



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

From Samarkand to Chang'an --The Regionality of Sogdian Cultural Identity during the Tang Dynasty

Yang Wang

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Archaeology, University of Nottingham

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my gratitude to those who helped me to complete this thesis. Firstly, I would like to offer my thanks to my supervisor in BFSU. This thesis would not have been possible to start without the help of Professor Shi Yuntao who supported me to start this research.

Sincere thanks also go to Professor Julian Henderson, my supervisor in the University of Nottingham. Completion this thesis could not have been accomplished without continue guidance and feedback from him. Advice from Doctor Thomas have been a great help in writing this thesis, I would like to show my appreciation to him.

Professor Li Delong , my supervisor in MUC during master study, without his help the study in this field could not start.

I also hope to acknowlege the help provided by all the tutors and Professors during my PhD study.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my parents for their constant support and trust in me.

Abstract

The Sinicization of the Sogdians in China has always been a focus of attention for the Sogdians. The Sogdians traveled eastward from Central Asia along the Silk Road to China and established many settlements to meet their commercial and living needs. After entering China, the Sogdians integrated and adapted to the local culture for a better life. During the Tang Dynasty, the Sogdians were very active. Among the settlements established by the Sogdians, the life of the Sogdians in Xizhou, Dunhuang, Liangzhou, Liuhu Prefectures, and Chang'an is more representative.

Integrating into Tang Dynasty society was a significant trend among the Sogde people. However, facing the profound influence of Tang culture, the Sogdians also had the right to choose themselves and exhibit different cultural identities. This kind of self-selection and cultural identity presents different situations due to factors such as the historical environment of the living area, social policies, and distance from the Central Plains Dynasty. In medieval China, even within its territory, the administrative powers of the rulers in the hinterland and border areas of the Central Plains were different. Due to their unique characteristics, different regions react differently to court orders. These differences have had an impact on the cultural identity of the Sogdians.

When Sogdians live in a place, they will integrate into the local society according to the specific situation. When the Sogdians lived in an environment far away from the Central Plains dynasty and with a stable local government, they absorbed more of the culture promoted by local managers and gained recognition for it. When Sogdians live in turbulent environments, their acceptance of multiculturalism and groups is higher, and their identity changes with the needs of the overall society. When the Sogdians live in regions easily disturbed by political situations, their identity is often trapped in dynastic politics without having too much right to self-choose.

Xian, as the central belief of the Sogdians, arrived in China with the footsteps of the Sogdians. The Sogdians also reformed Xian in order to better survive in China. The primary way was to combine Xian with Chinese Buddhism and folk beliefs so that Chinese society and rulers could accept Xian.

Both the choices of political identification and religious transformation were made by the Sogdians to better adapt to the social life of the Tang Dynasty. From a fundamental perspective, the adaptation methods of the Sogdians were formed based on historical development, social environment, and political background at that time.

Key Words: Sogdians; Tang Dynasty; Identity; Regional

Table of contents

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background	1
1.2 Research Review	3
1.3 Sources	9
1.4 Research Questions	12

Chapter 2 Native consciousness: The Sogdians in Samarkand

2.1 Commercial Consciousness and Intermediary Status of the Sogdians in Samarkand	15
2.1.1 Commercial Consciousness of the Sogdians in Samarkand	15
2.1.2 Intermediary Status of the Sogdians in Samarkand	18
2.2 Weak Consciousness of Sogdians in Samarkand	27
2.3 Anxiety about National Crisis facing the Muslims Attack	31
2.4 Self-Centered of Sogdians in Samarkand	36
2.4.1 Authority of King Varkhuman	37
2.4.2 Self-Recognition of Sogdians	42
Summary	45

Chapter 3 Far away from home: Sogdians in Xizhou

3.1 Geographical Location and History of Xizhou	47
3.1.1 Position of Xizhou	47
3.1.2 Historical and Cultural Environment in Xizhou	49
3.2 Sogdian Life Patterns in Xizhou	50
3.2.1 Settlements of Sogdians in Xizhou	51
3.2.2 Commercial Events of Sogdians in Xizhou	53

3.3 The Cultural Identity of Sogdians in Xizhou	60
3.3.1 Sogdian Family Tombs in Turpan	60
3.3.2 Absorption of Han Culture by the Sogdians in Turpan	65
3.3.3 The Religion of Sogdians in Turpan	71
Summary	78

Chapter 4 Near the Western Regions: Sogdians in Dunhuang

4.1 The settlement of Sogdians in Dunhuang	80
4.2 The Religion “Xian” in Dunhuang	84
4.2.1 Incorporated into the Official Sacrificial System with Folk Faith	84
4.2.2 Confusion with Buddhism	86
4.2.3 The Reason for the Change in Beliefs of the Dunhuang Sogdians	89
4.3 The Cultural Identity of the Sogdians in Dunhuang	92
4.3.1 Sogdians Identification with Confucianism in Dunhuang	92
4.3.2 Transformation of the Cultural Identity of Sogdians in Dunhuang	96
Summary	98

Chapter 5 Near the Central Plains: The Sogdians of Liangzhou

5.1 liangzhou: Outpost for the Sogdians to enter the Central Plains	100
5.1.1 Significant Location of Liangzhou	100
5.1.1.1 Administration of Liangzhou	100
5.1.1.2 Important Town along Silk Road	102
5.1.2 The Settlements of Sogdians in Liangzhou	103
5.2 Merchant Settlement and Armed Force	105
5.3 Identity of Sogdians in Liangzhou	107
Summary	113

Chapter 6 Steppe style: Turkic Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures

6.1 Organizational System and Geographical Environment in Liuhu Prefectures	115
6.1.1 Change of Organization and Personnel Migration	115
6.1.2 Geographical Location of Liuhu Prefecture	118
6.2 The Sogdians from Eastern Turkic Khanate	121
6.3 Cultural Identity of Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures	124
6.3.1 Differentiation of the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures	124
6.3.2 Transitional nature of Liuhu Prefectures	129
Summary	132

Chapter 7 Chang'an: Sogdians in the Han Cultural Center

7.1 Settlements of Sogdians in Chang'an	134
7.2 Political Life of Sogdians in Chang'an	138
7.3 Folk Popularization of Xian in Chang'an	141
7.3.1 Re-exploration for Sogdian Monk "Sengjia"	141
7.3.2 Popularization of Po Han Huxi in Tang	143
7.4 Differentiation of Sogdian Identity under the Influence of Tang culture	146
7.4.1 Family Marriage of Sogdian An, Shi and Kang in Luoyang	147
7.4.2 Confucian Feelings of He Hongjing family	150
Summary	152

Chapter 8 Conclusion

Bibliography	157
---------------------------	------------

Tables

Table 1 Sogdian elements in Gouxu Cemetery.....	58
Table 2 Sogdian elements in Ba Da Mu Cemetery.....	60
Table 3 Sogdian Family Temples in Turpan Documents.....	73

Figures

Figure 1 From Samarkand to Chang'an with key Districts.....	3
Figure 2 Sogdiana.....	16
Figure 3 The Sogdian Sarcophagus the Musée Guimet.....	22
Figure 4 Sogdian God--Veshparkar.....	24
Figure 5 The Eighth Slate of the Kooros Family in the Musée Guimet.....	24
Figure 6 The East Wall in Ambassador Hall, Reconstructed by Grenet.....	24
Figure 7 Ossuary in Afrasib.....	26
Figure 8 Mural on the Southern Wall in Panjikent. Reconstruction.....	27
Figure 9 Four Walls in Ambassdor Hall.....	37
Figure 10 The West Wall in Ambassador Hall.....	38
Figure Dunhuang Volume in the Collection of the French National Library P.4518(24).....	86
Figure 3 Liuzhou And Liuhu Prefectures.....	120

Chronology of Chinese Dynasties

Xia Dynasty	ca. 2100-1600 BCE
Shang Dynasty	ca. 1600-1050 BCE
Zhou Dynasty	1046-256 BCE
Western Zhou	ca. 1046-771 BCE
Eastern Zhou	ca. 771-256 BCE
Spring and Autumn Period	770-ca. 475 BCE
Warring States Period	ca. 475-221 BCE
Qin Dynasty	221-206 BCE
Western Han Dynasty	206 BCE-9 CE
Later Han Dynasty	25-220 CE
Three Kingdoms Period	220-265 CE
Jin Dynasty	265-420 CE
Northern Dynasties	386-589 CE
Northern Wei Dynasty	386-535 CE
Western Wei	535-557 CE
Northern Zhou	557-581 CE
Eastern Wei	534-550 CE
Northern Qi Dynasty	550-577 CE
Southern Dynasties	386-589 CE
Sui Dynasty	581-618 CE
Tang Dynasty	618-906 CE
Five Dynasties Period	907-960 CE
Northern Song	960-1127 CE
Southern Song	1127-1279 CE
Yuan Dynasty	1279-1368 CE
Ming Dynasty	1368-1644 CE
Qing Dynasty	1644-1912 CE

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Tang Dynasty (618-907) was the heyday of the development of Han-Chinese Dynasties. After the rulers' open and inclusive view of the world in the early Tang Dynasty, a stable social environment was created for foreigners to settle in China and the spread of foreign culture. The Tang rulers actively opened up to the outside world so that the Tang Dynasty's territory once penetrated deep into the hinterland of Central Asia to the west and entered the Mongolian steppe to the north. A large number of foreign ethnics came to China during this period as a result of the Tang Dynasty's expansion of the territory outward.

The Sogdians were a people with a long history in ancient Central Asia, living in the Transoxiana region centered between the Amu Darya and Syr Darya in Central Asia, part of modern Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. The Sogdians were the most famous merchants on the Silk Road. They became the messengers of cultural transmission by their dominant position at the crossroads of civilizations in the East and the West. According to historical data, the Sogdians arrived in China at least in the 4th century, as evidenced by the continuous discovery of documents related to the Sogdians since the 20th century and the gradual excavation of tombs in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. As the number of Sogdians settling in the Tang increased, the Tang Dynasty became the most active period for foreigners in Chinese history. As the most critical foreign people in China during the Medieval period, the Sogdians and their culture had a profound impact on the social development of the Tang Dynasty. The integration of Sogdians with Han-Chinese society predates the Tang Dynasty, but the climax of this process and this end occurred both in the Tang Dynasty and ended in the Tang Dynasty. ¹

The Sogdians entered Medieval China along the Silk Road from their homeland in Central Asia, and established many settlements along the route as a stronghold for life and trade contacts. Sogdian settlements existed in the Tarim Basin, the Helong area (河陇一带)², and the hinterland of the Central Plains. The Sogdians of the Tang Dynasty also lived and traded in these areas. Not all of the Sogdians of the Tang Dynasty came directly from Central Asia, and some of them moved into the Tang Dynasty with the fall of the Eastern Turk Khanate. At the beginning of the Zhenguan era (贞观), after the Eastern Turk Khanate was conquered by the Tang Dynasty, Emperor Taizong followed official Wen Yanbo's advice, and moved the Turkic peoples to the Shuofang area (朔方)³, and the Sogdians who lived in the Turkic Khanate before the Tang Dynasty were also migrated together with the surrendered people. Moribe Yutaka (森部豊) named this group "Sogdian-Turkic peoples", which means that they were nomadic and Turkic because they lived in the Eastern Turk Khanate for a while, and in some ways, were undoubtedly influenced by Turkic culture.

¹ Chen Haitao, Liu Huiqin, 2006, p. 2.

² Helong area, includes Hexi (河西) Circuit and Longyou (陇右) Circuit in the Tang Dynasty.

³ Shuofang area, the defense command in the Tang, its core region was Lingzhou (灵州).

Judging from the origin of the Sogdian migration to the Tang Dynasty, the management policy by the Tang to Sogdians who directly came from central Asia and who surrendered from the Eastern Turk Khanate were different, which also made these three have very different attitudes on how to adapt to the Tang policy and the degree of retention of their own cultural identity. What is more noteworthy is that the Sogdians, who also came directly from Central Asia, often faced different regional characteristics and local policies because they were in different regions and towns of the Tang Dynasty. The fact that These Sogdian settlements have different degrees of acceptance of the political influence of the Tang Dynasty due to their different distances from the ruling center of the Dynasty determine that the Sogdians have different choices between how to better adapt to the Tang culture and how to preserve their cultural identity to a greater extent.

For the Sogdians, the Tang culture and society are solid, and the Sogdians who are immigrants are a loose group. There is no doubt that it is the mainstream trend for the Sogdians in China to be sinicized and integrate into the society of the Tang Dynasty. However, it should not ignore the individuality and regionality under the mainstream trend. As Zhang Guangda concluded, "Each culture is concrete, real, and distinctive, and is created by each ethnic group adapting to a certain natural environment and living under a certain social system. When representatives of different cultures come into contact with each other, they must consciously or unconsciously learn from each other and selectively absorb according to their needs. With various cultures interacting, both selecting, absorbing, integrating rejecting, and discarding occurred."¹ Therefore, it is of great significance to take the Sogdians as the point for studying the self-adaptation choice of foreign ethnics in the Tang Dynasty.

The scope of Tang's control during the reign of Emperor Gaozong once reached Central Asia. However, the territory was not fixed, and the strength of the dynasty's control over the border areas was constantly changing with the form of domestic and foreign politics, followed by the change in the lifestyle of foreign peoples. When the Dynasty was strong, the Sogdians were incorporated into the household and mixed with the local people, and the integration progressed smoothly and autonomic; if forces insider and outsider weaken the dynastic dominance, the process of integration may be interrupted or repeated. Therefore, there is a need for targeted research on the Sogdians living in different political environments in the Tang Dynasty.

At the same time, the attitude of the Sogdians towards the Tang Dynasty is also worth studying. The attitude of the Sogdians toward the Tang Dynasty was influenced by many factors, such as living in the border areas or the Central Plains and being a solid leader or a managed people. Taking the Sogdians among the Eastern Turkic peoples as an example, when the Turkic peoples rebelled, these Sogdians also responded in a flurry. This also shows that even the Sogdians, who have lived in one place for a long time, will develop and change their sense of identity as the strength between Tang and strong enemies grows. Therefore, to grasp

¹ Zhang Guangda, 1995, p.301.

the overall trend of the Sinicization of the Sogdians, it is necessary to investigate and study the survival of the Sogdians in specific regions. On the one hand, it further explains the differences in the process of the transformation of the Sogdians in the Tang Dynasty. On the other hand, the relationship between the cultural identity of the Sogdians and the political trend of the Tang Dynasty can also be observed.

Based on the considerations above, this doctoral thesis takes the Tang Dynasty as the background of writing, selects six Sogdian settlements such as Samarkand, Xizhou (Turpan), Dunhuang, and Liangzhou in the Hexi Corridor, Liuhu Prefectures and Chang'an as the research object, and study how the Sogdians deal with the relationship between national identity and cultural identity in different regions and different periods in the face of Tang culture and local society, and how to integrate better and adapt to solid culture to maintain a suitable living environment. The differences between different regions and periods are discussed, so illustrate the interaction between Sogdian cultural identity and different social environments.



Figure 1 From Samarkand to Chang'an with key Districts¹

1.2 Research Review

Generally speaking, the research on the Sogdians mainly focuses on several areas, such as nationality, religious beliefs, social activities, cultural customs, and contacts with the surrounding ethnic groups. The relevant studies are sorted out and classified, and the cultural exchanges related to doctoral dissertations are reviewed.

Several monographs are of great reference value in the study of Sogdians. Jiang Boqin's *Dunhuang Turpan Documents and the Silk Road*² studied the Sogdians' settlements in Dunhuang and Turpan. He first proposed that the Sogdians gathered together to form settlements after entering China. Among these settlements, Sabao was the leader of a caravan and the administrator of religious sacrifices.

¹ <https://sogdians.si.edu/sidebars/sogdian-metalworking/>

² Jiang Boqin, 1994.

*Studies on the Nationalities from the Crossroads of Civilization: the Sogdians of Tang*¹ are mainly about analyzing the Sinicization of Sogdians in China using historical sources and archaeological discoveries. He believes that the Sogdians have accepted the concept of the Han family, but different individuals have different acceptance levels. The examples listed in this book provide case studies for thesis writing.

Based on historical sources and archaeological materials, Zhang Xiaogui² explores the spread and development of Zoroastrianism from Central Asia in medieval China from the aspects of its origin, distribution of Zoroastrianism temples in Tang and Song Dynasties, idolization of Zoroastrianism and its sacrificial rites, marriage customs, and burial customs.

Bi Bo³ studied the development history of the Sogdian settlements in Chang'an from Northern Zhou (AD 557–581) to Sui (AD 581–618) and Tang dynasties (AD 618–907). For Sogdians in Tang, it shows, using epitaphs, the ways and reasons that the Sogdians served in court, which is of great reference significance to thesis. The description of Chang'an Sogdian identity and the collection of epitaphs in this article are helpful.

*Medieval China and Foreign Civilization*⁴ and *Medieval China's Sogdian Civilization*⁵ by Rong Xinjiang are two masterpieces on the cultural exchange between China and the West in the Han and Tang Dynasties. Combining Sogdian literature and tomb materials, these two explore the migration route, settlement distribution, and foreign culture brought by Sogdians entering China.

*The History of Sogdian Merchant*⁶ mainly studies the historical overview of Sogdian merchants from the 4th to the 10th centuries. Patrick Wertmann⁷ investigates the Sogdians in China from the 3rd AD to the 10th AD using historical text and archaeological discoveries. In this book, the section on Tang is handy to my thesis.

Except for the monographs mentioned above, several articles still exist to explore the Sogdians' culture.

Sogdian art is expressed through frescoes, gold and silverware, sarcophagi and stone screen paintings.⁸ Among the archaeological finds in Sogdiana in Central Asia, the sites excavated in Panjikent and Afrasiab since the 20th century are the most relevant and landmark sites, both of which have better-preserved frescoes and sculptures associated with burials in Sinicized

¹ Chen Haitao, Liu Huiqing, 2006.

² Zhang Xiaogui, 2010.

³ Bi Bo, 2011.

⁴ Rong Xinjiang, 2001

⁵ Rong Xinjiang, 2014

⁶ Vaissière, Wang Rui trans., 2012.

⁷ Patrick Wertmann, 2015.

⁸ Guo Ping, 2015, p. 17.

Sogdian tombs. These archaeological discoveries have enabled the fine arts of the native Sogdian region to be noticed and understood by scholars worldwide. Among them, B.I. Marshak, A. M. Belenitsky, and others have clearly described and sorted out the native Sogdian art earlier.

Marshak devoted himself to the study of Sogdian art and Central Asian archaeology, and he presided over the excavations of the Sogdian region of Central Asia for many years.¹ He began his research in Panjikent in 1954 and has since led excavations. In 1981, he co-authored Berenitsky *Sogdiana's Paintings*, the first part of G. Azarpay's book *Sogdian Paintings*², systematically expounded the subject matter and content of Sogdian paintings, arguing that the frescoes were painted in the late 5th and early 6th centuries. The content of the murals included both banquet scenes of secular nobles and scenes of religious life sacrifices. He also believed that the funeral scenes in the murals included both Sogdians and Turkic.

Marshak and V. Raspopova studied the ruins of a palace with a barn valley in the Panjikent site³ and interpreted that its south, north walls and vaults contained both the goddess Nana and the goddess of agriculture, which represented secular harvest celebrations, and believed that the palace embodies the unique Sogdian religious concept of equal importance between Sogdian nobles and mural creators. He published a large number of treatises on Sogdian art, many of which have been translated into Chinese.⁴ Regarding Panjikent's research, scholars have written and discussed it in recent years⁵, but basically, it is within the framework of research results at the end of the 20th century, and there are few discoveries.

Guo Ping's research⁶ is a relatively comprehensive study of Sogdian Art in China. Several thesis⁷ in Chinese have also been devoted to the analysis of the content of the murals in the Sogdiana site and further explored their artistic origins.

The site of Afrasiab is another important discovery in Sogdian archaeology in Central Asia. In 1965, the palace of Samarkand from the 6th and 7th centuries and its frescoes were discovered at the site of Afrasiab.⁸ The content of the famous Hall of Ambassadors reflects the essential geographical location of Sogdiana in Central Asia at the crossroads of the East and the West. The murals in the hall have attracted much attention from the academic community, and the square living room walls depict the arrival of envoys from various Medieval Asian countries in Samarkand in the 7th centuries. The presence of murals in this living room is the way the rulers of Samarkand at that time showed their legitimacy.⁹

¹ Patrick Wertmann, 2015, pp1-4.

² Guitty Azarpay, 1981.

³ B. I. Marshak , V. Raspopov, Mao Ming trans., 2016, pp. 21-49.

⁴ B.I. Marshak, Yang Taojun trans., 2005(03), pp. 33-38. B. I. Marshak, Mao Ming trans., 2016.

⁵ Betty Hensellek. "A Sogdian Drinking Game at Panjikent", In *Iranian Studies*, 2019 Vol. 52, No. 5-6, pp. 837-857.

⁶ Guo Ping, 2015, p. 17.

⁷ Wang Meiyuan, 2016(02), pp. 91-99. Song Yongzhong, 2016(11), pp. 129-139. Xin Yan, 2019.

⁸ Patrick Wertmann, 2015, pp.1-4. Guo Ping, 2015, p. 39.

⁹ B. I. Marshak, Mao Ming trans., 2016, pp.50-70.

The first to reveal the painting of the west wall of the ambassador's hall was by Chiara Silvi-Antonini, who believed that the west wall depicts the Sogdian king being canonized by Emperor Gaozong of Tang accompanied by Turkic warriors.¹ Later, Marsark², Frantz Grenet³, Markus Mode and Matteo Compareti⁴ also studied the murals. These studies reveal that the rule of the Tang Dynasty at that time had expanded into the Sogdian states of Central Asia. At the same time, the contents of murals in the hall also show that the Sogdiana at that time was indeed a place where Eastern and Western cultures converged, and Tang culture, Persian culture, Indian culture, and the steppe nomadic culture all exchanged and collided here.

In the early 20th century, Stein discovered woodblock prints at the site of Dandan Urik in Khotan, Xinjiang, China. Markus Mode concluded that the woodblock prints contained not only Buddhist images but also images of Sogdian gods.⁵ In 2002, the Xinjiang Institute of Archaeology and the institutions of the Buddhist University of Japan excavated the ruins of the Dandan Uilik Buddhist Temple, where woodblock prints had been found, and also believed that the murals in the temple contained Sogdian Iranian deities.⁶ However, due to the lack of similar archaeological finds, further research has yet to be carried out on the emergence of new materials.

Marshark's research on *Sogdian Silverware*⁷ separates Sogdian gold and silver objects discovered before 1971 from the Perth artifact system so that Sogdian silver is not generally attributed to Persian artifacts. His other monograph⁸ represents new research after his Sogdian Silverware.

The use of sarcophagi, stone couches, and stone screen-style portraits unearthed in the tombs of the Sogdians in China to study Sogdian art and related issues is worthy of reference. As early as 1958, some scholars interpreted the images of several stone pavilions on the screen of the Northern Qi Dynasty (AD 550-577) in Anyang unearthed in 1922 and now collected in the Boston Museum of Art, confirming the fact that the Sogdians were in China from the perspective of image evidence for the first time.⁹ Subsequently, a complete screen stone couch collected in the Miho Museum of Japan received scholars' attention. Judith Lerner and Annette Juliano proposed that this screen stone couch was a relic of the Sogdian aristocratic wife of the Northern Dynasty. From the image, it was a burial device related to Xian.¹⁰ The Musée Guimet in Paris also houses a stone screen composed of ten stone slabs. Penelope Riboud also wrote an introduction and believed that the age was around the end of the 6th

¹ Chiara Silvi-Antonini, Vol.43, 1989, pp.109-144.

² B. I. Marshak, Mao Ming trans., 2016, pp.50-70.

³ Frantz Grenet, 2005, pp. 305-323.

⁴ Matteo Compareti, Mao Ming trans., 2016, pp. 3-17.

⁵ M. Mode, 1991/92, pp.179-214.

⁶ Xinjiang Wenwu Kaogu Yanjiusuo, 2005(03), pp. 8-19.

⁷ B.I. Marshark, 2019.

⁸ B.I. Marshak, 1986.

⁹ Giustina Scaglia, XXI, 1958, pp. 2-28.

¹⁰ Lerner J. & Juliano A., 1997, pp. 72-78.

century.¹ The images displayed on the burial utensils of Sogdians collected in foreign museums include not only secular scenes of aristocratic feasts, long journeys of caravans but also reflect Zoroastrian sacrificial activities.

After entering medieval China, many settlements were formed along the Silk Road. Cai Hongsheng, in his article “The City-State System of Zhaowu Nine Surnames and Eastern Settlements”² divided Sogdian settlements into three categories according to cultural types: transplanted, naturalized, and Turkic. Yao Chongxin³ agreed with this view but also emphasized that these three types of settlements do not exist in isolation. Pay attention to their dynamic characteristics when studying Sogdian settlements. Chen Haitao and Liu Huiqin’s research⁴ discusses the major settlement areas of Sogdians in China and also divides these settlements into five types according to cultural types: tribal type, conversion type, commercial type, tribal-conversion type, and commercial-conversion type, and analyzes in detail the sinicization process of the first three types of representative settlements.

Ikeda On⁵ is the earliest study to use Dunhuang documents to prove that many Sogdians living in the Dunhuang area. He elaborated the whole process of Dunhuang Sogdian settlement from its emergence to the end of their occupation, the origin of the settlement, the function and evolution of the settlement, and the end of the settlement. Finally, it is pointed out that this settlement appeared in the first half of the seventh century. When it was sinicized through intermarriage and settlement with the Han people. The most remarkable function of this settlement is to safeguard the interests of Sogdians as an intermediary of trade. In the middle of the eighth century, with the entry of Tibetan forces into this area, the scattering of settlements in Dunhuang resulted. Later, the Sogdians lived in diaspora with the local people.

Regarding the distribution of its settlements, scholars have proved through Dunhuang, Turpan documents, and some archaeological discoveries that Sogdian settlements existed around the Tarim Basin, Heshuo area, Chang’an⁶, and Luoyang⁷. These settlements had a great relationship with their commercial activities. On this basis, some scholars have further studied the organizational structure and personnel composition of these settlements.⁸ In addition to the Sogdians who independently chose to settle in towns along the Silk Roads, settlements were formed for political reasons. After the Eastern Turkic Khanate fell to the Tang Dynasty, the Tang rulers moved their surrendered people to fixed places to stabilize the situation, form Liuhu Prefectures. There are many articles on the origin and evolution of settlements in Liuhu Prefectures.⁹ Often in the areas where the Sogdians lived, part of the culture that has been formed over a long period, such as the social organization structure and living customs of

¹ Penelope Riboud, 2006, pp. 108-125.

² Cai Hongsheng, 1998, pp.14-15.

³ Yao Chongxin etc., 2013, p. 28.

⁴ Chen Haitao, Liu Huiqin, 2006, p. 126.

⁵ Ikeda On, 1993.

⁶ Xiang Da, 2001. Han Xiang, 2000(03). Li Hongbin, 1997(01)

⁷ Mao Yangguang, 2006, pp. 250-262.

⁸ Cai Hongsheng, 2001. Qiang Boqin, 1994. Ikeda On, 1993.

⁹ Niu Zhong Xun, 1984(04). Zhang Guangda, 1986(02). Zhou Weizhou, 1988(03). Chen Haotao, 2002(05).

their original living place is preserved, and part of it is also integrated with the customs of the local population, thus generating cultural exchanges and interactions.¹

The Anshi Rebellion brought a heavy blow to the Sogdians in the Tang Dynasty. After the Anshi Rebellion, the trend of hating Hu people in the society gradually increased, and some Sogdians tried to alleviate the hostile attitude of the Tang people by changing their surnames and geographical location. Some chose to migrate to the town of Hebei Fanzhen(河北藩镇)², which was built by the ex-generals and soldiers of An Lushan and Shi Siming, which caused the Heshuo area to experience a short-term in Hu people's style. By analyzing the epitaphs of the Sogdians living in this area, the researchers further studied the marriage and family status of the Sogdians after the Anshi Rebellion.³

Xian is the central religious belief of Sogdians, and the research results of Xian beliefs of the Sogdians entering China are vibrant.⁴ Scholars generally believe that it is precisely because the Xian itself integrates local gods and is more inclined to the folk beliefs of the Sogdians in nature, so even if the Sogdians arrived in China and established temples in their gathering places and carried out sacrifices, they did not have missionary intentions in essence, which also made Xian gradually mixed with folk customs in the late Tang Dynasty.⁵

The earliest scholar who systematically studied Xian in China was Chen Yuan⁶. His study mainly used the literature to describe the time and distribution of Xian in Chang'an. With the discovery of several Northwest Sogdian tombs in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, several Sogdian tombs have provided valuable materials for understanding Xian through images and other physical materials in China. Scholars mostly use the Northern Zhou Anjia Tomb⁷, Shijun Tomb⁸, Kangye Tomb⁹, Taiyuan Yuhong Tomb¹⁰, and so on for research. After studying this series of Sogdian tombs, through the examination of the paintings on the stone doors, coffins, and walls in the tombs, it was found that the content of the paintings reflected the Zoroastrian rituals and worship objects.¹¹

Except for the mainstream religion of the Sogdians, Zoroastrianism, the Sogdians also have a record of believing in Jingjiao¹². Ge Chengyong¹³ investigated the epitaph of Mi Jifen(米继芬) unearthed in Chang'an and found that the belief of the Sogdian Mi family in Jingjiao originated from the inheritance of their family's beliefs in Central Asia. There were no signs

¹ Wang Su, 1991(03). Xue Zongzheng, 1997(04).

² Hebei Fanzhen, Hebei Province with Military governship in the Tang.

³ Chen Yinke, 2001, p. 200. Rong Xinjiang, 2014, pp. 79-113. Rong Xinjiang, 2011. Li Hongbin, 2006, pp.72-86.

⁴ Gao Yongjiu, 1955(04). Chen Guocan, 1988(01). Yang Fuxue, 2016.

⁵ Lin Wushu, 2005, pp. 356—359. Cai Hongsheng, 2007, 10-11.

⁶ Chen Yuan, 2010.

⁷ Shaanxisheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo, 2003.

⁸ Rong Xinjiang, 2004, pp.64-65.

⁹ Xi'anShi Wenwu Baohu Yanjiusuo, 2008(06).

¹⁰ Shaanxisheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo, 2005.

¹¹ Zhang Xiaogui, 2019. Ge Chengyong, 2009(03).

¹² Jingjiao, the term "Nestorianism" in Chinese literature in The Tang Dynasty.

¹³ Ge Chengyong, 2001(01).

of changing their beliefs. In addition, a Tang Dynasty Jingjiao stele carving unearthed in Luoyang in 2006 proves that the Sogdians in China believe in this religion. Zhang Naizhu¹ found through his investigation of the content of the stone carvings that the Jingseng Qingsu brothers' method of building tombs for the An surnamed Sogdians by setting up "scriptures" next to the tombs was an imitation of local Buddhists, indicating the phenomenon of cultural integration in the Luoyang during the Tang Dynasty. At the same time, the content of the stele carvings also proves the existence of Nestorianism temples in Luoyang during the Tang Dynasty. This information about the Sogdians' belief in Nestorianism proves that the Sogdians were a group that accepted various religions and cultures, which also led them to have a greater acceptance of the new cultural environment after living in the Tang Dynasty.

In addition, scholars have used textual and historical data and the epitaphs of the Sogdians in China to study the issue of their sinicization. In this field, scholars primarily focus on individual cases and use epitaphs to study the family, marriage, and multiple aspects of the life of the Sogdians.

For the study of the Sogdians, especially for Sogdians in China, previous studies have focused on the Sogdians of a person, a family, or a region. Based on a large number of research results on the Sogdians, this thesis hopes to select several main living areas of Sogdians and, through studying the cultural identity of each region, try to outline a clue, namely, the living conditions of the Sogdians along the Silk Road from west to east. Then, analyze the relationship between the clues presented and the strength of the political radiation of the Tang Dynasty received by each region.

1.3 Sources

The research on "Sogdians in China" is based on combining of Chinese historical sources and archaeological materials. To be specific, Han materials include official historical books from the Northern Wei Dynasty (AD 386-535) to the Tang Dynasty (AD 618-907), novels, and geographical works by literati; archaeological materials include 1) tombs of Sogdians in China, 2) documents from Dunhuang, Turpan, Khotan and Mt Mugh, 3) epitaphs discovered in China.

1.3.1 Chinese Historical Sources

Han historical sources are the most direct historical records about Sogdians. It mainly divides into official records and novels. The special biography of Sogdians in official history records were written by historiographers, such as An Jinzang in *Zhongyi Zhuan* (The biographies of people who were famous for their loyalty to the emperor) of *Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu*.

The contents of novels also have some information about Sogdians. In *Chaoye Qianzai*,

¹ Zhang Naizhu, 2007(01).

written by Zhang Zhuo (AD 660-740) (2012), it records that there already had temples of Zoroastrianism in Luoyang, and Sogdians often held religious activities in specific areas.

However, due to the limitations of the Medieval Han understanding of the remote Sogdians, there were some things that needed to be corrected in historical materials. From the official records of the North and South Dynasties to Tang, it is believed that the ancestors of the Sogdians originally lived in Hexi Corridor (in the present Gansu Province in China) and then migrated westward to Sogdiana.

Therefore, for a long time, the relevant issues concerning the Sogdians immigrants to China have been of great importance and have attracted the attention of scholars. Before several Sogdians' tombs were excavated, the research was published based on historical sources, so the studies were limited.

1.3.2 Archaeological material

Archaeological materials include (1) tombs of Sogdians in China, (2) documents from Dunhuang, Turpan, Khotan, and Mt Mugh, (3) epitaphs discovered in China.

(1) Tombs of Sogdians in China

To date, the discoveries of Sogdian tombs in China have become a shred of important evidence for studying of their social life in Medieval Age.

There are five tombs unearthed in the Northern Dynasty, the most important of which are the tomb of Anjia Tomb (died 579 AD) whose family originated from the state of An, Han for Bukhara (Wu, 2010), tomb of Wirkak (Shi Jun or Lord Shi) who died in 580 AD, Han for Kesh which is present-day Shahr-e Sabz, ca. 80 km south of Samarkand in Uzbekistan (Dien, 2009; Sun, 2005; Wu, 2010; Yoshida, 2005) and the tomb of Kang Ye (died 571 AD) as descendant of the ruling family of the state of Kang, Han name for Samarkand (Wu, 2010). Epitaph is found in each tomb, which records the background of the owner. Among them, bilingual inscription (i.e., in Sogdian and Chinese) was found in the tomb of Wirkak.

The Han people also have some surnames like An, Kang, and Shi. It is impossible to determine the identity of the Sogdians. However, scholars confirm that they are Sogdians and Zoroastrian through the pictures on sarcophaguses (Rong, 2005), such as the painting of hunting and banqueting (Hen, 2001; Grenet, 2007). Some funerary objects, such as Persian silver pots, Byzantine gold coins, and other items with apparent Western Asian style, also indicate that the deceased came from Central Asia (Luo, 2005).

The description of the tomb is recorded in detail in the archaeological report, which is the most direct reference material for the study. Through the study of its tomb, it is proved that the tomb's owners are middle class. Although these tombs in the Northern Dynasty are not part of the research scope of the thesis, they can still provide important information about the

Sogdians.

In the Sui and Tang Dynasties, the number of tombs of Sogdians entering China is significantly higher than that of the Northern Dynasty. The main tombs are those of the Shi family in Guyuan (Ningxia), the tomb of He Hongjing (何泓敬) in Hebei province, the tomb of the An YuanShou (安元寿) with his wife in Xi'an, and the tomb of Anpu (安菩) and his wife in Luoyang.

The most important tombs, Shi family, were found in Guyuan, Ningxia from 1982 to 1986. Seven tombs and six tombs were found in this family tomb. The interpretation of their epitaphs, proves that seven tombs' owners belong to two Shi families (Luo, 1996).

There are achievements in the study of the Shi Family, such as the study of the shape of the tombs (Daoluo, 2000; Luo, 1996; Wertmann,2017) and the degree of acceptance of Han Culture, and the study of the different beliefs expressed in different tombs. The Shi family being involved in the changes from the Northern Wei (AD 386-535), Western Wei (AD 535-557) and Northern Zhou (AD 557-581) to Sui (AD 581-618) and Tang dynasties (AD 618-907) survived successfully these turbulent times of Chinese history(Wertmann, 2017).

The other tombs were stolen and destroyed seriously, so the only reference material was the epitaph carved on the sarcophagus coffin.

(2) Epitaphs of Sogdians

The custom of identifying the name, descent, and merits of a person by imperishable epitaph inscriptions on square stone plates buried inside tombs was common practice in China from the third and fourth centuries AD (Davis, 2015; Dien, 2007). Long epitaphs made for characters buried in tombs are usually rich sources of information about their bloodline, political events, and administrative system at that time(Wertmann, 2017).

This kind of epitaph is different from these carved in tombs. They were found individually without tombs and relics, which may be dispersed geographically. They are concentrated in cities where the Sogdians settle together in Xi'an, Luoyang, and Dunhuang etc. To date, there are compiled to interpret their contents, such as Epitaphs of Sui, Tang, and Five Dynasties (1991) and A Study of Tombs in Tang West Market Museum (2013). Some of the owners of these epitaphs were military generals of the Tang Dynasty, who could be regarded as middle status at that time, and some were civilian class, such as wine sales (Bi, 2011).

(3) Documents

a. The Sogdians "Ancient Letters"

The earliest Sogdian handwritten texts and the oldest available thesis documents(five letters and a number of fragments) provide valuable information about daily life and trade organization of Sogdians from the fourth centuries AD, which were found by Aurel Stein in

1907 in the remains of a watch-tower on the Han frontier wall., they are kept in the British Library(Grenet &Sims-Williams, 1987; Grenet, Sims-Williams, &La Vaissiere, 1998; Sims-Williams, 2001; Livshits, 2008). These Ancient Letters show the trade activities in the town of that period China by a Sogdian merchant group concluding bargains in China, proving the excitement of Sogdian trade.

b. Mt Mugh documents

The important archive of Sogdian documents was discovered in 1933 at Mt. Mugh in Tajikistan, concluding 92 documents in Sogdian, three in Han, one in Muslimsic, and one in Rune. They may be attributed to around the eighth to ninth centuries, and now are in the Leningrad(Henning, 1965; Sims-Williams, 1981; Zhang & Pang, 2017).

c. Sogdian documents from Khotan

In the spring of 2010, the Museum of Renming University of China acquired a collection of documents from Hetian (Ancient Khotan). These total of twelve items, including four economic documents (Bi & Sims-Williams, 2010) and a few fragments (Bi & Sims-Williams, 2015). The research from these two articles is both translated from Sogdian to English.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the above thinking, this thesis chooses the Sogdians in Samarkand, Xizhou, Dunhuang, Liangzhou, Liuhu Prefectures and Chang'an as the research objects, and chooses the point that best reflects the Sogdians' lifestyle here to discuss, to analyze and explore the specific lifestyle and cultural identity of the Sogdians in the above places, and compare their differences and similarities.

The important geographical position of the Sogdian State at the crossroads enables the Sogdians to take advantage of this convenient condition to walk on the east-west traffic routes and engage in long-distance transit trade. Sogdiana was also a place for multicultural meetings and exchanges. Sogdian State has long been mixed with the surrounding powerful forces to form limited independence and protect the development of commerce by relying on the powerful countries. The murals in the Samarkand Embassy Hall reflect the self-centered consciousness of King Sogdian, which is also the embodiment of the native consciousness of Sogdians.

Tang Xizhou is a critical transportation hub of the Silk Road. Before the Tang Dynasty, it was the center of multi-ethnic settlements and multi-cultural convergence. Before the establishment of Xizhou by the Tang Dynasty, there had been many Sogdians in Gaochang. Xizhou in Tang inherited the strong Han culture and prosperous Buddhist culture in the Gaochang state period, which significantly impacted on the cultural identity of the Sogdians here. Sogdians living in Xizhou are different from the Central Plains, which is the center of traditional Han culture regarding cultural concepts and lifestyles.

Dunhuang is an essential gateway for the Sogdians to leave the Western Regions and enter the Hexi Corridor. Due to the closer proximity of Dunhuang to the Central Plains, its foreign cultural atmosphere is weaker than that of Xizhou, while the atmosphere of Han culture is more potent. After the occupation of The Tibetan Empire and the management after the recovery of the Guiyi Army regime, the Sogdians in Dunhuang went through a process from self-consciousness to self-being.

Liangzhou is closer to the Central Plains. Because of its important strategic position, the Sogdians formed a powerful armed group that influenced the politics of the Tang Dynasty. Among them, the most influential one was the Sogdian An-brothers. The development process of their descendants reflected that the Sogdians with family backgrounds approved of the Tang Dynasty while maintaining their family identity. On the one hand, the attachment of other Sogdians to Liangzhou reflects that Sogdians imitate the Han people to think highly of their homeland, on the other hand, it also reflects Sogdians' regional identity to Liangzhou.

Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures were resettled to the south together with the people from the East Turkic Khanate. They had lived in the Turkic Khanate for a long time before entering China, which made them imbued with some grassland cultural characteristics. This is the uniqueness of Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures compared to other regions. As the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures live in the transitional zone between the Han area and nomadic grasslands, their recognition of the Tang Dynasty is very vulnerable to the political situation, which makes the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures waver in their national recognition of the Tang Dynasty.

As the capital of the Tang Dynasty, Chang'an naturally became where Sogdians came in droves. Most of Sogdians in Chang'an lived in the west, which was inseparable from Tang rulers' planning and management of the capital city. It is precisely because it is located in the most centralized area under the rule of the dynasties and the central area of Han culture that the speed and degree of the Sogdian civilization here are faster and more profound deeper than other regions. At the same time, the more deeply the Sogdians are affected by politics, the more they need to choose their adaptation methods sensitively and quickly, and their ways and identities are more likely to split into different levels.

By describing and analyzing the living conditions of the six regions where the Sogdians lived in the Tang Dynasty, this thesis aims to study the identification of Sogdians in different regions under the background of Han culture and explore the reasons behind it, to reveal the fact that the way of life, form and cultural identity of Sogdians in China are constrained by politics. No matter where the Sogdians lived in the Tang Dynasty, they needed to make choices according to their political situation. Through the study of Sogdians in several regions of the Tang Dynasty, we can not only reveal Sogdians' living conditions and analyze their cultural identity but also have a particular reference value for studying other foreign ethnicities living in the Tang society.

The thesis will mainly analyze several points:

Firstly, the living conditions of the Sogdians in the six selected regions in the article are analyzed, along with the regional characteristics of their cultural identity and the reasons for its formation.

Secondly, in the writing, the regional characteristics of cultural identity will be compared horizontally to highlight the shaping of Sogdian cultural identity by a region's historical, cultural, and geographical environment.

Thirdly, analyze the political reasons behind the differences in cultural identity among different regions and place the six regions selected in the paper in the context of the Sogdians coming to China from West to East along the Silk Road. Analyze the influence of the dynasty's political radiation from the inside out, from near to far, on forming Sogdian humanistic identity in different regions.

Chapter 2 Native consciousness: The Sogdians in Samarkand

Central Asia was bordered by the Eurasian steppe in the north on the Silk Road, India in the south, the Han and Tang Dynasties in the east, Persia, and the countries on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean in the west. The historical Sogdian kingdoms were located in a fertile oasis between the Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers in Central Asia, in present-day Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, and Samarkand was the cultural center of the Sogdian States.¹ Samarkand is one of the oldest cities in Central Asia, connecting China with West Asia and Europe, which is an important town on the Silk Road. At this crossroads, the Sogdians formed extraordinary ability to trade, gradually becoming the mercantile group with control along the Silk Roads in the Medieval Ages. Due to being surrounded by great powers, although Sogdian States had an independent royal system, they were still constrained by different regimes, which also limited the Sogdian states' independence and showed a dependent posture on the surrounding powers.

Among the Sogdian kingdoms, the Kang State centered on Samarkand was the strongest. In the Tang dynasty, the Kang State had frequent exchanges with the Tang court, ranking first among the Sogdian kingdoms in Central Asia. This chapter uses the Sogdians of Samarkand as an example to illustrate the self-cognition of the native Sogdians of Central Asia.

2.1 Commercial Consciousness and Intermediary Status of the Sogdians in Samarkand

The Sogdians are famous commercial people on the Silk Road, known as the “Phoenicians of the East”. The shaping of the Sogdian commercial character is closely associated with the vital position of Sogdiana at the crossroads between the East and the West, and this essential geographical position promotes the formation of the Sogdian trade network in turn. They were benefiting from the key position in Eurasia, the Sogdians, with their intermediary status, undertake the economic and cultural exchanges between the East and the West in many aspects.

2.1.1 Commercial Consciousness of the Sogdians in Samarkand

Sogdians was located at the crossroads of east-west transportation in Eurasia, and merchants occupied an important position in its economic life. According to historical records, “The people in Kang-state are good at trading. Men at the age of five should learn and understand how to be a good trader with more profit as good”², reflecting the Sogdian tradition of engaging in commercial activities, especially for Sogdian men, who began to teach the way of trade at a young age. *Jiu Tangshu*(*旧唐书*) describes in detail: “生子必以石蜜内口中，明胶置掌内，欲其成长口常甘言，掌持钱如胶之黏物。俗习胡书。善商贾，争分铢之利。男

¹ Великий шелковый путь, Gao Y. trans.,2017, p.5.

² *Tongdian*, 1988, p.5256.

子年二十，即远之旁国，来适中夏，利之所在，无所不到。”¹ It can be seen that the Sogdian ethnic character of being good at trading and pursuing interests was well known by Tang people.

The commercial consciousness of Sogdians did not arise at a time. It should be said that as early as the Western Han Dynasty(西汉), the residents of Transoxiana had already appeared commercial awareness, but at that time, there was no large-scale commercial behavior. *Shiji*(史记) mentions that “From the west of Dawan to the Anxi state, although the country is quite different, it is quite similar to the common customs, referring to the words. Everyone has deep eyes, many beards, and is good at trading and competing for baht.”² The place written here was called the Kangju Di(康居地) in Chinese historical records of the time. Regarding the relationship between Kangju(康居) and Kang State(康国) recorded here, the researchers have analyzed more³. To the Northern Wei Dynasty(北魏), the Kang State followed the Kangju, and the *Suishu*(隋书) also contains: “The Kang State, the inheritor of Kangju”⁴. As Yu Taishan said, the reason why the people in Sui dynasty chose to use “Kang” to translate Samarkand is that the Sui Dynasty knew that the main territorial scope of Kang state is the same as that of Kangju.⁵ However, this does not mean that the royal family and local people of Kang State were completely equal with that of Kangju. For example, Wang Zhilai believes that Kangju was distributed in the steppe area of the middle and lower reaches of the Syr Darya and was forced to move south to the Sogdiana region due to the westward migration of the Hun(匈奴), so later historical sources will refer to Kangju and Sogdians together.⁶ It can be seen that the Kang State and the Kangju cannot be simply equated, and the Kang state recorded in the Tang Dynasty historical records only overlaps with the Kangju in the Han Dynasty in terms of territory. In this regard, Étienne de la Vaissière believes that the Kangju during Han Dynasties was very extensive including Sogdiana, and the commercial element in the Kangju was the Sogdians of Sogdiana.⁷ It can be inferred from this that there was no large-scale trade in post-BC Sogdiana. However, it is foreseeable that the source of the Sogdian commercial trade network and the Sogdian commercial spirit nurtured in Sogdiana.

The Sogdians established commercial trade with China dating back to the early 4th century. The Ancient Sogdian Letters unearthed in the Dunhuang beacon revealed that the Sogdians in the 4th century had established a transportation network in the Hexi Corridor in China and used Dunhuang as a base to communicate the towns of the Hexi Corridor, and then the Western Regions and Samarkand. This vast commercial trade network supported the Sogdians

¹ *Jiu Tangshu* 旧唐书, 1975, p.3210. It means, “When giving birth, one must put molasses in one’s mouth and gelatin in one’s palm. If one wishes to grow, one should always say, ‘Hold money like glue in one’s palm.’ Sogdians are good at doing business and are always haggard. When a man reaches the age of 20, he goes to other countries for business, and wherever there is interest, he can see traces of the Sogdians.”

² *Shiji*, 1959, p.3174. It means that From the West of Dawan to the Parthian Empire, the languages of several countries were different, but the customs were very similar. The people have deep eyes and high noses, many beards, and are good at pursuing interests and doing trade.

³ Shiratori Kurakichi, Fu Qinjia trans., 2015. Yu Taishan, 2012. Chen Haitao, 2003(3).

⁴ *Suishu*, 1975, p.1848.

⁵ Yu Taishan, 1991(1), p.39. Yu T.S., 1992, pp.102-105.

⁶ Wang Zhilai, 2020, p.151.

⁷ Étienne de la Vaissière, Wang Rui trans., 2012, pp.18-19.

in carrying out commercial trade in China, and the network laid the foundation for the political activities of the Sogdians in the Medieval Dynasties.

The Ancient Letters unearthed in Dunhuang also illustrate two points, one of which is that the letter mentions that the Sogdians traded a wide variety of commodities such as linen, musk, and camphor¹; another is that the Sogdians had already established settlements in the Hexi corridor in the 4th century, which were based on families and had religious priests². These two points reveal that the Sogdians who entered China during this period had formed settlements due to the needs of commercial, and there were religious leaders in the settlements, reflecting that the Sogdian trade in China in the 4th century had formed a specific scale.

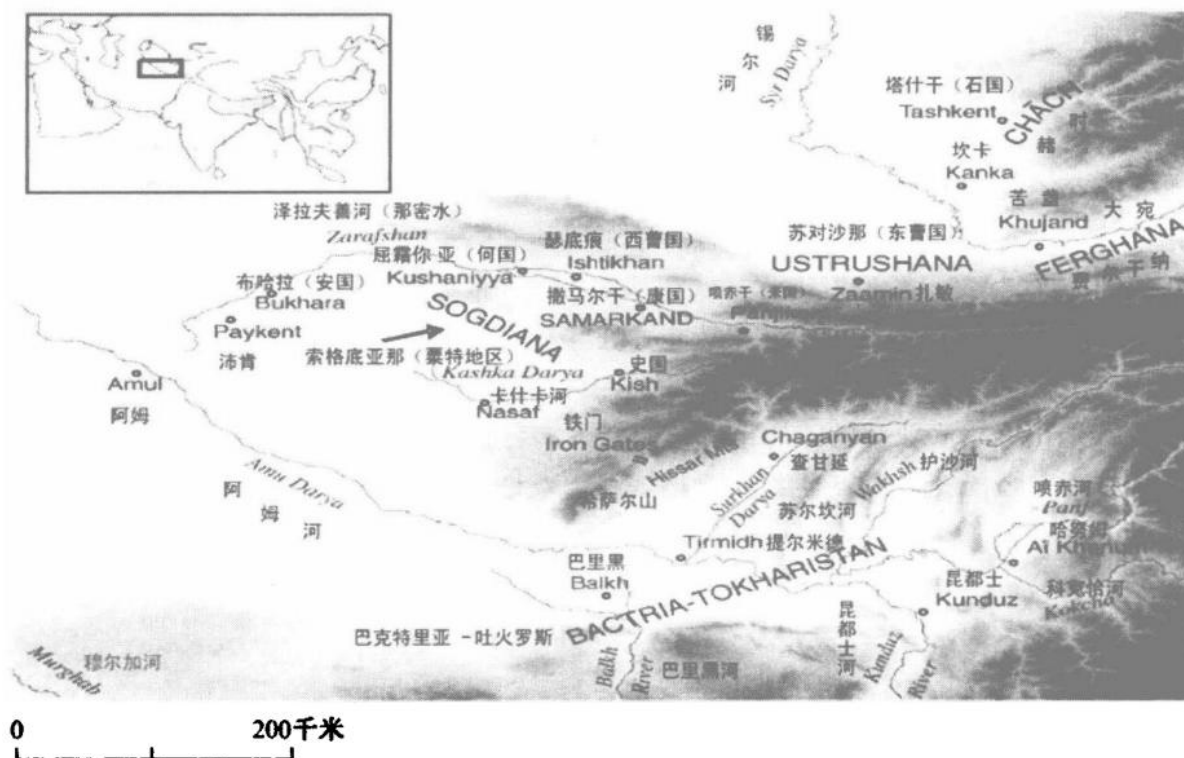


Figure 2 Sogdiana³

From the 5th century onwards, the Sogdian commercial territory expanded, especially from the East to the North centered on Sogdiana. Shiguo(石国) was not originally a concentration of Sogdian merchants. Sogdian coins from Sogdiana were discovered in Shiguo due to the expansion of Sogdian commerce, which is precisely the result of the radiation under the commercial influence of Sogdiana. As Étienne de la Vaissière said, the fact that the rulers of the Shiguo were Sogdian aristocrats led Han travelers to regard the merchants of Shiguo as Sogdian merchants⁴; the area around the Seven Rivers Basin northeast of Shiguo is also likely

¹ Liu Bo, 1995(3), pp.147-154.

² N. Sims-Williams, 2001, pp.267-280.

³ Étienne de la Vaissière, Wang Rui trans., 2012, p. 6.

⁴ Étienne de la Vaissière, Wang Rui trans., 2012, pp.70-71.

to have been opened by Sogdian nobles¹. Because of the large-scale expansion of Sogdian merchants' commercial territory, commercial influence from Sogdiana extended to the Seven Rivers Basin. This is why Xuan Zang called the area between the city Suyab(碎叶) and the kingdom of Karma as Qiuli² when he passed through Central Asia in the early 7th century. The activity of Sogdian merchants here precisely reflects the outward extension of the commercial network with Sogdiana as its core. At the same time, Xuan Zang still saw a flourishing commercial trade as he traveled west to Samarkand. *Datang Xiyu Zhuan*(大唐西域传) contains: "Sa Mo Jian(飒秣建)³.....exotic treasures, gathered here."⁴ It is enough to see that the Silk Road remained prosperous during the 5th-7th centuries. Samarkand also maintained its prosperity due to commercial activities and became an important area for the convergence and exchange of material culture between East and West.

Wherever the Sogdians went, they expanded trade through settlements. At present, it can be seen from the unearthed Dunhuang and Turpan documents that the Sogdians are not just merchants, but also dwellers of various occupations, due to the consideration of commercial transactions. Sogdians initially lived in one place, often in the form of social organizations; a variety of occupations provided the necessary survival materials and support for Sogdians to carry out long-distance or short-distance trade in this social organization, which Moriyasu Takao named the "Sogdian Network"⁵. Sogdian settlements and commercial activities complement each other. The Sogdians' commercial network formed by many footholds along the eastern section of the Silk Road in China is the premise and basis for their expansion of commercial trade scope. It is also the result of the Sogdians commercial consciousness.

2.1.2 Intermediary Status of the Sogdians in Samarkand

Xin Tangshu recorded that "城左有重楼，北绘中华古帝，东突厥、婆罗门，西波斯、拂菻等诸王，其君旦诣拜则退。"⁶ The murals of the Samarkand Embassy are also painted with elements of India, Persia, the Tang Dynasty, and Turkic people. Only the Silk Road important town like Samarkand, which undertakes the migration of people from all directions, can also gather the cultural elements of many countries in one hall. The Sogdiana, represented by Samarkand, is not only a transit station for trade and transportation but also a center for cultural exchange.

2.1.2.1 Transit Station for Commercial Trade

First of all, Samarkand is the intersection point of the east-west trade routes, and the Sogdians

¹ Étienne de la Vaissière, Wang Rui trans., 2012, p.72.

² *Datang Xiyu Ji*, 2019, p.72.

³ That is Samarkand.

⁴ *Datang Xiyu Ji*, 2019, p87.

⁵ Moriyasu Takao, Shi Xiaojun trans., 2020, p93.

⁶ *Xin Tangshu*, 1975, p.4740. It means that there is a tall building on the left of the Kang state city. The northern part of the building is painted with the Han emperor, the eastern part is painted with the Turkic khan and the Brahman, and the western part is painted with the Persian king. The king of Kang pays homage to these kings every day and leaves.

use this advantage to engage in trans-shipment trade on the Eurasian continent, promoting the circulation and exchange of goods between the East and the West.

According to Muslim scholars, the road Great Khorasan Road(大呼罗珊路), from Central Asia to the Tang Dynasty, starts from Merv(木鹿) to Amur(阿穆勒), crossing Amu Darya to Bukhara(布哈拉),¹ from Cook (库克) to Samarkand, then east to Zaamin (扎敏); from Zaamin there are two roads, one to Shi state (Toshkent 石国) and Turkic Khaganate, the other to Fergana(费尔干纳).² According to *The Historical Atlas of China*(中国历史地图集), from Shi-state, it is easy to arrive at Talas(怛罗斯城). If continue to go the East, the final place is the Suyab(碎叶城), an important military town in the early Tang Dynasty, by passing through the Kulan(俱兰城) and Ashi Bu Lai city(Bishkek 比什凯克西). If starting from Fergana(费尔干纳), the merchant can go east to Shule Kingdom(疏勒), and then to An'xi Protectorate(安西都护府). In the Tang Dynasty, the Kang with Samarkand became a critical point of the Silk Road from Central Asia to the Tang Dynasty and Central Asia to West Asia.

The Biography of Pei Ju(裴矩传) in *Sui Shu* records that the middle one of the three commercial roads from Dunhuang to the West is “from Gaochang (高昌), Karasahr (焉耆), Kuche(龟兹), Shule(疏勒), crossing the Pamir Mountains(葱岭), then passing the Sogdiana, finally to Persia and other areas further west.”³ In the Tang Dynasty, the middle road was very significant for the trade between China and the West. In addition to the harsh environment of the other two roads and the frequent disturbance from Turkic peoples and the Tibetan Empire, the middle road connecting with Sogdiana is also one of the essential reasons.⁴

Among the Sogdian states in Sogdiana, the Kang state centered on Samarkand has the more prominent strength. “Sogdiana was divided into two by He State(何国) and headed by Kang State, and Kang played the leading role.”⁵ Western scholars believe that in medieval Sogdiana, Samarkand (Kang) was the political center, and Bukhara (He) was the religious center.⁶ It can be seen that the east-west trade route through Samarkand can be guaranteed politically. The caravan can continue to move through Central Asia smoothly.

Transoxiana areas such as Samarkand and Bukhara became the center of transactions of settlers and nomadic.⁷ Many Central Asian cities produced rough fabrics and horses needed by nomads.⁸ In the 7th century, Xuan Zang(玄奘), a 7th-century Han Buddhist monk, who went to ancient India and recorded the information: “Different treasure goods gathered more in this place.”⁹ Cai Hongsheng also mentioned that the Sogdians gave tributes to the Tang court,

¹ Ibn Khordadbeh, Song Xian trans., 1991, p. 28.

² Ibn Khordadbeh, Song Xian trans., 1991, p. 215.

³ *Suishu*, 1973, p. 1579.

⁴ Chen Haitao, 2005(3), p. 34

⁵ Cai Hongsheng, 1998, p. 3.

⁶ W. J. Vogelsang, 1992, p.73. cited from Chen Haitao, 2003(3), p. 55.

⁷ Xu Xuya, 2012, p. 60.

⁸ ГаХуров,Б.Г, 1985, p. 164,168.

⁹ *Traveling Notes of the Western Regions in Great Tang Dynasty* 大唐西域记, 1985, p. 87.

however, these goods were not produced in Sogdiana.¹ Sogdians played a role in transporting goods,² even in Ming Dynasty(AD 1368-1644), Sogdiana was so the place like transfer station³. Regarding the number of residents, Samarkand is undoubtedly the first city in the Transoxiana. The significance of Samarkand is that it was the intersection of the roads to India, Persia, and Turkic peoples, so in this situation, Samarkand was rich with a large population in the city.⁴ The activity of Sogdians in Samarkand on the Silk Road is self-evident. They are good at long-distance transshipment trade, which makes them more valued by the rulers of nomadic peoples. In the Middle Ages, the Turkic regime north of the Central Plains Dynasty was the closest link with the Sogdians. Many Sogdians lived in the Turkic Khanate with this specialty, thus forming the Sogdian tribe in the Khanate.

The Sogdians also built a bridge of trade between Central Asia and India. More than 600 Saute inscriptions in Aramaic from the 4th to 7th centuries have been found in Shatial in the Upper Indus River basin. It is generally believed that most Sogdianster travelers who have engraved inscriptions in Chateau and other places through the upper reaches of the Indus River should be business people. Their primary purpose in coming here is to conduct commercial trade. This passage is known as the “Sogdian Road”⁵.

Édouard Chavannes once wrote: “At that time, the trade of selling silk in West Asia were mainly people of Kang Ju(康居).” The Kang Ju mentioned here means Sogdiana.⁶ The Sogdians also have been a momentous part in the trade exchanges between the Turkic Khanate and the western Byzantine Empire from the 5th century. “The Turkic rulers sent Sogdian merchants as their representative to Byzantine Rome; the trade activities across Central Asia also relied on the protection of the Turkic rulers.”⁷ Sogdian merchants reached a mutually beneficial relationship with the Turkic rulers. At this point, the Sogdian merchants reached a mutually beneficial relationship with the Turkic rulers. While the Sogdian region has become the most crucial channel and transit station for land trade between China and the West, the long-distance transportation of Sogdian merchants has connected the towns and transit stations along the Silk Road and maintained a dynamic and active trade network.

Some Western historical materials also revealed the identity of the Sogdians besides merchants. In the middle of the 6th century, Maniyak, who was sent to Constantinople at the behest of the Turkic Khan, was a Sogdian merchant who aimed to trade silk for treasure. The Remnant Volume of Greek History records the story of Maniyak, the leader of Sogdian, who secretly proposed to establish diplomatic relations with the Romans to facilitate the sale of raw silk.⁸ At the same time, the Fragmented Volume of Greek History also recorded that at

¹ Cai Hongsheng, 1988, p.112.

² Chen Haitao, 2005(3).

³ *Xiyu Fanguo Zhi*, 1991, p. 81.

⁴ William Bartold, Zhang Guangda trans., 2007, p.99.

⁵ Qiao Xiaoyan, 2017(5), p.79.

⁶ Édouard Émmanuel Chavannes, Feng Chengjun trans., 1958, pp. 208-209.

⁷ Wang Zhilai, 2007, pp. 203-204.

⁸ Henry Yule, Henri Cordier ed., Zhang Xushan trans., 2008, pp. 169-170.

the end of the fourth year and in the beginning of August of the second year of the fifteenth year of Justinian II's age, he sent an envoy to the Western Turkic Khanate with Maniyak.¹ From this historical fact, we can see the respective purposes of the three forces. The Turkic Khanate and Rome both communicated for political alliance, while the Sogdians made great efforts to promote this matter for their own commercial purposes. Because if the Turkic and Roman Union successfully fought against Sassanian Persia, the Sogdians could move directly to Byzantium through Persia.² For the Sogdians who are eager for benefits, having a safe and convenient business route is the most important thing. For this reason, they also play the role of diplomatic envoys among the major forces to seek help for their business activities.

In fact, before the Turkic Khanate and Byzantine envoys, the famous “Sogdians Caravan Incident” occurred. That is, the Sogdian merchants went to Persia to sell raw silk in its territory, but were refused by the Persians, and the silk was also destroyed. The surface of the negotiation breakdown between the Sogdian Mission and the Persians was the economic reason for the fight for control of the trade route. There was also the consideration of national security in Persia. The identity of the Sogdians is not just the simple traders. Traders in long-distance trade often cover up the possibility of their spies as businessmen or envoys in particular. As Sen Anxiaofu believed, the Sogdians used their advantages in long-distance trade to weave an information network across the Eurasian continent.³ This intelligence network is based on the needs of Sogdian commercial activities. The ability of the Sogdians to do business and the fact that Sogdians were in the position of the Silk Road trade transfer station prompted the Sogdians to shuttle between countries with ease.

2.1.2.2 Melting Pot of Religion

Sogdiana and Sogdian merchants are not the intermediaries of commercial exchanges and the important connectors to promote cultural exchange and integration. Sogdiana is located in the center of the east and the west. In Eurasia's wide range of frequent personnel flow, religious cultures from all directions meet and exchange here. On the Silk Road, the Sogdians also spread their religion to different regions through trade, promoting the integration and development of religious culture.

Central Asia has been continuously under the control and influence of different ethnic groups and cultures since it was recorded, making the culture of this region complex and diverse. Xian(祆教), the most popular belief of the Sogdians in the Middle Ages, has formed Zoroastrianism with the native Persian Zoroastrianism after the unique geographical location of Sogdiana and the integration of multiculturalism Teach different Zoroastrianism.

Before the Achaemenid dynasty(525-404BC) (the first Persian Empire) conquered Sogdiana, the religion of the Sogdians was expressed as a local belief with the nature of Shaman

¹ Henry Yule, Henri Cordier ed., Zhang Xushan trans., 2008, p. 176.

² Zhang Shuang, 2009, p. 83.

³ Moriyasu Takao, Shi Xiaojun trans., 2020, pp.111-112.

witchcraft. “The Andronov culture discovered in Central Asia proves that in the late Bronze Age, Central Asians also practiced cremation.”¹ This differs from the burial custom of Zoroastrianism in Persia, which was widely spread among Central Asians. After the conquest of Sogdiana by Cyrus II (590-529 BC), Zoroastrianism began to spread from the Persian Empire to the Sogdians. It gradually became the bulk of the Sogdians’ faith based on combining with the local faith.

Xian, believed by Sogdians, originated from Zoroastrianism in West Asia, but there are differences. The most obvious difference is that Zoroastrianism is monotheistic worship, but Xian is polytheistic. This is determined by the fact that it is located at the crossroads of the East and the West and often in contacts with multiple religious cultures. The image of gods in the Sogdian Pantheon is result from religious integration. So Xian is the folk religion or folk belief of the Sogdians.² Xian is rooted in the local beliefs and folk beliefs of Sogdians, which makes it easy for Zoroastrianism to assimilate and integrate with folk customs after entering Central China. The trend of Zoroastrianism in the society of the Tang Dynasty also influenced the Han people in the way of customs. It merged into the folk customs of China.³ Therefore, from the perspective of Zoroastrianism in China, as a custom of the Hu people in the Western Regions, Zoroastrianism was sinicized in the late Tang and early Song dynasties and became one of the folk beliefs in China.⁴ This is inseparable from Zoroastrianism’s ability to absorb and integrate other cultures.



Figure 3 The Sogdian Sarcophagus the Musée Guimet

Zoroastrianism of Persia is inevitably influenced by various civilizations and religions, from its landing in Central Asia to the formation of Xian in Central Asia. The scholars analyzed the

¹ Frumkin G., 1982, pp.41-43, cite in Lin Wushu, 1990(01), p. 62.

² Zhang Xiaogui, 2010, p. 10.

³ Lin Wushu, 2003, p. 373. Lin Wushu, 2005, pp. 360-361.

⁴ Lin Wushu, 1999, pp. 202-222. Lin Wushu, 2005, pp. 316-345.

combination of the Nana goddess and Sogdian Xian, which originated in Mesopotamia.¹ In addition, the Xian absorption of Greek and Indian culture is reflected in the relevant animals, winged feathers and other elements on the sarcophagus bed of the Sogdians in the Musée Guimet in Paris(Figure.² All these prove that Zoroastrianism in Sogdian must exist with other religious beliefs and civilizations.³ This also shows that although Zoroastrianism and Zoroastrianism in Persia have a doctrinal connection, they are not the same. Zoroastrianism is more abundant than Xian in terms of religious rituals and god portraits. Zoroastrianism in Central Asia is a variant of Zoroastrianism⁴.

Although Zoroastrianism originated from Zoroastrianism in West Asia, it is a regional religious culture⁵. Zoroastrianism in Central Asia absorbed many religions when it created gods, the most important of which was Hinduism. The reason for the coincidence of Hinduism and Zoroastrianism may be the result of the trade between Central Asia, and India carried out by Sogdian caravans.

In *The Suvarnaprabhasa Sutra* 《金光明经》, an unearthed Buddhist document in Gaochang⁶, there is a corresponding table between Sogdian and Indian gods⁷. Henning further explained its specific corresponding gods, namely the Brahma-Zurvan, Indra-Adhag, Mahasvara (“Mahasvara” or “Siva”)-Vesparker.⁸ In this correspondence relationship, the former is the Hindu gods, and the latter is the Sogdian gods. The Mahasvara here was originally Shiva, the Hindu god of creation and destruction of the universe, and was later absorbed by Buddhism and became one of the Buddhist dharmapalas.⁹ In the annotation of Sabao(萨宝) in *Tongdian* (通典), it is said that “Xian is the god of Western Region, and the Buddhist scripture is called Mahesvara.”¹⁰ It can be seen that the Tang people also confuse Mahesvara with the god of in Xian, and the Mahesvara in Buddhism is also derived from Hinduism, so it can be seen that Hinduism greatly influences Zoroastrianism by the shaping of gods.

In the 8th century A.D., Zoroastrian mural was found at the site XXII of Panjikent in the ancient city of Sogdiana, there is a Sogdian god with three heads and three forks.(Figure 3) This god is only considered the wind god in Xian. Its artistic prototype is from the Hindu three-headed Shiva.¹¹ Most of Sogdiana’s gods were found in secular palaces or house murals in Central Asia, which means that Zoroastrianism has a long history of borrowing Hindu gods, so that these borrowed god portraits are integrated into the lives of local people.

¹ Azarpay G., 1976, 96(4), pp. 536-542. Ghose M., 2006, Vol., pp.97-112. Azarpay G., 1969, 31(2-3), pp.185-203. Yang Juping, 2010(05), pp. 103-115.

² Catherine Delacour, Pénélope Riboud, Shi Chunlin trans., 2006, p. 111. Pénélope Ribou, Bi Bo&Zheng Wenbin tran., 2005, pp. 416-429.

³ Pénélope Ribou, Bi Bo&Zheng Wenbin tran., 2005, pp. 416-429.

⁴ Zhang Xiaogui, 2010.

⁵ Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, Zhao Chongmin trans., 1994, pp. 140-143.

⁶ Gaochang, a district of Turpan, Xinjiang, China.

⁷ Matteo Compareti, Mao Ming trans., 2016, pp. 128-129.

⁸ W.B. Henning, 1965, Vol.28, No.2, p.253.

⁹ Zhang Yuanlin, 2013(06), p. 1.

¹⁰ *Tongdian* 通典, 1988, p. 2103.

¹¹ Boris I Marshak et al, 1981, p. 29, fig.5., cite in Jiang Boqin, 1996,p. 187.



Figure 4 Sogdian God--Veshparkar¹



Figure 5 The Eighth Slate of the KoorosFamily in the Musée Guimet²

The mysterious relief on the sarcophagus of the Kooros family who entered China in the North Dynasty (AD 550-579) in the Musée Guimet in Paris. The relief depicts an archer riding on the back of a bull, rising from the river, and shooting arrows at a large bird in the sky. Penelope Riboud pointed out the elements of the Indian Vishnu faith on the screen of the Kooros sarcophagus in Musée Guimet(Figure 5).³ In the mural on the east wall of the Samarkand Ambassador Hall site, There is also a scene similar to “archer riding on a bull and shooting arrows at a big bird”(Figure 6). These elements are also believed to originate from Indian mythology⁴.



Figure 6 The East Wall in Ambassador Hall, Reconstructed by Grenet.⁵

¹ Guo Ping, 2015, p.82.

² Zhang Qingjie, 2006, p. 116.

³ Matteo Compareti, Mao Ming trans., 2016, pp.88-89.

⁴ Frenent, Mao Ming trans., 2005, pp. 307-308. Wang Jing, Shen Ruiwen, 2018(03), pp.67-68.

⁵ Wang Jing, Shen Ruiwen, 2018(03), pp.61.

Hindu deities helped the Sogdians create their religious images. Zoroastrianism in West Asia does not worship idolatry, especially in the period of the Persian Empire. The iconography destruction movement once again emphasized the tradition that Zoroastrianism does not worship idolatry, so its image of gods is scarce. There are many gods for Zoroastrianism, which inherited more Zoroastrianism from the Achaemenid period. However, the original Zoroastrianism cannot provide many god portraits. Therefore, Zoroastrianism borrowed the face of Hindu gods, and artists created the Zoroastrianism Pantheon in Central Asia.

Some scholars further pointed out that the popular Zoroastrian customs in Central Asia and other regions reflected more the provisions and requirements of the original Zoroastrianism, that is, the religious rituals of the Achaemenid dynasty.¹ When talking about the form of burial in Sogdian, the *Xifan Ji* (西蕃记) said that when the Kang people held the funeral ceremony, they would put the body in a particular hospital for dogs and let the dogs eat it. After only bones were left, they would be buried, and there was no coffin at the time of burial. Lin Wushu believes that although the method mentioned here belongs to the category of Zoroastrian celestial burial, it is more similar to that of priests in the Achaemenid period, and Central Asia, after accepting the celestial burial method in the Achaemenid period, has not experienced a strong Hellenization like the native Persians, so it retains more original elements.²

Since the fifth century, the funeral custom in Sogdiana has been to remove the flesh of the dead from the bones and bury the bones in the urn. This custom can also be seen in the Khwarazm.³ The Sogdians' ossuary should generally be square to imitate the shape of the house. However, it also has an oval shape, which is the result of the contact with the nomadic people and the absorption of the nomadic concept of the sky curtain⁴. (Figure 7) The Sogdian region in Central Asia has been controlled by the Sogdian and Turkic regimes since the fifth century. The nomadic concept of respecting the sky influenced the Sogdians and directly affected the shape of the Nabu urn. As Zoroastrians avoid burying bodies underground and being polluted by soil, they hold the bodies in a bone urn. Such an important burial method with religious belief features absorbed the Sogdians' concept of nomadic people, which is enough to show the absorption of diverse cultures.

In addition to religious exchanges, from some palaces in Sogdiana, we can also see the intersection of this area, especially Samarkand and its surrounding areas at the crossroads. Some of the gods in Samarkand and Penjikent's murals have Indian characteristics and Chinese portraits. At the same time, it shows patterns from Byzantine, Sassanid Empire, Turkic peoples, and Medieval China from some metal vessels. These artistic influences are the embodiment of Samarkand's intermediary position. For example, according to the clothes

¹ Lin Wushu, 1994, p. 234.

² Lin Wushu, 1995, p. 92.

³ *History of Civilization in Central Asia*, Vol.3, 2003, pp. 208-211.

⁴ Gong Fangzhen, Yan Kejia, 1998, p. 157.

shown in Sogdiana's paintings, the fifth century was similar to the Kusan Empire(贵霜帝国), the sixth century had the elements from Hephthalite, and the seventh and eighth centuries had Turkic elements.¹ However, they are good at combining foreign elements to develop their style.



Figure 7 Ossuary in Afrasib²

A palace site in the royal city of Panjikent is painted with a couple of gods of war and several celestial maidens carrying wine rhyton. Marshak believes that these celestial maidens belong to the fairyland, and this scene is partly from the painter's imagination. Partly from Indian mythological images.³(Figure 8) In this hall, there are also camels painted with the war god and his wife. According to research, there is no god incarnated by camels in Zoroastrianism in Persia, and the appearance of camel elements in Zoroastrian art in Sogdian region is related to the commercial trade tradition of Sogdians. Because camels are essential and vital means of transportation in long-distance trade, so they are regarded as a protective god.

In the paintings of Sogdian religious art in Central Asia, secular gods often appear only on the murals of houses. This is because the Sogdian States need more highly developed national organizations, and the Sogdians who are good at business often carry out long-distance trade. Therefore, such animals related to their commercial life will also develop into protective gods to protect individual families and communities.

In general, the acceptance of multiple religions is related to the commercial consciousness of the Sogdians. As merchants who often travel along the Silk Road, Sogdians have the opportunity to contact multiple religions and cultures, making them have an inclusive attitude towards different religions. At the same time, it should also be noted that as businessmen who often walk on the Silk Road, the Sogdians often face bandits and natural disasters. In the face of these disasters, seeking spiritual support from religion is the most essential solution. It is also such a character that the Sogdians in Central Asia will have the choice to absorb and integrate them into the Zoroastrian faith for their use in the face of multiple religions, which has nothing to do with cultivating of their commercial national character.

¹ *History of Civilization in Central Asia*, Vol.3, 2003, pp. 208-211.

² Guo Ping, 2015, p. 49.

³ Boris Marshak, Mao Ming trans., 2016(04), p. 115.



Figure 8 Mural on the Southern Wall in Panjikent. Reconstruction.

2.2 Weak Consciousness of Sogdians in Samarkand

Marshak once said that Samarkand (Kang State) was one of the most advanced states in Sogdiana from the 3rd to the 8th centuries and was the leader of the whole Transoxiana.¹ However, Kang State, the most powerful state, has never been permanently subordinate to any neighboring country, although it has independence in politics and diplomacy. However, this kind of independence is limited, and the limited independence stems from the fact that powerful forces have surrounded the Sogdian States.

Around 540 BC, Cyrus of the Achaemenid Dynasty conquered Sogdiana, and the Sogdians were under the control of the Achaemenid Dynasty. At this time, Sogdiana absorbed the Zoroastrianism of Persia and began to form the Xian of Sogdians. After the Alexander Conquest and the Greek-Bactrian period, the Parthian Empire controlled the whole area of Sogdiana. From 140 BC to 130 BC, under the repeated attacks of the Saka and the historic people in Central Asia(大月氏), the Sogdian region frequently changed suzerain. Since then, the political history of Sogdians has disappeared from the historical records for several centuries.

¹ Boris Marshak etc., Ma Xiaohe trans., 2003, p. 195.

According to the Han historical records, in the middle of the 4th century AD, the Hephthalites invaded Central Asia, and occupied Sogdiana,¹ and even defeated the Sassanian Persian Empire(AD 224-651). Meanwhile, the Hephthalites also gained some control over the economy. At this time, the Sassanian dynasty needed to offer to the Hephthalites, which prompted many silver coins of the Sassanian dynasty to flow into Sogdians and be used for commercial circulation².

After Hephthalites withdrew from Central Asia under the joint attack of Sassanian Persia and Western Turkic Khanate, Sogdiana was under the jurisdiction of the Western Turkic Khanate. When the Tang Dynasty conquered the Western Turkic Khanate, these Sogdians who were originally under the rule of the Western Turkic Khanate were included in the territory of the Tang Dynasty. Although the period that the Sogdian States belonged to the territory of the Tang Dynasty was very short, the Tang Dynasty was still the nominal suzerain of these Sogdians before the Muslims entirely occupied Central Asia.

It can be seen that before the invasion by Muslims, Sogdiana was not included in any country. However, it was never separated from the control and influence of the neighboring countries. Although the Sogdian States have been independent, they are always represented as the provinces or affiliated states of the surrounding powers. They must pay taxes or pay tribute economically in exchange for their limited independence.

The coins used by the Sogdians also vary according to different social environments. For example, it was deeply influenced by the Greek coins during the Alexander Conquest. After that, it was mainly influenced by the coins of Sassanian Persia when under the control of Hephthalites. Marshak believed that when Sassanian coins were mainly used in Sogdiana, the local coin system had even ceased to be used.³ From the middle of the 7th century, the Sogdian rulers began to imitate the coin, Kaiyuan Tongbao(开元通宝), of the Tang Dynasty.⁴ The basic form of the coin is round with square hole. The surface is engraved with the name and emblem of each king in Sogdiana. The researchers compared these names with those in the Chinese historical sources and sketched out the ruler lineage of Kang State from the middle of the 7th century to the middle of the 8th century.⁵ At the turn of the 7th and 8th centuries, a large number of round square hole coins made in imitation of the Tang Dynasty were also found in a handicraft workshop site in Panjikent.⁶ However, these coins are not as large as Sassanian silver coins and Roman gold coins, which were unearthed along the Silk Road. Therefore, it can be considered that the imitation of Kaiyuan Tongbao(开元通宝) in Central Asia from the 7th to 8th centuries was not used for commercial trade, but more reflected the political and diplomatic intentions of the rulers. The use of Kaiyuan Tongbao(开

¹ *Wei Shu* 魏书, 1974, p. 2278.

² Étienne de la Vaissière, Wang Rui trans., 2012, pp. 69-70.

³ Boris I. Marshak, 2003, pp.15-16.

⁴ Qi Xiaoyan, 2018(03), p.71.

⁵ Smirnova O. I. *Svodnyi Katalog Sogdiiskikh Mon et*,1981, cited in Qi Xiaoyan, 2018(03), p.73.

⁶ Lu Yuan, 1992(04), p. 81.

元通宝) by the Sogdians reflects the ownership of Central Asia by the Tang Dynasty as the suzerain.

Sogdian merchants carry out long-distance trade in the form of caravans and inevitably encounter dangers during the journey. In this case, they need strong regime protection. The Sogdian merchants suggested that the Turkic Khan establish diplomatic relations with the Byzantine Empire over Sassanne Persia to protect their commercial routes to the West, which reflects that their commercial activities primarily rely on the support and protection of solid forces.

This kind of dependence is even more so politically. After the middle of the 7th century, the attachment of the Sogdian States to the Tang Dynasty was evident, which can also be seen from the tribute to Tang Dynasty from Sogdiana. Xu Xuya divides the tribute paid by the Sogdian to the Tang Dynasty into three stages: the first stage was the period from Wude era(武德) to Yonghui era(永徽) (AD 618-655), the second stage was the period from Xianqing era(显庆) to Xiantian era(先天) (AD 656-712), and the third stage was the period from Kaiyuan era(开元) to Dali era(大历) (AD 713-772). He further analyzed that the tribute paid mainly concentrated in the first and the third stages. Among the 16 times of conferring titles of nobility on Sogdian King by Tang court, in addition to the two times by Emperor Zetian(武则天), the rest are also concentrated in the 19th year of Kaiyuan era(开元)(AD 731) to the 12th year of Tianbao era(天宝)(AD 753).¹ Obviously, the Sogdian paid tribute to the Tang Dynasty for a certain purpose, relying on the prestige and power of the Tang to resist Western Turkic Khanate and the attack from Muslims. Although the Tang Dynasty also established a border defense system through the enfeoffment of neighboring small countries, it also reflected the Sogdians' choice to bow down and actively defend their rights in the face of crisis.

This attachment to the Tang Dynasty embodies a win-win situation between Sogdian nobles and the Tang Dynasty. From years 550 and 560, Sassanid Persians allied with Turkic peoples, the emerging nomadic regime in Central Asia at that time, attacked the Hephthalites. The states in Sogdiana subject to the rule of Hephthalites were then transferred to the Turkic Khanate. In the hope of getting rid of the control of the West Turkic Khanate, the Sogdian states sought help from the Tang Dynasty. So in the year 627, the King of Sogdian Kang State sent envoys to pay tribute to the Tang Dynasty. These tributes, Étienne de la Vaissière believed that although these tributes were a form of goods, the number of them would not be too large, and the Sogdians maintained diplomatic ties with the royal family of the Tang Dynasty through these tributes to facilitate trade.²

During the Zhenguan(贞观) era of Emperor Taizong(太宗), after conquering the Western Turkic peoples, the Kang State sought refuge from the Tang Dynasty. In the second year(657)

¹ Xu Xuya, 2012(01), pp.2-3.

² Étienne de la Vaissière, Wang Rui trans., 2012, pp. 86-87.

of the Xianqing(显庆) era during Emperor Gaozong's reign, general Su Dingfang(苏定方) and others of the Tang Dynasty defeated and captured rebel Ashina Helu(阿史那贺鲁), and all the Western Turkic tribes returned to the Tang Dynasty, including the Sogdian States affiliated initially to the Western Turkic Khanate. The Tang Dynasty immediately established the Kangju Area Command(康居都督府) in Samarkand and took its king Varkhuman as the governor.¹ At the same time, the Tang Dynasty also set up administrative agencies in other parts of Central Asia, so that jurisdiction original under the Western Turkic peoples in Central Asia was included in the territory of the Tang Dynasty. This kind of management organization set up by the Tang Dynasty in Samarkand and other Central Asian regions is a kind of Jimi(羁縻) system², and it is precisely because of its Jimi nature that the Sogdian States are willing to recognize the status of the Tang Dynasty's suzerain. This point should begin with the nature of the Jimi Prefectures (羁縻府州) set up in the border areas in the Tang Dynasty.

The Tang Dynasty set up the Kangju Area Command and managed Kang State with the Jimi system. Jimi Prefecture(羁縻府州) is an autonomous administrative agency set up in the frontier areas in the Tang Dynasty. Their native leader continues to serve as the governor. It is a loose policy of appeasement, and also a defensive line established by the Tang Dynasty ruler's in the empire's periphery. The border boundary of the Tang Dynasty often shows the characteristics of instability and changeability³, and the presentation of this characteristic depends on the relationship between the Tang Dynasty and the surrounding regimes at that time, as well as the relationship between these regimes and their surrounding regimes. Jimi Prefecture was set up by the rulers in the early Tang Dynasty in line with the concept of distinguishing between Han people and barbarians. As a buffer zone between the Tang Dynasty and the barbarians outside China, Jimi Prefecture often lacked clear or fixed boundaries because of its temporary construction.⁴ These buffer zones played a protective role when the Central Plains Dynasty was strong.

For the rulers of the Tang Dynasty, the states in Sogdiana, such as the Kang State can pay tribute to the dynasty regularly and respect the Tang Dynasty as the suzerain to ensure the political influence of the Tang Dynasty in Central Asia. As the suzerain, although it has an obligation to send troops to protect the vassal states, whether it can provide real help depends on the current strength of the suzerain. For example, when the Muslims invaded Central Asia, the Tang Dynasty did not play a protective role, so the States of Sogdiana fell into the influence of the Muslims in succession⁵. Compared with the temporary establishment of Jimi Prefectures and other administrative agencies in Central Asia, the Sogdian States continued to treat Tang Dynasty as the suzerain in the status of vassal states. They continued to pay tribute for a longer time. This tribute was ceremonial to the Tang Dynasty, and its purpose was to maintain the relationship between each other to maintain the stability of their respective

¹ *Xin Tangshu* 新唐书, 1975, p. 6244.

² Jimi, subordinated of prefectures and counties in the Tang.

³ Li Hongbin, 2011(02), p. 136.

⁴ Mark Edward Lewis, Zhang Xiaodong, etc. trans., 2016, p.25.

⁵ Bai Shouyi, 1936, p. 67.

regimes.

The Jimi(羈縻) policy implemented by the Tang Dynasty in the border areas was mutually benefited to the Tang Dynasty and the frontier regimes. The Tang Dynasty effectively maintained contact with the frontier regimes while maintaining a safe political distance from these regimes through the Jimi policy. The frontier regime can also access the more advanced culture of the Tang Dynasty and does not need to change its traditional customs too much. The Jimi policy was the reason that helped the Tang Dynasty succeed in diplomacy and was accepted by the neighboring regimes with its open and enlightened attitude.¹ For the Sogdian nobles, it is also one of the benefits of the Jimi policy to maintain their independence in decision-making and culture under the protection of the reputation of the Tang Dynasty.

For the Tang Dynasty, the Sogdian States were located outside the territory of China and closely connected with the Tang regime. Such geographical conditions could have posed a better threat to the Tang Dynasty. The Kangju Area Command did not exist for a long time. Later in the year 670, the Kangju Area Command was restored to the Kang State. The withdrawal of the Kangju Area Command shows that the Tang court did not have too much attachment to the land of Sogdiana, nor did it interfere too much in its internal affairs and diplomacy. That is to say, although the Sogdian States take the Tang Dynasty as the suzerain, their internal affairs and diplomacy are still determined by themselves, which is very important for the Sogdians who take commerce as their lifeline. This kind of Jimi policy is not only the protection of the Tang Dynasty as the suzerain but also the maintenance of the commercial freedom of their nation.

However, in the face of the invasion of Muslims, the Sogdian States showed different attitudes from those of the Tang. From the middle of the 7th century, the invasion of the Muslims into Central Asia changed the policy of the Tang Dynasty towards Central Asia. In the 8th century, the fact that Muslims ruled Central Asia became an obstacle for Sogdian merchants to enter though they did through the Silk Road eastward to continue their commercial trade.

2.3 Anxiety about National Crisis facing the Muslims Attack

From the middle of the 7th century, the Muslims began to invade Sogdian States in Central Asia, and to incorporate Sogdiana into the territory completely, the Sogdians experienced a long struggle. The different attitudes of the Sogdians towards the Muslims and the Tang Dynasty are related to the different policies of these two regimes and also reflect the fact that the Sogdians first considered commercial trade when facing the attack of powerful enemies.

The attack of Muslims on Central Asia was divided into three stages. The first stage (AD

¹ Wang Zhenping, Jia Yonghui trans., 2020, p.267.

673-705) was dominated by economic aggression¹. According to the situation of Kang State and number of tributes to Tang court by Sogdian States recorded in the historical sources, apart from the regular tribute to the Tang Dynasty, the Kang State expressed political and military appeals to the Tang Dynasty three times, which were concentrated in the Kaiyuan(开元) era of Emperor Xuanzong(玄宗), namely the third year (715), the seventh year (719), and the nineteenth year (731).

In the third year of the Kaiyuan(开元) era (715), the background of the request for surrender was the alliance between The Tibetan Empire and Muslims to establish A Liaoda(阿了达) as the new king of Ferghana(拔汗那). The old king was defeated and went to the Anxi Protectorate(安西都护府)² of the Tang Dynasty for asylum. After Guo Xiaosong(郭孝嵩) defeats A Liaoda(阿了达), States in the Western Regions, including the Kang State, appealed to the Tang Dynasty to surrender to show their loyalty.³ In March of the seventh year of the Kaiyuan (开元) era (719), the appeal was to ask Tang to help Kang State resist the Muslims.

The invasion of the Muslims into Sogdiana began in the second half of the 7th century, but Sogdian States just asked the Tang Dynasty to send troops to help in the early 8th century. The reason is that the Sogdian States at that time competed with each other and hoped to become the natural ruler of Sogdiana through negotiation with the Muslims.⁴ For example, King Devashtich of Sogdian Mi State(米国) and King Ghurak of Cao State(曹国) once competed for the throne of Kang State, the leader of the Transoxiana alliance. For this reason, Devashtich once turned to Muslims, which allowed Muslims to attack Sogdiana. The king of Cao State, Ghurak, was granted the title of King Sogdian after he changed to the Muslims in the second year of Jingyun(景云) era(722).⁵ The chaos of the internal regime among the Sogdian States is caused by the historical reason that Sogdiana has not formed a unified and powerful regime for a long time. Such a split situation also made the Sogdian States need to rely on more powerful forces to improve their voice on the Silk Road. While Muslims invaded Central Asia, it was necessary to seek spokespeople in Central Asia to facilitate tax collection due to the long-distance war. The split Sogdiana just provided Muslims with the opportunity to break through each other, which made the States of Sogdian not choose to ask for help from the Tang Dynasty in the face of the first stage of the attack of Muslims but to try to gain the jurisdiction of Sogdiana through Muslims, and then gain the leading position in commercial trade.

According to the records of historical sources in Tang, the Muslims crossed the Amu Darya River to attack the Sogdian Mi State⁶(米国) in the fifth year of Yonghui era (永徽) during Emperor Gaozong (654) after conquering Khurashan, “五年五月，大食引兵击波斯及米国，皆破之。波斯五伊嗣侯为大食兵所杀，伊嗣侯之子卑路斯投吐火罗遣使来告难，上以路

¹ Lan Qi, 1995(04), p.35.

² Anxi Protectorate, the jurisdiction of a protector-general.

³ *Zi Zhi Tong Jian 资治通鉴*, 2011, p. 6713.

⁴ Lan Qi, 1995(04), p.35.

⁵ Xue Zongzheng, 1993(06), p.20.

⁶ In Han historical sources, the core land of Sogdian Mi state was around Panjikent.

远不能救之，寻而大食兵退，吐火罗遣兵援立之而还(In May of the fifth year, the Muslims attacked and conquered the Mi State. The Persian king was killed, and his son sent an envoy to the Tang Dynasty to solve the problem. The Emperor of the Tang Dynasty refused because the journey was too far to be saved. Soon thereafter, Muslims sought to withdraw.)”¹ The *Tang Huiyao* (《唐会要》) recorded that the Muslims destroyed the Sogdian Mi State (米国). At same time, Kang State still existed and had to pay taxes to the Muslims. In fact, in the following decades, Kang State continued to file documents to the Tang Dynasty requesting assistance in the fight against Muslims.

One of the most important reasons why the Sogdian States was subject to the Tang Dynasty but resistant to the control from Muslims was the issue of taxation. “In 696, the Muslims sent troops to attack the Sogdiana, and the Sogdians of Mulu (木鹿) even lent money to the Muslim Governor’s Office to help them send troops.”² The behavior of Sogdians in Mulu was to protect the peace of their native land while reducing the taxes imposed by Muslims on the states. According to the content in *Tang Huiyao* (《唐会要》), “During the Yonghui era (永徽), the State (Kang) frequently sent envoys to report the destruction of Muslims and levy taxes.”³ It can be seen that the ruler of Sogdian was very concerned about the taxation of Muslims. In contrast, the Jimi policy by the Tang Dynasty in Central Asia did not interfere too much with their domestic taxes. For normal prefectures in the central plains of the Tang Dynasty, officials were appointed by the central government and were utterly subordinate to the central government. Meanwhile the registered residence and tax revenue must be managed by the Ministry of Household(户部). However, the Tang Dynasty retained the original governance model in Central Asia, and only needed to recognize the status of the suzerain in diplomacy. Sogdian States could still maintain a great degree of freedom, including autonomy in tax. In this respect, the rulers of the Tang Dynasty did something completely different from Muslims.

In 705, after Qutaybah became governor of Khurashan, the second stage of Muslim conquest began. When Qutaybah used his army against Bukhara⁴, the King of Kang State, Melik, reached an agreement with the Muslims. At that time, King Kham of Bukhara reached an agreement with the Muslims on the amount of tax payment. Later, because the Samarkand nobles were dissatisfied with Melik, they established Ghurak(乌勒加) as King of Kang. “After the conquest of Khwarezmia(花刺子模) in 710, Qutaybah marched again to Samarkand. Then came the war between Qutaybah and Ghurak in 712. Qutaybah defeated Ghurak and the troops who assisted him in Turkic peoples, Tashkent, and Ferghana, forced Ghurak to surrender, and signed a peace treaty.”⁵ In 712, the city Samarkand fell. *Ce Fu Yuan Gui* 册府元龟 records the request document written by King Ghurak to Emperor

¹ *Ce Fu Yuan Gui* 册府元龟, 1960, p. 11686. It means that In fifth year of Yonghui era, Muslims attack Persia and the Sogdian Mi state, both of which were destroyed. Persia King was killed by the Muslims army. The son of King, Bei Lu Si(卑路斯) sent an envoy to Tu Huo Luo(吐火罗) to save him.

² Christopher I. Beckwith, *Fu Ma* trans., 2020, p. 132.

³ *Tang Huiyao* 唐会要, 1955, p.1774.

⁴ Bukhara was called Sogdian He state in Han historical sources.

⁵ Ma Xiaohu, 1986(01), pp.72-74.

Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty in the seventh year(719) of the Kaiyuan(开元) era. The document recounts the fierce battle between Qutaybah and Ghurak from October 711 to October 712¹. That is:

(二月?) 其月庚午康国王乌勒伽遣使上。表曰：臣乌勒伽言臣是从天主普天皇帝下百万里马蹄下草土类奴，臣种族及诸胡国，旧来赤心向大国，不曾反叛，亦不侵损大国，为大国行裨益土。从三十五年来，每共大食贼斗战，每年大发兵马，不蒙天恩送兵救助。经今六年，被大食元率将异密屈底波领众军兵来此，共臣等斗战。臣等大破贼徒，臣等兵士亦大死损，为大食兵马极多，臣等力不敌也。臣入城自固，乃被大食围城，以三百抛车傍城，三穿大坑，欲破臣等城国。伏乞天恩知委送多少汉兵来此，救助臣苦难。其大食只合一百年强盛，今年合满。如有汉兵来此，臣等必是破得大食。今谨献好马一、波斯骆驼一、驃二，如天恩慈泽，将赐臣物，谓付臣下使人将来，冀无侵夺。²

(This passage is about the King of Kang State expressing his loyalty to the Emperor of the Tang Dynasty, hoping that the Tang Dynasty could send troops to help him fight back the attack of the Muslims. The article also predicted that the Muslim regime could only exist for one hundred years to please the Tang Dynasty Emperor.)

The same year, the King of An State(安国) also made a statement to the Tang Dynasty³. He hoped to get help and permission from the Tang Dynasty to form a Sogdian cavalry to fight the Muslims' attack. At the beginning of the 8th century, the Sogdian States "must obtain the consent from Han emperor whether they are allied with Turkic peoples or borrow soldiers"⁴. In order to obtain the permission of the Tang ruler, the King of Kang State used some praise and exaggeration in the request document, as well as the so-called prophecy. Gibb, a British scholar, believes that the fierce war situation and the statement that the Muslims can only be vital for a hundred years mentioned in this document are exaggerated out of the Sogdian King's interests.⁵ To be sure, such an exaggerated attitude is necessary for the Sogdian States, which are often under the threat of powerful forces around them, and any regime's intention of self-protection in the face of threats can be understood.

What is worth pondering here is that, as the Sogdians who have always been at the crossroads of Eurasia in history, the fact that many powerful regimes surround them does not only exist in a short period of time. Before the invasion of the Muslims, it seemed that all the Sogdian States could maintain certain independence in the turbulent forces, and Xian, the religion they had always believed in, had not been swallowed up by other foreign religions. The invasion of Muslims brought out the tenacious resistance by Sogdians, and Islam began to penetrate into the lives of the Sogdians gradually. Historical facts have proved that it is tough for any

¹ Cai Hongsheng, 2007, p.11.

² Ce Fu Yuan Gui 册府元龟, 1960, pp.11722-11723.

³ Ce Fu Yuan Gui 册府元龟, 1960, p.11722.

⁴ Cai Hongsheng, 1998, p.13.

⁵ Cite Ma Xiaohe, 1986(01), p.74.

nation to change its beliefs, especially for Central Asia, which has a long history and multiple religious beliefs. In contrast, the control of the Turkic Khanate and the Tang Dynasty over the Sogdian region is more inclined to formal possession; that is, the Sogdian States can only respect it as the suzerain, and the suzerain has no excessive interference with the original cultural life habits of the Sogdians.¹ For the Sogdians in Central Asia, they are more accustomed to keeping close contact with the Tang Dynasty in the East, accepting the title of the Tang Dynasty, and maintaining tributary and trade relations². Even after the death of Qutaybah, the governor of Khurasan, the Sogdians still wanted to take back the occupied land by the power of the Tang and Turkic forces. They asked Emperor Xuanzong of Tang to send troops for rescue. From the perspective of Muslims, “there was always a problem of treating pagans in their foreign conquest and domination of their territories. Because the Muslim rulers believed that the source of their power was Islam, and the conquered people would not oppose Muslim rule if they believed in Islam.”³ The change of religious belief is not easy for Sogdians. The Tang Dynasty not only gave them the freedom of trade but also maintained an open and inclusive attitude in religion without too much interference. However, in the face of the invasion of the Muslims turned Central Asia into its territory and spread the solid religion to the local people, the resistance of Sogdiana also reflected their desire to maintain independence to a certain extent.

Another critical factor is the trade exchanges between the Sogdians and eastern countries that have been formed for a long time. The business and trade relations between the Sogdians and the East are much closer than those with the West. In order to ensure the continuous stability of the trade to the East, they pay more attention to establishing and maintaining the relations with the Turkic peoples and the Han rather than flattering the Muslims. ⁴

The gradual occupation of Central Asia by the Muslims was the gradual inward contraction of the western frontier of the Tang Dynasty. In order to maintain Tang’s rule in the Western Regions, Tang regarded the Sogdiana as an external barrier. The geopolitical characteristics of the Tang Dynasty are that the early stage is superior to the late stage, and the watershed was 756 years.⁵ In the early period of the Tang Dynasty, Turkic peoples were the focus of the geopolitics of the Tang Dynasty. From Emperor Taizong to Gaozong, the Tang court successively conquered the Eastern Turkic people and the Western Turkic people. During this period, they also set up prefectures in the Western Regions, as well as the Anxi Protectorate(安西都护府), which made the western and northwestern frontier of the Tang Dynasty have defensive barriers. Since the end of the 7th century, the successive restoration of the post-Turkic Khanate and the riots of The Tibetan Emire in the Hexi Corridor have consumed the strength of the Tang dynasty. In 751, Gao Xianzhi(高仙芝) was defeated by the army of Muslims in Talas. Since then, Tang’s initiative in foreign relations has disappeared, ⁶

¹ Wang Zhilai, 2010, p.253.

² Wang Zhilai, 2010, p.254.

³ Wang Zhilai, 2010, p.259.

⁴ H. A. R. Gibb, 1923, p11.

⁵ Ye Zicheng, 1998, p. 208.

⁶ Ye Zicheng, 1998, p. 209.

and there are signs of decline at hinterland and abroad. In this context, the influence of Tang in Central Asia has shrunk, which led to the situation that the Tang Dynasty did not send troops actively in the face of seeking help from Sogdian States.

Chen Yinke has made a brilliant conclusion: “A foreign nation is not only in contact with China ruled by the Tang Dynasty but also related to other foreign nations. The rise or strength of other foreign nations can lead to the death or decline of the foreign nation. Although it is not easy to analyze the cause and effect of each other in detail, the Tang Dynasty was also affected by its rise and fall”¹. The same is true of the relationship between the Tang Dynasty, the Turkic Khanate, and the Sogdian States. “The biggest reason why the Tang Dynasty was able to have such an international structure was the collapse of the Eastern Turkic Khanate and the disintegration of the Western Turkic Khanate, which led to the inclusion of many Sogdians in the Tang Dynasty, besides nomads.”² With the collapse of the western Turkic Khanate, the policy of incorporating Turkic peoples into the Tang Dynasty also promoted the military victory of the Tang Dynasty against other foreigners. The Sogdian States in Central Asia, which were initially under the jurisdiction of the Western Turkic Khanate, turned to respect Tang as the suzerain. Even though the jurisdiction of the Jimi Prefecture set up by the Tang Dynasty in Central Asia could not be compared with prefectures in the Central Plains, this was at least the reflection of the strong national solid and the far-flung power of the early Tang Dynasty.

Although the eastward movement of Muslims did not directly impact the Tang Dynasty’s social process, the strategic contraction of the Tang Dynasty in Central Asia did provide an opportunity for Muslims to conquer Central Asia quickly. As the middle zone of east-west traffic, the rise and fall of the Sogdiana is also a reflection of the strength of the surrounding regime and the rise and fall of the regime.

2.4 Self-Centered of Sogdians in Samarkand

Afrasiab, the oldest part of Samarkand in Uzbekistan, a famous trade center connecting the East and the West, is believed to have been built in the 6th to 5th centuries BC and was severely damaged by Alexander The Great in 329 BC. It was also ravaged after the fall of Kushan Empire(30-375). Later, this area was restored to a considerable level based on the conquest of Hephthalite and the Turkic peoples successively.³ After conquering the Western Turkic Khanate in the middle of the 7th century, the Tang Dynasty included Central Asia into. Although it briefly set up the Kangju Area Command(康居都督府) to control, it was still under the jurisdiction of the Turkic peoples nobles who originally controlled Central Asia. At the same time, Muslims began their first stage of invasion of Central Asia. Surrounded by this powerful power, the Sogdian States still maintain their limited independence and self-centered consciousness. This can be seen from the murals in the ruins of the ancient city of Afrasiab in

¹ Chen Yinke, 1982, p.128.

² Kiyohiro Iwami, Wu Zhihong trans., 2019, p. 68.

³ Frumkin, 1981, p. 56.

Samarkand.

A palace site in Afrasiab is famous for its walls depicting several robust regimes around the Sogdiana, also known as the “The Hall of the Ambassadors”. The four walls of the palace are painted with exquisite patterns (Figure 9). The east side of the four walls is seriously damaged, and the other three are relatively intact. Due to the serious wall damage and the limitation of historical materials, the interpretation of the painting content and the study of the attribution of the palace site have been debated.

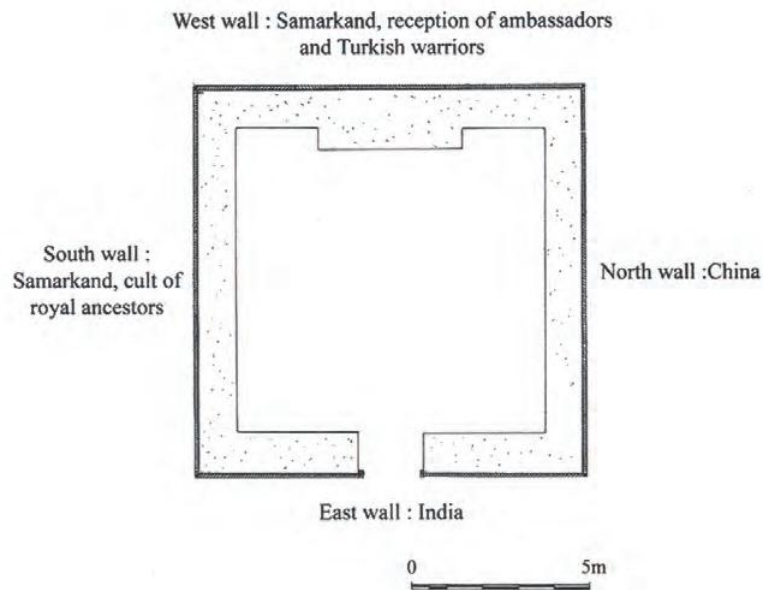


Figure 9 Four Walls in Ambassador Hall

On the west wall(main wall) of the Ambassador Hall is an international scene of foreign envoys attending and giving gifts. The north wall is painted with Han elements such as Emperor Gaozong(高宗) and Empress Wu(武则天) of the Tang Dynasty, the east wall shows the content related to India, and the south wall is the grand occasion for King Sogdiana to travel during the Persian New Year’s Navruz Festival. The paintings on the four walls mainly involve Sassanian Persia, India, Turkic peoples and the Tang Dynasty around Sogdiana, reflecting the political pattern of Central Asia during the reign of King Varkhuman of Sogdian (AD 650-659), as Frant Grenet said: “Turkic peoples, the Tang Dynasty and India on the wall were all major countries on the Silk Road that have a profound impact on Sogdian”¹. However, Sassanian Persia in the middle of the 7th century declined, and India in the south has never been a suzerain to the Sogdian States. Therefore, from the analysis of the contents of The Hall of the Ambassadors about Turkic peoples and the Tang Dynasty, we can get a glimpse of the strong national identity and self-centered consciousness of the native Sogdians.

2.4.1 Authority of King Varkhuman

¹ Grenet, Mao Ming trans., 2016, p. 24.

The west mural was seriously damaged, and the upper part of the whole mural could not be identified (Figure 10). According to the Persian art tradition and other murals found in Sogdiana, there should be a figure in the middle of the upper part that is larger than the elements in the painting, and this figure should be the primary position of the hall. The determination of the identity of this character is related to the theme of the whole West Wall expression, so the focus of the debate has always been.

The lower part of the mural on the west wall is painted with many Turkic peoples' attendants. According to these figures, the researcher believes that the disappearance figure should be the Turkic Khan and further believes that the whole hall displays the worship of the Sogdian rulers to the Turkic peoples. However, this view ignores the geographical location of Sogdiana as the crossroads of east-west traffic and the disorder of the flow of people on the Eurasian grassland.



Figure 10 The West Wall in Ambassador Hall¹

Following Marshak's identification, the traces of the lion's throne in the upper half of the painting are still discernible.² Regarding the discussion of the characters on the throne, several major views have emerged, such as Goddess Nana, Turkic peoples Khan, and the Sogdian King. From perspective, it is reasonable to infer that the characters on the throne are either the Sogdian God or the Sogdian king. Combined with the content of the foreign envoys' meeting painted on the west wall, it reflects the Sogdian King's self-centeredness at the Silk Road's key spot.

Due to Central Asia's lack of historical materials, we cannot make an absolute conclusion. However, according to the excavation experience of the Panjikent site, in many palaces, the walls facing the entrance of the hall are used to worship gods. The gods are painted bigger than the other figures in the murals.³ As the main wall, the west wall is the first thing the owner or visitors see when they enter the hall, it must depict a respected figure with a certain influence in religion or politics at that time.

Xian, believed by the Sogdians, originated from Zoroastrianism in West Asia. However,

¹ <https://sogdians.si.edu/afasiab-mural-paintings/> Afrasiab (present-day Samarkand), Uzbekistan (ancient Sogdiana), Site XXIII:1, mid-7th century. Wall painting; H. 3.4 m × W. 11.52 m. Afrasiab Museum.

² Marshak, Mao Ming trans., 2016, p. 57.

³ Marshak, Mao Ming trans., 2016, p. 27.

Zoroastrianism, believed by the Sogdians, is no longer the original appearance of Zoroastrianism. However, the Xian formed after it became popular in the Sogdiana and integrated into the local local gods. Therefore, it is more polytheistic in idolatry, which is fundamentally different from Zoroastrianism.¹ The Xian of Sogdians was more inclined to folk faith in nature.² Therefore, even if the Sogdians established Xian temples and carried out sacrifice activities in their gathering places after they arrived in ancient China, they had no intention of preaching in essence. In other words, in the Sogdian homeland of Central Asia, Xian was naturally integrated into the lives of Sogdians. Based on this fact, it is unsurprising that the main character painted in the hall is the Sogdian God. As for who this god is, Marshak, the scholar who advocates this view, believes it is the Goddess Nana.

It is also possible to identify the master of the west wall as King Varkhuman. Since the main hall of the king has been excavated in Afrasiab, Ambassador Hall should be a hall of the noble mansion in Samarkand. This hall should be related to King Varkhuman, the king of Sogdiana at that time.³ Then, put the portrait of King Varkhuman in the most prominent place in the hall to show respect, so that every guest can see the face of the great king when they arrive in the hall. The owner of the hall intends to highlight that Samarkand was at the center of the world at that time and to express the supreme power of Sogdian King.

As quoted in Marshak's view above, the Sogdians in Central Asia were used to worship local gods in the main wall of the palace, such as Goddess Nana or other Xian Gods. As the main wall, the west wall should not violate this custom, nor should it put the Turkic Khan above the local gods. Marshak's statement is only his point of view, but he insists that the theme of the west wall must be a figure related to Sogdiana is undoubtedly correct.

As mentioned earlier, the Sogdians in Central Asia have been controlled by the surrounding empires because they have yet to form a strong unified country. The Western Turkic Khanate once extended its sphere of influence to Central Asia. When doing trade along the Silk Road, the Sogdian merchants often attached themselves to the Western Turkic Khanate for security. At the same time, the West Turkic Khanate also relied on the Sogdians, who were good at long-distance traffic, to trade with the Byzantine Empire. There is a mutually beneficial relationship between the Sogdians and Turkic peoples. Since the 5th century, the Sogdians have become the absolute leader of the East-West trade. For the nomadic Turkic peoples living in the grassland, obtaining the necessary living materials through the Sogdian merchants is very important. Therefore, Sogdians have the initiative in the economy, and this economic initiative also helps the Sogdian rulers win the initiative in politics.

From the perspective of the forces of both sides, the Turkic Khanate is the more powerful side, and Sogdian States represent the weak side. However, this does not mean that people in the

¹ Gong Fangzhen, Yan Kejia, 1998. Lin Wushu, 2005. Zhang Xiaogui, 2010. Zhao Hongjuan, 2018(02). Feng Min, 2019(03). Xia Jinhua, 2019(01).

² Lin Wushu, 2005, pp. 356-359. Cai Hongsheng, 2010, p. 6.

³ Marshak, Mao Ming trans., 2016, p. 52.

society flow from the weak society to the strong society. The migration of people is complex, especially in the context of the ancient Eurasian grassland. The migration of people is complex, especially the wide range of Eurasia and the complexity of nationalities, which is self-evident, and the mixing of different nationalities is even more typical. Therefore, it is also normal for Turkic peoples to appear in the paintings of the Sogdians in Central Asia.

In this way, the interaction between people and groups runs throughout history. Interaction is the form of the existence of a human social organization. Any human social organization is not closed and isolated. They must exist in communication with the outside world, form an interrelated system or network, and influence each other within the system or network.¹ Human interaction and cultural exchange are not one-dimensional but two-dimensional. When global historians put forward the concept of interaction, they emphasized the idea of mutual subjectivity and the will of each group.

The latest study of Chinese scholars on the theme of the west wall of appears to match the above views. Wang Jing and Shen Ruiwen set the theme of the West Wall as “sitting in the east to discuss”(坐东议事) and believed that this habit was in line with that of the Inner Asia society.² The tradition of this custom may be traced to the behaviors of nomadic people in Medieval China. As settled ethnics, many nomadic groups ruled Sogdians, it is natural to absorb the customs from nomadics. However, it should also be noted that the absorption of culture was often limited.

Generally speaking, the interaction between cultures will seek an interactive balance. Under this interaction, vulnerable cultures are at a disadvantage. In order to ensure their development in a strong society, most vulnerable cultures will spontaneously adjust their contact strategies and make positive changes in favor of themselves. As long as vulnerable groups and cultures still exist, they will not accept all cultures from a strong society in a short time.³ For ethnic groups, culture is the product of history, which is constantly developing and evolving. However, throughout the process of cultural change, the national characteristics of culture are relatively stable and will not be easily changed, especially the ethics, thinking mode, and values shared among the group. This stability will be recovered due to the extensive and in-depth contact between the two cultures, nor will it change in the acculturation process. It is the root of the existence of a nation, and it is also a vital identification information that distinguishes a nation from other nations.⁴

The Sogdians had always maintained a close relationship with the Turkic peoples, and many had held important positions in the Turkic Khanate. Scholars have discussed the relationship between Sogdians and Turkic peoples.⁵ From the Sogdian inscriptions recording the

¹ Liu Xincheng, 2009, p. 8.

² Wang Jing, Shen Ruiwen, 2021(01).

³ Tong Enzheng, 2004, p. 401.

⁴ Zhou Lijun, Lu Di, 2007, p. 144-147.

⁵ Cai Hongsheng, 1998, pp.135-136. Jiang Boqin, 2001, pp. 14-37. Rong Xinjiang, 2006, pp. 1-23. Cheng Yue, 1994, pp. 62-67. Edwin G.Pulleyblank,1952,pp.317-356. Peng Jianying, 2011, pp. 4-15. Yutaka Moribe, Wen Jingen trans., 2005, pp.226-234.

construction of Turkic temples found in Bugut, it can be known that the Sogdians entered Turkic Khanate very early and held higher official positions, and then became the right assistant of Turkic peoples' cultural development, which had a certain impact on Turkic peoples culture and religion.¹ The records of Xian in *You Yang Za Zu* (酉阳杂俎) can also illustrate that the survival of the religion in the Turkic Khanate was also due to the Sogdians' important position within the Turkic Khanate. *You Yang Za Zu* records the fact that the customs of Turkic peoples may be influenced by Xian, that is: "When the Turks worshipped the Zoroastrian God, there were no ancestral temples. They use felt to make a temple shape, put it in a leather bag, and apply grease to it anywhere or tied to a pole for constant sacrifice."² This method of smearing was learned from the Sogdians.³ Louis Bazin said: "The Sogdians, as merchants, played an important economic role in the Turkic Khanate, and they certainly had a cultural influence there that we cannot underestimate. They also played a huge role in the spread of two major international religions among the Turkic peoples, namely early Buddhism and Manichaeism, later from the second half of the 9th century."⁴ The Sogdians also influenced the political activities of the Eastern Turkic Khanate. The main body of the tribe with the leader Tong Teqin(统特勤), recorded in *Xin Tangshu* is the Sogdians.⁵ After the Tang Dynasty conquered the Eastern Turkic Khanate, many Sogdians leaders submitted to the Tang Dynasty, such as An Pu (安菩)⁶ who became the leader of Liuhu Prefectures(六胡州). Zhang Guangda said: "In the political aspect, the Sogdians once served as political advisers to many grasslands nomadic khanates such as Turkic peoples and Uygurs, and traveled between regimes as political envoys or military generals."⁷ While exercising their rights over the Sogdiana, the Turkic peoples Khan also protected the Sogdian caravans on the Silk Road. Similarly, the Sogdians also held important positions in the Turkic Khanate.

After the monk Xuan Zang(玄奘) left Gaochan(高昌), he passed the Tianshan Mountains(天山) and reached the Tokmok(碎叶城) beside Issyk-Kul(伊塞克湖). Here, he met the Western Turkic Khan. Xuan Zang recorded in the *Traveling Notes of the Western Regions in Great Tang Dynasty* (大唐西域记) that the Tokmok (碎叶城) was a town with merchants from Sogdiana. In the era of Xuan Zang, the Western Region, including Central Asia, was under the control of the Western Turkic Khanate. Sogdian merchants needed to be protected on their way to the Central Plains. At the same time, the power of nomads on the grassland ensured cooperation between Sogdians and Turkic peoples and the formation of a mutually beneficial relationship; therefore, it is not difficult to understand that the Tokmok, described by Xuan Zang was a place where merchants from various countries lived together.⁸ For nomads, their

Li Ruizhe, 2018.

¹ Lin Meicun, 1994(02), p. 64-71

² *Youyang Zazu* 酉阳杂俎, 1981, p. 45. *Taiping Guangji* 太平广记, 1961, p. 3956. It means that Turkic peoples believe in Xian gods and do not establish temples. They draw gods on the felt and stick the felt on the leather bag. Whenever Turkic peoples migrate, they smear grease on the bag and tie the bag to the long pole for sacrifice four times a day.

³ Cui Shiping, 2010(03), p. 61. Li Ruizhe, 2018, p. 141.

⁴ Louis Bazin, Geng Sheng trans, 1987(05), p. 50.

⁵ Edwin G. Pulleybank, 1991, p.321.

⁶ Zhao Zhenhua, Zhu Liang, 1982(03). Luoyang Cultural Relics Team, 1982(03).

⁷ Zhang Guangda, 1986(02), p. 71.

⁸ Kiyohiro Iwami, Wu Zhihong trans., 2019, p. 54.

natural mobility allowed them to move from one place to another more freely with fewer land constraints.¹ For the people in nomadic tribes, evidence of disorderly flow is more pronounced.² Therefore, it is possible that there were many Turkic peoples in the Sogdiana, and it is reasonable to suggest the Turkic peoples, as depicted in the mural, were attendants; therefore, we cannot simply believe that the west wall was made to flatter the Western Turkic Khan. In general, the theme of the west wall still shows the authority of the Sogdian king, Varkhuman.

2.4.2 Self-Recognition of Sogdians

On the robe of the figure on the lower left side of the west wall in “The Ambassadors Hall”, there is a relevant text that reads, “The king of Sogdians accepts the worship of all countries”.³ It can be seen from the clothes of the figures painted on the west wall and the silk objects in hand that among the many envoys who have been seen before, there are envoys from the Tang Dynasty.

In the previous analysis of the theme of the West wall, based on the time of the creation of the west wall after the establishment of prefectures in Central Asia in the Tang Dynasty, it was impossible for the content of the mural Turkic Khanate to override the emperor from Tang. However, it is worth noting that the inscription written on the robes of the figures on the West wall does not mention the envoys of the Tang Dynasty in the core picture.

Mr. Marshak believes that the inscription on the west wall cannot be treated as a letter of history and does not have the function of national publicity.⁴ The reason why the list did not mention the envoys of the Tang Dynasty was probably a golden mean treatment made by the Sogdians based on their political condition at that time.⁵

Combined with the historical background at that time, it was when Emperor Gaozong(高宗) of the Tang Dynasty conquered the Western Turkic Khanate, extended the influence of the Tang Dynasty to Central Asia, and established the Kangju Area Command(康居都督府) in the Samarkand. King Varkhuman was appointed governor to direct the Sogdiana. If the inscription on the west wall clearly describes the tribute gifts brought from Tang envoys, it could have led to the dissatisfaction of the Tang ruler. Therefore, it would have been hidden to face the vanity of King Varkhuman. As Mr. Grenet pointed out, “In any case, in front of his ministers, Varkhuman is willing to show his court with more intelligent officials; in this way, it may decrease the damage to the dignity of Tang”.⁶ It can be seen from this that the Sogdians’ self-awareness, surrounded by several powerful empires, chose to use the golden mean to reflect their rights as much as feasible without damaging the honor of the sovereign.

¹ Colin Mackerras, 1990, p.328.

² David Ludden, 2003, pp.1057-1058.

³ Marshak, Mao Ming trans., 2016, p. 22-23.

⁴ Marshak, Mao Ming trans., 2016, pp. 57-59.

⁵ Wang Jing, Shen Ruiwen, 2020(12), p. 23.

⁶ Grenet, Mao Ming trans., 2005, p. 311.

As a weak political body that mighty political powers have surrounded, the States in Sogdiana are characterized by their ability to stay in the middle. The Sogdians have yet to prove a strong country since the Achaemenid Empire in Persia. With their changing political surroundings, they sometimes depended on mighty neighbors and sometimes split into many minor kingdoms. Although they have been circling among the powerful countries, the Sogdians are still good at using ingenious means to deal with political adversity, that is, to win the most favorable results from various situations, and maintain a great degree of cultural and economic independence.¹ Even after the breakup of the Turkic Khanate, the control of the Western Turkic Khanate on Sogdiana is still maintained except tribute, and the actual ruler of Sogdians was still the king of all States, and the king owned diplomatic and political independence.² Some scholars judged on the evidence of numismatic archaeology that the Sogdian States had minted their own coins before Islamization, which shows that the Sogdian States still have a certain degree of economic independence in the process of controlling Central Asia one after another by various powerful forces.³ This also proves that the Sogdian States have a certain degree of economic autonomy, and once again confirms that they constantly expressed their loyalty to the Tang Dynasty in the face of the heavy taxes raised by the Muslims, hoping to be protected to safeguard their own interests.

“Under the rule of different ethnic groups, the Sogdians became extinct and strengthened their adaptability. They not only preserved the independent royal lineage but also became a unique commercial power that controlled the land Silk Road in the middle ages.”⁴ What is involved here is the question of how to maintain the independent monarchy of the Sogdian States. When discussing the relationship between the Tang Dynasty and the surrounding political powers, Wang Zhenping proposed “soft power in international politics”⁵, enabling all parties to achieve satisfactory results in communication in non-military and non-violent ways. In Medieval society, political loyalty was the most effective way to achieve this goal, which could avoid conflict with power. Assistance from suzerain can also be obtained when other external forces are invading. However, this can only be achieved when the suzerain is strong. The multiple political loyalties mean that the weak and small regimes are sandwiched between the regional powers to try to balance the forces that may be the most threatened around, and it is the self-protection under the consideration of the situation.⁶ The groups living in the Eurasian grassland in the West of the Tang Dynasty can move around freely. This natural mobility makes them lack a fixed political identity, so they often change their political loyalty to different regimes.⁷ This is the case with the Sogdians living in an important position on the Silk Road. The stable social environment is critical in Sogdiana, where commodity exchange is the leading way of survival. Therefore, in the face of the international

¹ Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, Zhao Chongmin trans., 1994, p. 138.

² Zheng Binglin, 2018, p. 41.

³ Marshark, Mao Ming trans., 2016, p. 9.

⁴ Zheng Binglin, 2018, p. 37-38.

⁵ Wang Zhenping, Jia Yonghui trans., pp. 4-6.

⁶ Wang Zhenping, Jia Yonghui trans., 2020, p. 5.

⁷ Wang Zhenping, Jia Yonghui trans., 2020, p. 316.

situation with the alternation of forces around, the multiple political loyalties shown by the Sogdian King are always the best choice.

While discussing the dependence of the weak and small nationalities, we should not ignore their self-centeredness because it is also a reason for them to remain neutral in the powerful regime. People in the past, due to their limited vision, often used self-centeredness to define their relationships with other groups when observing the world and surrounding groups.¹ This universal self-centered worldview reflects the lack of understanding of the external world of early ancient civilizations and the resulting affirmation and amplification of their cultural superiority.² At the same time, self-centeredness does not only exist in the minds of rulers, but the people of all countries also believe that their rulers are the kings of the world, and “whether it is the people who have surrendered or the people who have not, all the barbarians should come to surrender to our monarch. This phenomenon is widespread in Eurasia in the Middle Ages.”³ So it is not surprising that we see the main wall of the ambassador’s hall in Samarkand painted with the content of the audience of the envoys of various countries.

Another situation that needs to be taken into account is the reality of the distance between the Sogdian States and the core ruling area of the Tang Dynasty. Central Asia Sogdiana is far from the ruling center of the Tang Dynasty, and there is also a Western Region with complex ethnics and forces in the middle, which made the Tang Dynasty unable to produce extreme political radiation on Sogdiana. Undeniably, that the Tang Dynasty enjoyed a great reputation in Asia in the 7th and 9th centuries, but its actual political control could not reach Sogdiana. The Tang Dynasty’s policy of Jimi in the Sogdian region of Central Asia reflects this actual situation. For the relatively weak regimes around the Tang Dynasty, maintaining a certain nominal relationship between monarch and minister with the Tang Dynasty is its diplomatic strategy of self-protection, which also leaves much freedom at the same time. Giving allegiance to the Tang Dynasty can not only seek external protection but also obtain certain economic benefits by pleasing the rulers of the Tang Dynasty. For the Tang Dynasty, this not only maintained the tributary system of the Central Plains Dynasty for a long time but also gratified the rulers’ own “vanity”.⁴

Therefore, it is impossible to exaggerate Tang’s central position in Asia. The Tang Dynasty did have the competitiveness to export its own culture, law, and administrative management and had a particular impact on its neighbors. Nevertheless, these neighbors were not wholly passive in acceptance but chose, according to their self-consciousness, to create a robust external environment for their own development, and showed their own “political or national centrism”⁵. Wang Zhenping believed that the ministers of the Tang Dynasty described the Tang as a world center and the surrounding political powers or nationalities actively paid

¹ Fang Hanwen, 2009, p. 235.

² Wang Yongping, 2015, p. 19.

³ Christopher I. Beckwith, Fu Ma trans., 2020, p. 138.

⁴ Wang Zhenping, Jia Yonghui trans., 2020, p. 2.

⁵ Wang Zhenping, Jia Yonghui trans., 2020, p. 315.

tribute to the Tang Dynasty while recognizing the status of the Tang suzerain in exchange for military asylum and economic assistance.¹ This opinion has certain rationality but ignores the actual intention of the surrounding neighbors to communicate with Tang Dynasty. It also requires taking into account the differences between the groups in East-Asian Han language circle that admires Tang culture and the States of Central Asia. The East Asian countries are close to the Tang Dynasty, so they have a deep absorption of its political and cultural contacts, thus showing a state of learning and admiration for the Tang Dynasty. In sharp contrast, the Sogdian States, which are far west of the Tang Dynasty, are far away from the core area of the Tang Dynasty, and thus form a superficial relationship of submission with the Tang Dynasty, that is, the fact that the Sogdian king and the Tang Dynasty took what they needed and mutually beneficial.

The Sogdians have been under the influenced by the nomadic regime for a long time. Although they have a certain admiration for the Tang culture, they give weak feedback on the political and cultural influence of the Tang Dynasty due to their less cultural homogeneity. The reason for this situation is that, on the one hand, there is a certain distance between the Sogdian States and the Tang Dynasty, and the Tang Dynasty did not directly extended its power to Central Asia as Persia and Muslims did; on the other hand, the Sogdian nobles had the self-centered consciousness as the rulers of the world, which both made the relationship between the Sogdian kingdoms and the Tang Dynasty indissoluble. Not only the Tang Dynasty but also the relationship between the Sogdian States and other neighboring powerful regimes was not blindly obedient, and more out of the need for the freedom of business and trade and freedom of belief in the country, they tried to maintain their limited independence.

Summary

During the Tang Dynasty, the Kang State centered on Samarkand was the strongest and had the most frequent exchanges with the Tang Dynasty. As the central point on the east-west communication road, it became an important link connecting the Tang Dynasty and West Asia.

The Sogdians were known for their ability to trade along the Silk Road. The important geographical position of the Sogdian States at the crossroads allowed Sogdians to take advantage of this convenient condition to travel on the east-west routes and engage in long-distance transshipment trade. The Sogdians were not simply merchants on the Silk Road but also used their long-distance trade to weave an intelligence network across Eurasia. A vast network that not only facilitated their commercial exchanges but also brought Sogdian merchants closer together. Therefore, the Sogdians who entered China established a stronghold and expanded their social network simultaneously.

The Sogdians played a key role in the exchange of goods and mediators of cultural exchanges between East and West, North and South. Although the Xian believed in by the Sogdians

¹ Wang Zhenping, Jia Yonghui trans., 2020, p. 313.

originated from Persian Zoroastrianism, it retained more of the oldest Zoroastrian doctrine during the Achaemenid Dynasty while absorbing a variety of religious and cultural ideas, among which Hinduism, which enriched the Sogdian Xian deities. Moreover, before Zoroastrianism landed in Central Asia, Sogdian itself was dominated by local beliefs, so Xian gradually became the majority of Sogdian beliefs based on combining with local beliefs. The characteristics of Xian rooted in the original beliefs and folk beliefs of Sogdians made it easy for them to absorb and integrate with folk customs after entering Medieval China, so Xian was finally integrated into the folk belief system in China and was incorporated into the pantheon together with folk gods.

The Sogdian States did not form a unit of strong power but were included in the surrounding regimes, so the Sogdian States always had limited independence. This limited independence allowed it to stay between the great powers and the suzerainty. However, the attitude of the Sogdian States towards the surrounding powers was different. The reason for the difference was the ability of the suzerain to grant economic and religious freedom to the Sogdians.

Although the Sogdian States showed dependence on the Muslims and the Tang Dynasty in a short period, the self-centered consciousness of the Sogdian kings cannot be ignored. This sense of self-centeredness was not only present in the rulers of every ancient regime but also inseparable from Sogdiana's central location.

The shaping of the national character and culture is inseparable from the history, geography, and culture of the place in which they live. The location of the Sogdians in the center of east-west communication promoted the exchange of local material culture. Also it cultivated the quality of Sogdians who were good at trade. While maintaining a sense of self-centeredness and some independence, the Sogdians also survived between the great powers, which gave the Sogdians the political acumen to judge the situation and expand the trade and transportation network by establishing settlements when they reached a new society. Overall, the native character of Sogdians directly affects their state of existence and way of living in foreign societies. Understanding these is important in helping to analyze better how the Sogdians adapted to the new culture and environment in Medieval China.

Chapter 3 Far away from home: Sogdians in Xizhou

In the 14th year of the Zhenguan era(贞观) of Emperor Taizong (640), the Tang Dynasty conquered Gaochang(高昌) and took its place as Xizhou(西州). Xizhou, as the gateway of the Western Regions to the Tang Dynasty, has always been a place of multi-ethnic gathering and cultural integration. According to the records of Turpan documents, the Sogdians migrated to Gaochang early to become permanent residences. Sogdians are engaged in a variety of occupations here and live together with local people. This chapter starts with the geographical location and cultural environment of Xizhou analyzes the life form and cultural identity of the Soogdians in Xizhou based on the documents and the tombs excavated by archaeology in Turpan.

3.1 Geographical Location and History of Xizhou

Turpan region of Xinjiang is an essential spot on the Silk Road and has become the living place of many foreign ethnicities during the period of Gaochang State. Because of the importance of its geographical location, it has become the object of contention for many regimes. The rulers of dynasties also attached importance to the Turpan area and wanted to govern the western region with its land as the center. They not only moved many Han people to this area but also vigorously developed agricultural production and strengthened military defense in the form of garrison reclamation. After the destruction of Gaochang State by the Tang Dynasty, Xizhou was established, further extending the influence of Tang culture to this region, which also formed the historical background for the multi-ethnic survival and activities of Xizhou. Sogdians came here early. Since the Wei(魏), Jin(晋), and Southern and Northern Dynasties(南北朝), a large number of Sogdians have settled here, and it has almost become the second hometown of Sogdians. So, what are the characteristics of the Sogdians living here regarding political, national, and cultural identity? First, it should understand the physical geography and political and social environment here.

3.1.1 Position of Xizhou

Historically, Turpan has always been an important area of the Silk Road and also an important gateway connecting the Central Plains and the Western Regions and Eastern and Western cultures. According to the biography of *Houhan Shu*(后汉书):

自敦煌西出玉门、阳关，涉鄯善，北通伊吾千余里，自伊吾北通车师前部高昌壁千二百里，自高昌壁北通后部金满城五百里，此其西域之门户也，故戊己校尉更互屯焉。伊吾地宜五谷、桑麻、蒲萄。其北又有柳中，皆膏腴之地。故汉常与匈奴争车师、伊吾，以制西域。

自鄯善踰葱岭出西诸国，有两道。傍南山北，陂河西行至莎车，为南道。南道踰葱岭，则出大月氏、安息之国也。自车师前王庭随北山，陂河西行至疏勒，为北

道。北道西踰葱岭，出大宛、康居、奄蔡焉。¹

From the west Dunhuang (敦煌) to Yumen (玉门) and Yangguan (阳关) through Shanshan (鄯善) and Yiwu, it is more than a thousand miles to the north. It is a thousand and two Hundred miles from north of Yiwu to Gaochangbi (高昌壁) in front of Cheshi (车师). It is five Hundred miles from the north of Gaochangbi (高昌壁) to the Houbu Jinman Cheng (后部金满城), which shows that Gaochang (高昌) was the gateway of the Western Regions.

There are two ways to travel from Shanshan (鄯善) to Western countries. The south road crosses the Pamir Mountains, reaching the Da Yue Zhi (大月氏) and Parthian Empire. From the north road across Pamir Mountains, can reach Dayuan (大宛), Kangju (康居) and Yancai (奄蔡).²

This record reflects the vital position of Turpan in east-west transportation. According to the above records, there are two roads from Yumen Gate(玉门关) and Yangguan Gate(阳关) to the west. The north road is from Cheshi Qianbu(车师前部) to Sule(疏勒). The Cheshi Qianbu(车师前部) here is an ancient regime in the western region centered on the old city of Jiaohe(交河), west of today's Turpan, Xinjiang. Through this area, merchants and envoys can reach Dayuan(大宛), Kangju(康居), and Yancai(奄蔡) in the west.³ As the gateway of the Western Regions, Gaochang's important geographical location can be seen. During the Sui Dynasty, Gaochang still played an essential role in the key location from the Central Plains to the Western Regions.⁴ In the Tang Dynasty, due to the closure of Daqi Road(大碛路), most of the tributaries from the west to the Tang Dynasty chose to reach the Central Plains through Gaochang.⁵ It can be seen that the Turpan Depression was the place through which foreign nationalities, including the Sogdians, reached the trade towns along the Silk Road from west to east in the Gaochang State era. The unearthed texts from the tombs of Astana(阿斯塔那) and Harahezhuo(哈刺和卓) in Turpan revealed that a large number of Sogdians settled here and were active in the Gaochang trading market.

The Turpan Depression, where Xizhou is located, is surrounded by the mountains in the eastern part of the Tianshan Mountains. *Wei Shu*(魏书) and *Tongdian*(通典) also recorded that Gaochang is surrounded by many mountains, which makes it easy to form a relatively independent and closed area around Turpan, making it easy to form an independent regime here since Gaochang State, so its political and military status is valued by the rulers. One of the reasons why the Tang Dynasty conquered Gaochang in 640 was that the king of Gaochang allied with the Turkic peoples in an attempt to block the Silk Road and control the Silk Road trade. It can be seen that the political and economic significance of this place is different.

¹ *Houhan Shu* 后汉书, 1965, p. 2914.

² These two paragraphs are the Han translation of the above.

³ *Han Shu* 汉书, 1962, p. 3872.

⁴ *Sui Shu* 隋书, 1973, p.1580.

⁵ *Jiu Tangshu* 旧唐书, 1975, p. 5294.

The important strategic position mentioned above makes the Turpan region gain the attention of various forces from ancient times, and also forms the situation of multi-cultural coexistence. This is one of the important perspectives from which we observe the cultural concepts of the Sogdians in Xizhou.

3.1.2 Historical and Cultural Environment in Xizhou

During the Western Han Dynasty (西汉), with the army fighting against the Huns and the deepening of Western Han forces in the Turpan Depression, the Cheshi State (车师) began to be divided into Cheshi Qian State (车师前国), Cheshi Hou State (车师后国) and the other six states. The ruling center of Cheshi Qian State (车师前国) was Jiaohe town (交河城), about the west of present-day Turpan City. During the Western and Eastern Han Dynasties, Cheshi Qian State (车师前国) gradually became more potent, and Jiaohe town (交河城) also became a political and cultural development center in Turpan. Later, they successfully experienced the occupation of some regimes, also known as the Gaochangjun (高昌郡) period of Turpan (AD 327-442). After that, the Turpan region established the Gaochang State in 460-640 years and has experienced four kingdoms dominated by Han families, namely family Kan, Zhang, Ma, and Qu. Therefore, the Turpan region has been deeply influenced by the Central Plains culture before Xizhou was established. It is another perspective for us to observe the cultural concept of the Sogdians in Xizhou.

In fact, because of its important geographical location, since the Gaochangbi (高昌壁) period of the Western Han Dynasty, the rulers have continuously moved Han people from the Central Plains to the Gaochang area using immigration and land reclamation. They intend to use Gaochang as an outpost to control the western region. Although far from the Central Plains, the Turpan area has been deeply influenced by the Han culture since the Han Dynasty. The migration of Han people brought advanced technologies into this area, such as irrigation technology to promote agricultural development, thus promoting the development of the local economy. According to historical records, "Gaochang State has fertile soil, and cereal crops mature twice a year" (高昌国, 土良沃, 谷麦一岁再熟)¹. By studying the Turpan documents (吐鲁番文书), Yin Qing, a scholar, found that Turpan has a large number of records of planting grapes and other cash crops. There are also leasing and trading based on these cash crops.² At the same time, Han culture has gradually become the mainstream culture of the region. *Zhou Shu* (周书) recorded that Gaochang "has Mao Shi (毛诗), Lun Yu (论语), Xiao Jing (孝经), and has scholars to teach", "its criminal law, customs, marriage, and burial are not different from those of China."³ It can be seen that Turpan has had a high acceptance and maintenance of Han culture since the Han Dynasty, which also made Confucian culture take root and develop in Gaochang area, directly affecting the daily life and cultural concepts of the local people.

¹ *Yuanhe Junxian Tuzhi* 元和郡县图志, 1983, p. 1032.

² Yin Qing, 2008(01), pp.17-26.

³ *Zhou Shu* 周书, 1971, p. 620.

In the 14th year of the Zhenguan era (贞观) (640), the Tang Dynasty attacked the Gaochang, changed this place into the Xizhou, and established Xizhou Protectorate(西州都护府) at the same time. Later, the Anxi Protectorate(安西都护府) was set up in Jiaohe town(交河) of Xizhou, which was intended to take Xizhou as a stronghold of the western region and control the vast areas to the west of Xizhou, including Central Asia, during the reign of Emperor Dezong Zhenyuan. The Tibetan Emire and Tang contended for Xizhou. After The Tibetan Emire captured Khotan and Xizhou in the seventh year of Emperor Zhenyuan's reign (791), the Tang Dynasty's operation in the western region ended, and the rule of the Tang Dynasty finally withdrew from Xizhou. The jurisdiction of the Tang Dynasty over Xizhou made the whole area of Xizhou present a stable social atmosphere, which is also conducive to commercial events of Sogdians here. It promoted the integration of Sogdians and local people.

Xizhou's important traffic location and superior geographical environment make the composition of ethnic groups living here complex and diverse, according to Dong Yongqiang's summary of the surnames of Turpan residents during the 4th and 8th centuries. The proportion of Sogdian surname in Gaochang Jun(高昌郡) period was relatively small, and the proportion of hu surnames in the Gaochang State(高昌国) period increased significantly, especially the Sogdian surnames Kang(康), Shi(史), Shi(石) etc., which was added to this period, indicating that the Gaochang State period was the era when Sogdians entered Turpan Depression on a large scale and settled down, as well as the era of the integration of non-Han and Han people. There were also new hu people's surnames in Xizhou of the Tang Dynasty, but the Han people were still prominent, which showed that the Han people were the central part of the social structure in Turpan since the Gaochang State.¹

3.2 Sogdian Life Patterns in Xizhou

The Sogdians of the Xizhou period lived more intensively in Anleli(安乐里), Chonghua Township(崇化乡), east of Gaochang Town, and became registered residents in the Tang Dynasty. According to Turpan documents, the Sogdian settlement east of Gaochang town appeared in the 5th century and continued until the Xizhou period, reflecting the inheritance of the Sogdian settlement in the Turpan region. The settlements established by Sogdians were inseparable from the national commercial character. The Sogdians used the Turpan Depression as a base to consolidate short-distance trade in the Tarim Basin, and also continued to expand long-distance inland trade to the east. The settlements east of Gaochang town facilitated various commercial activities. After the establishment of Xizhou by the Tang Dynasty, the smooth opening of roads between the Central Plains and the Western Regions, coupled with the strong support of the rulers, made the Silk Road trade more prosperous, and also promoted the expansion of the Sogdian commercial trade network. The Sogdians' long-term settlement and life in Turpan were prerequisites for their exchange and integration with the local culture.

¹ Dong Yongqiang, 2007, pp.27-29.

3.2.1 Settlements of Sogdians in Xizhou

As an important traffic artery on the Silk Road, Xizhou has a very complex ethnic composition, including many Sogdians from Central Asia. Tang Xizhou inherited the multi-ethnic characteristics of Gaochang Jun and Gaochang State, and continued to become an important residence for the ethnic groups in the western region. The trade activities of the Sogdians are obviously one of the most attractive landscapes.

According to the Sogdian Ancient Letter unearthed in Dunhuang, at least in the early 4th century, the Sogdians in Central Asia had entered the Hexi Corridor through the Silk Road. On the road from Central Asia to the Hexi Corridor, Turpan became one of the towns it must pass through. Rong Xinjiang believed that at least at the beginning of the 5th century, there had been Sogdian settlements in Turpan, and extended the settlements to Dunhuang.¹ In fact, it must have been much earlier for the Sogdians to enter the Turpan area.

The vast majority of the Sogdian settlements were formed during the Qu(麴) family's reign in Gaochang (AD 502-640) due to commercial activities and settlement.² Gaochang, as an important stronghold of the Sogdians moving to the east, naturally has the remains of the Sogdian settlement.

The arrival of the Sogdian faith in Gaochang accompanied the formation of the settlement. Among the officials listed in the Turpan document 《高昌永平二年(550)十二月三十日祀部班示为知祀人名及谪罚事》 were the Sabu(萨簿)³. The Sabu(萨簿) here is also known as the Sabao(萨宝). It is the leader of the social organization and religion of the Sogdians. The existence of Sabao(萨宝) in the Turpan document proves the existence of Xian(祆教). However, the emergence of a large number of Sogdians in registered is still in the sixth century,⁴ and the period is relatively concentrated in the Gaochang State(高昌国) and Xizhou(西州) periods. In this regard, Jiang Boqin classified the Sogdians in Turpan into three types: the registered residents in Gaochang State, the residents in Xizhou and the merchants in Turpan.⁵

The occupations of Gaochang Sogdians are very diverse. It can be said that Sogdians have penetrated into all industries of Gaochang society. Sogdians and local people are generally engaged in various duties, such as tax and military service. They are sentenced in criminal proceedings according to the laws of the Tang Dynasty⁶. According to the Turpan document 《高昌丑岁(617)兵额文书》⁷unearthed from the ancient tomb in Anle town(安乐城) in

¹ Rong Xinjiang, 2014, p. 38.

² Chen Haitao, 2002(02), p. 197.

³ Wang Su, 1986(03), p. 172.

⁴ Jiang Boqin, 1994, p.155.

⁵ Jiang Boqin, 1994, p. 180.

⁶ Jiang Boqin, 1994, p. 183.

⁷ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu 吐鲁番出土文书*, 1983, p. 180.

Astana Xinjiang, Jiang Boqin believed that there had been Sogdians serving as military officials in Jiaohe town during the Turpan Yihe (义和) period (614-619)¹. At the same time, in the epitaph of Sogdians Kang ? Bo(康□钵), who lived in Gaochang State at the end of the 6th century, his position was recorded as “the leading non-Han general”. This character indicates that he is a non-Han person. This evidence further proves that there are also people in the Sogdian family of Kang who hold official positions related to military armed forces. However, Zhang Mingxin believed that the official positions held by these Sogdians were more common through the official titles mentioned in the epitaphs of other Sogdians during the Gaochang State period.² The above research shows that in the Gaochang State era at the end of the 6th century and the beginning of the 7th century, there was no significant difference in the rights and obligations between the Sogdian residents and the local people.

Concerning the location of the Sogdian settlements during the Gaochang period, Rong Xinjiang pointed out that there should be no doubt that there were Sogdian settlements in Gaochang town and its surrounding areas. ³As for its specific location, one may be near a temple, Hu Tian(胡天), east of Gaochang town. The other may be in the area of Tuyugou (吐峪沟) where the temple, Dinggu Tian(丁谷天), mentioned in the document, is located. The Hu Tian temple here is recorded in *The Suvarnaprabhasa Sutra* 《金光明经》⁴ unearthed in Turpan in 1965, and the writing time of this sutra is the years 430⁵ according to Rong Xinjiang. Therefore, as early as the late Gaochang Jun period, there were traces of the existence of Xian believed by the Sogdians in the east of Gaochang town, which further indicates that the Sogdians had gathered in the east of the city at this time.

The settlement above of the Sogdians in the east of Gaochang town, which had existed since the period of Gaochang Jun(高昌郡) and Gaochang State, still existed in Xizhou(西州) of the Tang Dynasty. After the Tang Dynasty conquered Gaochang State, all the residents in Turpan were enrolled as registered Tang people. Therefore, the Turpan document 《唐神龙三年(707)高昌县崇化乡点籍样》⁶, which recorded the household register of the residents of Chonghua Township(崇化乡) in early eighth century, provided more specific information for an in-depth understanding of the settlements of Sogdians in Xizhou. This document illustrates that there are a certain number of Sogdians living in Chonghua Township(崇化乡) during Gaochang State.⁷ Ikeda On further verified that the Sogdians lived in Anle town(安乐城)⁸, the same town found in *The Suvarnaprabhasa Sutra* 《金光明经》, which again demonstrates the existence of this Sogdian settlement in the east of Gaochang town.

Scholars have summarized Sogdians names and age distribution of in Chonghua Township(崇

¹ Jiang Boqin, 1994, pp. 159-160.

² Zhang Mingxin, 2007(02), p.60.

³ Rong Xinjiang, 2014, p. 47.

⁴ *Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu Bowuguan 新疆维吾尔自治区博物馆*, 1991, pic.84.

⁵ Rong Xinjiang, 2014, p. 41.

⁶ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu 吐鲁番出土文书*, 1986, pp.468-485.

⁷ Jiang Boqin, 1994, p. 167.

⁸ Cited from Rong Xinjiang, 2014, p.167.

化乡) recorded in the documents. Of the total of 56 people recorded, 32 are Sogdians. From their names, there are 18 non-Han-style names, and the number increases with age; the number of Chinese-style names is 11, which are more evenly distributed in the age range of under 20 and 30-50. At the same time, the document also reflects that “among the population over 50 years old, the name is translated from non-Han-style to Han; on the contrary, many members under the age of 50 have directly adopted Han names, indicating that this part of the Sogdians is undergoing sinicization.”¹ At the same time, it also shows that the Sogdians who directly used Han-style names may have been collectively registered into Xizhou(西州) by the Tang Dynasty.²

Finding out the way of life of the Sogdians here will help us analyze the changes in their cultural concepts when they immigrated from their hometown to Turpan.

3.2.2 Commercial Events of Sogdians in Xizhou

Turpan Depression was a significant region for the Sogdians to trade eastward along the Silk Road. Since the Turpan entered the Gaochang State period in the late 5th century, it formed a powerful unified kingdom and promoted social stability. Therefore, the long-distance trade with Turpan as the supply station and the short-distance trade within the Tarim Basin with Gaochang as the center have made significant progress. After the conquest of Gaochang by the Tang Dynasty, “the whole western region, even from far away Persia, continued to pay tribute to the Tang Dynasty, and merchants came and went”³. The Sogdians in Xizhou continued their trade, and the Tang government effectively managed and regulated the trade.

A Sogdian document found in Turpan reflects the trade route of Sogdians on the Eurasian continent. After entering the Western Regions, this trade route passes through Khotan(于阗), Kucha(库车), and Yanqi(焉耆). Then it passes through Gaochang, then goes Dunhuang and Lingzhou(灵州).⁴ These facts reflect that Turpan is not only an important commercial town for short-distance trade within the Tarim Basin, but also an important link in the entire northern commercial transportation network.

Sogdians who settled here are the local residents. From the documents unearthed in Turpan, we can know that these Sogdian residents have various identities in Turpan society and are engaged in various occupations like the Han people. Most of the Sogdians who pass through Turpan and use Turpan as a transit station are non-settlers. They need to apply for a license called Guosuo(过所) when they are engaged in the long-distance trafficking trade.

After Turpan entered the Xizhou period, the Sogdians who were not registered in Xizhou also needed to go to various places for commodity trade by virtue of the license issued by the local

¹ Liu Huiqin, Chen Haitao, 2005(02), p. 123.

² Rong Xinjiang, 2014, p.48.

³ *Tang Da Zhao Lin Ji* 唐大诏令集, 2008, p. 702.

⁴ W. Henning, 1940, pp 8-11. Wang Yongping, 2022(03), pp. 88-95.

government of the Tang Dynasty¹. Such trade is also common for the Sogdians living in other prefectures in the Tarim Basin. Xizhou, the trade center of the Turpan Depression since the Gaochang State period, is the first choice for many Sogdians to do business. Zhu Lei made statistics on the traders in the Turpan documents 《高昌内藏奏得称价钱帐》². The vast majority of the trading parties were Sogdians. Among them, there were 16 people surnamed Kang(康), 10 people surnamed He(何), 6 people surnamed Cao(曹), 5 people surnamed An(安), and 1 person surnamed Shi(史). The commodities involved gold, silver, copper, incense, salt, medicine, salt, molasses, and tulip root.³ Besides transporting the goods mentioned above, the Sogdians also trade in horses and camels.

From the following unearthed documents in Turpan, we can see the situation of the Sogdians when they were doing trade in Xizhou(西州). The document 《唐贞观廿二年(648)庭州人米巡职辞为公请给公验事》 records the historical facts of the transaction of the maidservant who was brought to Xizhou by Sotgdians, Mi Xunzhi(米巡职), in Tingzhou(庭州). The contents are as follows:

- 1 贞观廿二(中缺)庭州人米巡职辞:
- 2 米巡职年叁拾奴哥多弥施年拾伍
- 3 婢娑鬲年拾贰馳壹头黄铁勤敦捌岁
- 4 羊拾伍口
- 5 州司: 巡职今将上件奴婢馳等, 望于西
- 6 州市易。恐所在烽塞, 不练来由。请乞
- 7 公验。请裁, 谨辞。
- 8 巡职庭州根民, 任往
- 9 西州市易, 所在烽
- 10 塞勘放。怀信白。
- 11 廿一日⁴

(In the twenty second year of the Zhenguan era, Mi Xunzhi, a Tingzhou native, went to Xizhou to trade commodities and prayed to the government for evidence to travel to Xizhou.)

In order to carry out trade in Xizhou, the Mi Xunzhi(米巡职), a Sogdians from Tingzhou, mentioned in the document mentioned above, applied to the government for credentials. From the perspective of address, the official position of the Sogdians surnamed Mi, was “patrol”. In the ninth year after the Tang Dynasty conquered Gaochang State, he carried a slave, a maid, a camel, and a sheep to Xizhou for trade. This document reveals information that Turpan is not only an important town on the whole Silk Road trade but also a central place for trade transactions between towns in the Tarim Basin. Sogdians are under the control of the Tang government when they travel to and from Xizhou for commercial activities. The Sogdian trade often accompanied the slave trade.

¹ Lin Meicun, 1995, pp. 68-79.

² *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, pp.318-325.

³ Zhu Lei, 1982, pp. 17-24.

⁴ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, p. 306.

First of all, the short-distance trade centered on the Turpan Depression was very developed, which made the Sogdians settle down as the natives after reaching Turpan or settle down in other towns in the Tarim Basin and go to Gaochang for commercial activities. For this reason, there have been many Sogdian settlers in the Turpan Depression since the middle of the 5th century, which can be proved by the documents unearthed in Turpan.

About the characteristics of the commercial trade of the Sogdians in Turpan, Zheng Yanyan, a scholar, summarized its characteristics as the small caravan model¹, which was formed based on the Sogdians' short-distance trade with Turpan Depression as their stronghold. Although the commercial location of Turpan is superior, it is only as far as the interior of the Turpan Basin is concerned. If placed in a broader scope, its advantages will be significantly weakened compared with Liangzhou(凉州), an important town on the Hexi Corridor that controls the Silk Road. The Turpan area is located in the desert oasis, which limit its resources , so it can not bear the large number of people in the Sogdian caravan². Therefore, the Sogdian caravan in the Turpan area is mainly small-scale.

During the Gaochang State period and the Xizhou period, the Turpan area had a relatively stable social environment. This stable rule made the large Sogdian caravans, which were initially aimed at helping each other, lack the necessity of existence.³After a large number of Sogdians settled and became natives, they often chose short-distance trade between Xizhou, Guazhou(瓜州) and Yizhou(伊州). This feature continued from the period of Gaochang State to the period of Xizhou. This short-distance trade also does not need the support of large-scale caravans.

The Sogdians settled in Turpan earlier and engaged in short-distance trade so that they would not form a sizeable independent settlement in Turpan, so their internal relations would not be deep. At the same time, the identity of national culture and origin would be easily broken, and it would be easy to mix with the Han people, which also accelerated the Sinicization of the Sogdians in Turpan. The life form and cultural identity process of the Sogdians in a region are closely related to their trade status here.

Secondly, the Tang government managed and regulated the trade of the Sogdians in Xizhou. According to Wu Zhen's summary of the commercial activities of the Sogdians in Xizhou,⁴ we can know the following information: Sogdians generally trade in Xizhou and other cities and towns as before, and in this process, they need to provide official documents; in the trading activities between the Sogdians and the Han people, many of the guarantors are also Sogdians.

According to the Dunhuang document S.1344 《开元户部格》, "If there are various merchants

¹ Zheng Yanyan, 2012(02).

² Zheng Yanyan, 2012(02), p. 17.

³ Zheng Yanyan, 2012(02), p. 17.

⁴ Wu Zhen, 2009, pp. 164-173.

who drive camels, they are not allowed to enter the vassal territory after traveling to the mainland for trading. Strict control should be exercised at all border crossings. If there are people from Xizhou, Tingzhou, or Yizhou, they can go to the Central Plains after verifying their credentials.”¹ The Tang Dynasty strictly restricted non-Han merchants(胡商) to trade livestock in China. Meanwhile, it is also not allowed to go to the territory outside the scope of the Tang Dynasty through the hinterland when they left Gaochang to go to the hinterland². Besides, Sogdian merchants who have been registered in Xizhou, Tingzhou and Yizhou(伊州) can continue to go east to the mainland for trade after obtaining official documents. For example, in the Turpan document 《康义罗施等请过所案卷》³ wrote in the first year of Chuigong(垂拱) era (685), is recorded that the Sogdian merchants who set out from Xizhou to Chang’an, of which person Kang Hecha(康纡槎) and Kang Yiluoshi(康义罗施) should be the Sogdians. They should apply for license to Xizhou Area Commandery(西州都督府) before continue to pass. It can be seen that the Tang Dynasty was strict in its trade management.

The Tang Dynasty regulated and managed the commercial activities of Xizhou, including the Sogdians, which was also the result of the Tang rulers’ attention to the development of Turpan’s commerce. The rulers of the Tang Dynasty attached great importance to the Sogdians living in Xizhou, not only for their ability to trade but also for their language advantages as translators on the Silk Road.

There are also many Sogdians in the military affairs of Xizhou, but they also retain their status as merchants. The document 《唐开元廿一年公元年正月西州百姓石染典买马契》⁴ records the horse buying activities between the Sogdians Shi Randian (石染典) and the merchant Kang Sili (康思礼). The Shi Randian here has a military post, called “Youji General (游击将军)”⁵. The document mentions that Shi Randian sees his family and his wife here, which can be seen that he has been registered in Xizhou and went to Yizhou twice in the 20th (732) and 21st (733) years of the Kaiyuan(开元) era of Tang Dynasty. The Tang government did not restrict commercial activities because of its military status.

The above examples reflect two points. First, after a long period of settlement in Turpan, the Sogdians have engaged in a variety of occupations like the local people, including general military positions; the second is that as the merchants, the Sogdians are responsible for developing of commercial trade in Turpan. The rulers of the Tang Dynasty still encouraged them to continue to trade based on the importance of the social economy of Xizhou and the whole western region. This continuation benefited from the commercial value created by the Sogdians in the Turpan Depression since the fifth century.

¹ *Yingcang Dunhuang Wenxian* 英藏敦煌文献, No.2, 1990, p. 269.

² Liu Zifan, 2021(01), p. 269.

³ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1986, pp. 88-94.

⁴ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1990, p. 44 .

⁵ Youji General (游击将军): Mobile corps commander, a kind of military prestiger title of the Tang.

The Sogdians also played the role of interpreters on the Silk Road. The Turpan document 《译语人康某辩辞为领军资练事》¹ records that there is a translator named Kang in Gaochang County. These translators mainly assist local officials in receiving foreign missions.² In the document 《收领马价抄》³, the translator He Deli(何德力) is also the Sogdians. The document reflects that He Deli also talks with the head of Turgesh (突骑施) on behalf of the government about the price of horses. As far as the Tang Dynasty was concerned, the Sogdians, with Xizhou as their stronghold, traded with Turkic peoples to the north. The Turkic peoples obtained the necessary living materials from the Sogdians in exchange for the excellent horses from the northern grasslands.

There are high-quality horses in the native land of Sogdians in Central Asia, so the Sogdians have their uniqueness in the selection and breeding of horses. There is a note recorded in *Tang Huiyao* 《唐会要》: “The horses from Kang State are huge, during Wude(武德) era, offered 4,000 as official horses.”(康国马, 康居国也, 是大宛马种, 形容极大。武德中, 康国献四千匹, 今时官马, 犹是其种。)⁴ Turpan Depression was the most important horse trading market in the Tang Dynasty. For example, in the official document of the governor’s office of Xizhou, 《为请留送东官马填充团结欠马事》⁵, it was recorded that 70 official horses were required to be left in Xizhou, and some were transported to the east. In the fourth year of Chang’an(长安) era (704), the document 《请处分抽配十馱马事》⁶ also recorded that the county department bought ten horses, and the counties would also draw some horses from it. The work involves buying horses from Central Asia or nomadic peoples and transporting them to other cities and towns, of which the most important is the Sogdians who are good at long-distance trade.

Sogdians often act as the guarantors in the transactions in Xizhou. For example, the guarantor in the document 《买驼契》 wrote in the fourth year of Xianheng(咸亨) era(673) was Sogdians Kang Mozhe(康莫遮)⁷, and the guarantor in document 《请过所案》 was Sogdians Kang Adin(康阿丁) from Tingzhou(庭州), Sogdians Shi Bao(史保) from Yizhou(伊州), Sogdians Cao Bunazhe(曹不那遮) and Shi Kangshi(史康师) from other towns⁸. The four Sogdians mentioned here lived in Tingzhou(庭州), Yizhou(伊州), Yanqi(焉耆), and Gaochang(高昌) respectively, which again shows that there is regular short-distance trade between these towns. Moreover, the Sogdians also play an essential role in such short-distance trade.

In general, most of the guarantors are registered people, but there are also cases where the non-registered Sogdians act as guarantors. For example, in Turpan document 《买马契》, Shi Randian(石染典), a Sogdians in Xizhou, bought the horses. The guarantors for him are

¹ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1985, p. 72.

² Li Fang, 1994(02), pp.45-51.

³ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1987, p.87.

⁴ *Tang Huiyao* 唐会要, 2006, p.1547.

⁵ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1987, p.82.

⁶ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1986, p.282.

⁷ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1986, p.389.

⁸ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1986, pp. 92-93.

non-registered non-Han people, Luo Shina(罗世那) and An Dahan(安达汉), and local registered Sogdians Shi Zaohan(石早寒).¹ Sogdians usually act as guarantors for their clans members, which is also due to the nature of merchants. As profit-seeking merchants, they usually choose their relatives who are relatively trusted when they engage in commercial trade. Whether registered or not, they guarantee each other and help each other consolidate the established commercial trade network.

It can be seen from the documents 《唐贞观廿二年(648)庭州人米巡职辞为公请给公验事》² mentioned above that the trade activities of the Sogdians centered on Turpan were often accompanied by the slave trade. Scholars have already discussed this point³. This thesis focuses on the trading mode reflected in a slave trading instrument.

The document 《唐开元十九年(731)唐荣买婢失满儿市券》⁴ said that Tang Rong bought the maidservant named Shimaner(失满儿) from Sogdian merchant Mi Lushan(米禄山) in Xizhou, and Mi Lushan(米禄山) got 40 pieces of silk. The transaction medium of the slave trade mentioned here is silk. It can be seen that there are various kinds of trade and transaction media of the Sogdians in Turpan. Besides gold and silver coins, silk is one of them. The diversity of commercial transaction media in Turpan also benefits from the operation of the Sogdians here.

The Sogdians carried out commercial trade in the Turpan Depression, prompting the gold and silver coins from Byzantium and Persia to enter the Turpan market and become currency. In the documents unearthed in Turpan, the use of silver money in the transactions of the Sogdians shows that the popularity of gold and silver coins in the western region is related to the Sogdian merchants. Sassanian Persian silver coins and some western silver coins played an international currency role in the trade exchange along the Silk Road.⁵ Many gold and silver coins were unearthed in the tombs of Gaochang-state and Xizhou periods excavated in Turpan. As an intermediary, the Sogdians traveled between Byzantium, the Western Regions, and even the Western Turkic peoples and passed through the Persian Empire on the road. Under such frequent trade exchanges, Byzantine gold and Persian silver coins flowed into the Turpan area through the Sogdians. They became the currency in the Turpan area and even the Tarim basin⁶.

Lu Qianqian believed that the Turpan monetary system from the middle of the 6th century to the period of Xizhou in the Tang Dynasty experienced a process from the silver standard to the silk standard and then to the copper standard.⁷ What determined this process was the commercial trade situation in Turpan from periods Gaochang-state to Xizhou. As an important

¹ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1990, pp. 48-49.

² *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, p. 306.

³ Zheng Yanyan, 2012(02), p. 18.

⁴ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1990, pp.26-28.

⁵ Jiang Boqin, 1994, p. 199.

⁶ Jiang Boqin, 1994, pp. 7-9.

⁷ Lu Xiangqian, 1992, pp. 239-260.

undertaker of the Turpan trade, the Sogdians played an important role in this process.

The fact that the use of silk fabrics in commercial transactions in Turpan is related to the Sogdians can be seen from several Turpan documents. A lawsuit document, 《唐西州高昌县上安西都护府牒稿为录上询问曹禄山诉李绍谨两造辩辞事》, records that around year 670, Li Shaojin, a Chang'an merchant, borrowed 275 pieces of silk from Cao Lushan(曹禄山) in Gongyue town(弓月城) to finance trade in Anxi.¹ 《唐咸亨四年西州前庭府杜队正买驼契》 records that a person bought camels from the Sogdian merchant Kang Wupoyan(康乌破延) with 18 pieces of silk in the fourth year of Xian Heng(咸亨) era(673) during Xizhou period.² 《唐神龙三年和汤牒为被为被问买马事》 records that the price of a 7-year-old horse at that time was 13 pieces of silk.³ 《唐开元二十一年(733)石染典买马契》 records that the Sogdians in Xizhou, Shi Randian(石染典) bought a 6-year-old horse from the Sogdians Kang Sili(康思礼), and its price was 18 pieces of silk;⁴ in the same year, Shi Randian(石染典) bought a donkey by 17 pieces of silk⁵. It can be seen that it is prevalent for the Sogdians in Xizhou to use silk as a payment method when trading.

In fact, during the period of Xizhou in the Tang Dynasty, due to the management by the Tang Dynasty, the copper coin “Kaiyuan Tongbao”(开元通宝) used by the Tang Dynasty also began to occupy a vital position in the commodity circulation market of Xizhou. In document 《武周如意元年(692)里正李黑收领史玄政长行马价抄》 has this record: “史玄政付长行马价银钱貳文, 准铜钱陆拾肆文”⁶, reflecting the phenomenon that the silver money and copper money were used together when Sogdian Shi Xuanzheng(史玄政) traded. Therefore, the use of silk fabrics in the Turpan trade exchange is related to the regular long-distance trade of the Sogdians. The Silk trade also has purchasing power, and it is precisely because of the relatively stable value of silk that many Sogdians use silk as a payment method⁷ when trading horses, camels, and even enslaved people. They often do commercial activities with the nomadic people in the northwest using silk and other fabric products. On the one hand, silk is easy to carry; on the other hand, these silk fabrics are also commodities needed by nomadic peoples.

It can be seen that since the 5th century, the Sogdians have entered the Turpan region in large numbers for trade. With their long-term life in Turpan, Sogdians who are native to Turpan are engaged in a variety of occupations as well as the local people, and many even have official positions. Based on the crucial influence of the Sogdians in the trade around Turpan, whether in the Gaochang-state period or the Xizhou period, the Sogdians, relying on their ability to trade and excellent language talent, took Turpan as a stronghold to connect the states of the Tarim Basin, the northern grassland people and even the Central Asian Sogdiana, and

¹ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1985, p.471.

² *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1986, p.389.

³ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1987, p.68.

⁴ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1990, pp. 48-49.

⁵ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1990, p. 50.

⁶ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1986, p.441.

⁷ Zhao Zhen, 2019, p. 40.

developed and expanded their trade network.

3.3 The Cultural Identity of Sogdians in Xizhou

There have been traces of Sogdians engaging in commercial activities in the Turpan area for a long time. Based on Turpan's geographical location and historical and cultural environment, Sogdians living here have formed a unique identity under the dual influence of Central Plains culture and Buddhism supported by the rulers. Tang conquered Gaochang state to establish Xizhou and took the people of Xizhou as the registered residents. According to the documents unearthed in Turpan, the Sogdians in Xizhou still largely continue the living habits and cultural identity of the Gaochang State period. This section mainly explores the cultural identity of the Sogdians in Xizhou based on the two Sogdian family tombs and some documents unearthed in Turpan.

3.3.1 Sogdian Family Tombs in Turpan

3.3.1.1 Tombs of Sogdian Family with Surname Kang in Jiaohe Gouxi(交河沟西)

The Gouxi(沟西) Cemetery in the Jiaohe(交河) town is a public cemetery for the residents of Turpan. The Sogdian Kang family cemetery excavated in the 2004-2005 is located southeast of the Gouxi Cemetery. A total of 36 tombs were found in this excavation, including 33 tombs and five epitaphs. According to the information provided by the epitaphs, the tomb's owner was the Sogdian family with the surname Kang. The investigation of the objects unearthed in the tomb determined that the entire cemetery belonged to the Sogdians. There are eight rows of tombs in the whole cemetery, and the burial time of the back rows is much earlier. The burial time in the whole cemetery is at least 69 years.¹

The tombs of the Sogdian Kang family cemetery in Jiaohe town are built with gravel walls. Family members are often buried in a cemetery for several generations. As the burial time of each member is different, the entire family cemetery needs to be planned to ensure that the ancestors' tombs are not damaged². This shows that the Sogdian Kang family began to follow the local Turpan family in the planning and constructing family tombs in the late 6th century during the Gaochang State period.

Among Sogdian Kang's tombs, 30 are ramped cave tombs, and 3 are vertical cave partial chamber tombs. The earliest epitaph unearthed is the 33rd year of the Yanchang(延昌) era in the Gaochang State under the Qu family's rule (593), and the latest is the second year of Longshuo(龙朔) era (662) under rule of the Tang Dynasty, which determines that the burial age is basically within the range from the late Gaochang State period to the Xizhou period, mainly the Xizhou period.³ There are a total of two gold coins in the funeral goods, one of

¹ Tulufan Jintang Mudi 吐鲁番晋唐墓地, 2019, pp. 5-7.

² Tulufan Diqu Wenwuju 吐鲁番出土文书, 2006(12), p. 24.

³ Tulufan Jintang Mudi 吐鲁番晋唐墓地, 2019, p. 56.

which had a crowned head of the Roman emperor; the three silver coins are the coins of Khosrau II of the Sassanian Dynasty,¹ reflecting the characteristics that the Sogdians carry gold and silver coins on their way to trade.

The following is a list of tombs and burial objects that may be related to the identity of Sogdians and reflect their cultural characteristics:

Table 1 Sogdian elements in Gouxu Cemetery

Tomb	Object	Content	Reference ²
04TYGXM1	One Persian Silver coin	The obverse is a lateral bust of Khosrau II (AD 590-628) with four crescent moons hugging stars on the outer edge; on the back is a Zoroastrian altar, with a priest standing on each side of the platform, and four crescent moons holding stars on the outer edge.	p. 14
04TYGXM4	One epitaph	延昌卅年癸□岁十，二月□□十八日，□□领兵胡将康□，钵春秋五十有四□，疾卒于交河城内□，柩启康氏之墓。 In the thirtieth year of the Yanchang era, Kang□Bo died in Jiaohe. He missed being 54 years old, and the coffin was placed in the tomb of Kang.	p. 18
04TYGXM5	One epitaph	延昌卅三年癸丑，岁三月□□日卒于，交河岸上殡葬康，蜜乃春秋八十有三，康氏之墓表。In the third-third year of the Yanchang era, Kang Raimi died in Jiaohe. He missed being 83 years old.	p. 19
04TYGXM6	One epitaph	延昌卅五年乙卯，岁三月朔己未廿八，日丙戌帐下左右康，众僧春秋卅有□，康氏之墓表。In the thirt-fiveth year of Yanchang, Kang Zhongseng died in the city of Jiaohe.	p. 20
04TYGXM11	One epitaph	贞观十四年岁次，在庚子十一月朔，甲子十六日乙卯，交河县民高将康，业相春秋八十有，二以终□灵殒殡，葬斯墓康氏之墓表。In the 14th year of the Zhenguan era, Kang Yexiang died in Jiaohe. He missed being 82 years old.	pp. 21-23
	One imitation Roman gold coin	The motif is Anastasius I (AD 419-518)	
04TYGXM14	One Persian silver coin	The obverse is a lateral bust of Khosrau II (AD 590-628) with four crescent moons hugging stars on the outer edge; on the back is a Zoroastrian altar, with a priest standing on each side of the platform, and four crescent moons holding stars on the outer edge.	pp. 26-27
04TYGXM20	One epitaph	诃△守延愿交河郡内将之子其先出，自中华迁播屈于	p. 38

¹ *Tulufan Jintang Mudi* 吐鲁番晋唐墓地, 2019, p. 7.

² All the data of this table are from *Tulufan Jintang Mudi* 吐鲁番晋唐墓地.

		交河之郡也君以立，性高洁禀气忠诚泛爱深慈谈让为质，乡邦推之领袖邻田谢以嘉仁识干清，强释褐而□交河称右领军岸头府队，正正八品属大唐启运乘以旧资告身，有二一云骑二武骑尉忽以不衰遇患，缠躬医方药石将疔不绝转以弥留困，笃余以龙朔二年正月十六日落于私，第也有秋七十有六即以其年其月十，六日葬于城西墓也河期积善无征变，随物化亲族为之悲痛乡闾闻之叹伤，岂以川水难停斯人逝往故立铭记于，□官之左使千秋不朽，正月十六日书。In the 2nd year of the Longshuo era, Kang Yanyuan died in Jiaohe. He missed being 76 years old.	
04TYGXM22	ossuary	N/A	p. 40
04TYGXM28	One-eared clay pot	Inside contains ashes	p. 45
04TYGXM29	One Persian silver coin	The obverse is a lateral bust of Khosrau II (AD 590-628) with four crescent moons hugging stars on the outer edge; on the back is a Zoroastrian altar, with a priest standing on each side of the platform, and four crescent moons holding stars on the outer edge.	p. 46

There are five epitaphs unearthed in this group of tombs. The tomb owners are Kang □bo(康□钵), Kang Minai(康蜜乃), Kang Zhongsheng(康众僧), Kang Yexiang(康业相), and Kang Yanyuan(康延愿). According to the stages of the epitaphs in Turpan, the first three belong to the Gaochang State period, and the last two belong to the Xizhou period.¹ The first two are exotic from their names, while the latter contains Buddhist elements. This process of name change is consistent with the fact that the previous generation of a Sogdian family still translated the non-Han name with Han characters containing foreign factors. With the long-term living in Turpan mixing with the local people, and the promotion of Buddhism by the ruler of Gaochang state, the descendants of the Sogdian Kang family diluted the traces of Sogdian religion in the naming and changed to names containing Buddhist factors. This process of integration is no doubt consistent with the whole process of the Sinicization of the Sogdians.

3.3.1.2 Tombs of Sogdian Kang Family in Badamu(巴达木)

Badam Tombs, discovered in 2004, are located east of Gaochang town.² There are 79 tombs unearthed in the whole Badamu Cemetery, of which three are earth cave tombs with sloping tombs with patio, and the remaining 76 are earth cave tombs with sloping tombs without patio. The burial form of the whole Badamu Cemetery is the earth cave tomb with a courtyard ramp popular in the Tang Dynasty, which is the same as that of Astana, Halahezhuo (哈拉和卓),

¹ Zhang Mingxin, 2007(02), pp. 57-58.

² Tulufan Diqiu Wenwuju, 2006(12), pp.47-72 .

and Jiaohe(沟西) cemeteries in Xinjiang, China during that period.

According to the text data unearthed from Badamu Cemetery, the surnames of the tomb owners include Bai(白), Kang(康), Zhu(朱), Mai(买), and other Han surnames, which shows that the Badamu Cemetery was a multi-ethnic public cemetery during the period from Gaochang State to Xizhou. According to the owners of tombs and the characteristics of the human body, most of the people buried in this tomb group are descendants of the non-Han people. However, since Han immigrants always dominated the Turpan region, coupled with the respect for Han culture from rules, the burial customs reflected in this tomb group were mainly Han styles, such as burial and epitaphs. Many non-Han people and Han people were buried in the same cemetery group, which shows that there is no apparent exclusion between them, and their places of residence are also adjacent, which reflects the multi-ethnic social integration in Turpan.

No. 2 in Badamu Cemetery is the Sogdian Kang family tombs, in which the brick epitaphs and adobe epitaphs with the inscription of Sogdians were unearthed, and most of the tombs have earthen burial tables¹. The appearance of such a sizeable Sogdian family cemetery in the east of Gaochang town, among many non-Han people’s tombs, shows that many Sogdians once lived here and formed settlements².

The Kang Family tombs in the No. 2 platform of Badamu Cemetery also use a square with doorways to delimit the scope of family tombs. However, unlike most of the tombs in Turpan, which are usually built with gravel, Badamu Cemetery uses trench excavation as the four boundaries of the tomb yard. This makes the tomb yard more like a real ghost house³, which embodies the concept of “death is like a rebirth” in the funeral culture from the Han people.

Seven epitaphs were unearthed from the Kang family tomb group, the earliest of which was the 14th year of Yanchang(延昌) era(574), and the latest of which was the 2nd year of Chuigong(垂拱) era (686) of the Tang Dynasty. The cemetery age here was between the late Gaochang State period and the Xizhou period, the same as the Sogdian Kang family cemetery in Jiaohe town.⁴ Among the unearthed items, there are more than 100 ancestor money, all of which are made of gourd wood and are irregular in shape.

The following is a list of tombs and burial objects that may be related to the identity of Sogdians and reflect their cultural characteristics:

Table 2 Sogdian elements in Ba Da Mu Cemetery

Tomb	Object	Content	Reference ⁵
M201	One epitaph	延昌十四年甲午岁二月, 廿一日康虏奴公母, 墓表 14th year of	p. 190

¹ *Tulufan Jintang Mudi 吐鲁番晋唐墓地*, 2019, p. 144.

² Ma Xiaoling, 2020, p. 223.

³ *Tulufan Diqu Wenwuju*, 2006(12), p. 67.

⁴ *Tulufan Jintang Mudi 吐鲁番晋唐墓地*, 2019, p. 325.

⁵ All the data of this table are from *Tulufan Jintang Mudi 吐鲁番晋唐墓地*.

		Yanchang era, Kang Lunu.	
M202	One epitaph	康虏奴及妻，竺氏买婢延昌，十四年甲午岁二月廿，三日康之墓表 Kang Lunv and his wife, Zhushi, brought a slave in the 14th of Yanchang era.	p. 190
	Documents fragments	N/A	p. 197
M204	One epitaph	保相妻墓 Tomb of Baoxiang's wife	p. 199
M209	Silk painting with Fuxi(伏羲) and Nvwa(女娲)	N/A	p. 224
M212	Epitaph	十二月朔壬辰□(满)廿十四日乙卯除，延寿七年庚寅岁十二月，廿四日左亲侍左右康浮面，之辅墓	p. 230
M216	Persian silver coins	N/A	p. 237
M217	One epitaph	君讳□节其先究城之胜族也卜宅，徙塞高栖此地长为西州人焉，祖前庭府队正上护军讳护□父上柱国让欢，之长子祗质怡亮禀灵聪颖文风有裕□，□知机与交淡水之情密契秉拔云之趣年将，四五祗奉公门孝笃居德无亏私空岂讳，涉洹之梦俄及蒿里之闷忽从秀而靡实，歼光景春秋卅以垂拱二年岁属庚戌六月，十九日终共月廿一日权殡于私第其年十一月廿七日，迁葬城东先人旧礼茔也呜呼哀哉乃为，铭曰金方茂族玉塞[荣□陶] 儒训，性尚知机公庭肃私第仁次怀秀 Die in the 2nd of Chuigong era.	p. 238
M225	Persian silver coins	N/A	p. 250
M231	Epitaph	(Not recognized)	p. 256
M234	Imitation of Byzantine gold coins;	Justin I (AD 518-527) wears a chest of armor with embossed letters around the perimeter	p. 262
	One epitaph	延昌卅七年，丁巳岁十二月，十六日虎牙，将军康□□墓 General Kang's tomb	
M235	Imitation of Byzantine gold coins	Anastasius (AD 491-528) bust on the front with a weekly letter on the edge of the coin.	p. 264
M237	Men have gold coins in his mouth	N/A	p. 270
M238	Imitation of Byzantine gold coins	Anastasius (AD 491-528) image	p. 273
M244	Persian silver coins	The obverse is a bust of Khosrau II (AD 531-579) with four crescent moons holding stars on the outer edge; In the center of the back is a Zoroastrian altar, with a priest standing on each side of the platform.	p. 286
M245	Yiwu Shu(衣物疏)	白绫褶袄一具白绫衫袄一具白钿(银)带一具大刀，服(腿)屯一具冈(铜)究(完=椀?)弓箭一具金银铜钱一千文脚□，一两播(潘=攀)天思(丝)万万九千丈在得自去不得相注五	pp.291-292

		(件)若, 为相注五(件)各自有别舅(咎)若谷(欲)求 海东头若谷(欲)觅, 海西壁 延寿九年壬辰岁六月十日倩书吏(李)定度时[见], 张贤(坚) 固。	
M247	Fragments of Sogdian documents	N/A	p. 296
M252	Byzantine gold coins; 30 ancestors coins	The pattern is blurred.	p. 305

The above part lists the relevant information on two Sogdian family tombs in Turpan. From the perspective of burial, we can study whether the tombs of Sogdians in a specific period conform to the system of government of that time and whether they also retain the identity of their ethnicity on the premise of conforming to the system.

3.3.2 Absorption of Han Culture by the Sogdians in Turpan

In general, the Sogdian Kang family tombs in Jiaohe(交河) and Badamu(巴达木) in the Turpan region during the Gaochang State to Xizhou period reflect the absorption of local burial customs by the Sogdians. Generally speaking, the tombs of the Sogdians entered China are gradually close to the local burial style in shape, which is the most direct manifestation of the influence of the local burial culture after they entered China.¹ The Han culture of the Sogdians of Turpan is the Han culture with the characteristics of the Turpan region.

First of all, from the perspective of the style of the burial group, the similarity between the two groups and the yard-style family tombs widely distributed in the Hexi region shows that the burial customs in the Turpan area are related to those in the Hexi region, which is a burial custom introduced by Han immigrants since the Western Han Dynasty.² The burial custom of “gathering and burying” used by the Sogdians in Turpan is also the custom of the residents in the region. The main burial form of these two Sogdian Kang family tombs is the earthen cave tomb without a patio in the slope cemetery,³ which is also the main burial form from the Jin Dynasty to the middle of the Southern and Northern Dynasties in Turpan.⁴

There are many couples buried together in these family tombs. Since the joint burial of husband and wife has not been seen in Sogdiana, Cheng Yue believes that this should result from accepting Han influence.⁵ In China, the custom of gathering families for burial has gradually formed since the Shang Dynasties⁶, and the joint burial of a couple has been increasing since the Han Dynasty. It has gradually become the primary way of family burial.⁷

¹ Ma Xiaolin, 2015, p. 104

² Ma Xiaolin, 2020, p. 227

³ Ma Xiaolin, 2020, p. 224

⁴ Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu Bowuguan 新疆维吾尔自治区博物馆, 1973(10), pp. 7-9.

⁵ Cheng Yue, 1994(01), p. 25.

⁶ Yang Xizhang, 1983(10), pp. 67-72.

⁷ Chen Huawen, 2007, p.133.

The Han people moved from the Central Plains to the Turpan region, bringing the most stable and long-preserved funeral custom in the culture here. The emergence of the joint burial custom in the Turpan region can be seen as the reflection of the root of the Central Plains culture in this region.

However, the custom of placing the corpse on the reed mat of the burial table or the ground is different from that of Xi'an(西安) tombs simultaneously. From the stages of the tombs in Xi'an and Turpan, we can see that the tombs during the Xizhou period in the Turpan region are about the same as those in Xi'an from the early Tang Dynasty to the middle Tang Dynasty.¹ This kind of burial custom in Turpan is inherited from the burial tradition in the region since the Sixteen Kingdoms and the Southern and Northern Dynasties.² The same burial custom of placing the body upright on the reed mat can also be seen in Astana tombs of the same period³.

In contrast, there are burial tools in Xi'an tombs, rather than placing the body on the reed mat of the earthen corpse table in Turpan. Chen Anli believes that this may be due to the prevalence of joint burial in Turpan, as the owners of a tomb are not buried at the same time, so the body should be placed on the reed mat so that the owner of the tomb who will be buried later can be placed together with the existing body.⁴ The corpses in the tombs of the Central Plains are primarily placed in the coffins; even if the owners buried successively, the first one will not be placed on the reed mat of the corpse table. This burial culture with local characteristics developed in the Turpan region is based on absorbing the customs of joint burial of Central Plains culture.

The difference is because Turpan is far away from the Central Plains of China and has formed a relatively independent regime. Its prominent people are Han people from the Central Plains who constantly migrated from the Han Dynasty, the Wei and Jin Dynasties. However, since the Sixteen Kingdoms Period, due to the war, the flow of people lacks integrity compared with the previous generation; in addition, since the middle of the 5th century, Turpan has entered the Gaochang State period, and the people in power are bound to have more strict control and management over the immigration and emigration of the population. Although there are still Han people coming from the Central Plains, at this time, the development of Han culture in Turpan and the development process of Han culture in the Central Plains cannot be consistent. Therefore, the burial customs of the Sogdians in Turpan are more inherited from the Han customs that have been rooted in Turpan since the Wei and Jin dynasties, which are not the same as those of the Central Plains in the Tang Dynasty.

Secondly, we can see the absorption of the Central Plains culture by the two families from the burial objects. It can be seen from the table above that the burial objects in the Sogdian Kang

¹ Chen Anli, 1991(01), p.60.

² Tulufan Diqu Wenwuju 吐鲁番地区文物局, 2006(12), pp. 3-5.

³ Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu Museum 新疆维吾尔自治区博物馆, 1973(10), pp. 9-10.

⁴ Chen Anli, 1991(01), p.64.

family tombs in Badamu are more abundant, which can also reflect the absorption of Han culture by the Sogdian family better.

The funerary objects of the Sogdian Kang family cemetery in Badamu No. 2 platform are no different from those found in the tombs of other ethnicities in the No. 1 and No. 3 platforms. The funerary objects such as copper covering, the paintings with Fuxi(伏羲) and Nvwa(女娲), brocade coverings, and so on are also common in the non-Sogdian tombs of the same period in Turpan, which shows that the Sogdians in the late Gaochang State period and the Xizhou period have generally accepted the burial customs in this region. The following is a further illustration of some buried objects.

1. Ancestor money(冥币). In the above table, both M203 and M252 tombs found the coins of the dead, which were made of gourd shells. Some are covered in the eyes of the tomb owner, and some are in the mouth. These coins have been transformed into burial objects to a certain extent, symbolizing the wealth of the tomb owner during his lifetime. They are unique burial customs that should be inherited from the burial customs of the Central Plains.¹

Scholar Yu Xin believes that the emergence of Hades coins is related to sacrifice. However, it is not so much influenced by Confucianism as local beliefs and ancestor worship influence it.² Some scholars take three gold ancestor coins unearthed in the tombs of late Warring States in today's Changfeng County(长丰县), Anhui Province(安徽省), under the head of the deceased as an example and believe that the ancestor coins in the Badamu cemetery seem to inherit the characteristics of burying money formed in the late Warring States period.³ The Persian Sassanid silver coins unearthed in the Tang tomb in the northern suburbs of Luoyang(洛阳) in 1955 were placed on the head of the skeleton of the western side along with other burial artifacts, and some scholars speculated that the tomb owner may have been a minority from the Western Regions.⁴ Therefore, it is not easy to decide whether this way of burying the coins on the head has some religious significance or foreign cultural factors. Considering that the identity of the tomb's owner should be that of the Sogdians surnamed Kang, it is possible to consider it multifactorial. The appearance of the grave coins in the Sogdian tombs in Turpan may be a combination of foreign cultural factors and the local tradition of burying money.

2. Yiwu Shu(衣物疏). Burial documents were unearthed in tomb M245 that recorded the clothing burned by the tomb owner. This kind of document has been popular in the funeral custom of Turpan for three centuries, reflecting Turpan's local customs and religious beliefs.⁵ It has experienced three stages of change in the 300 years since it was popular in Gaochang Commandery and Gaochang State periods. Yiwu Shu in Turpan's funeral spread here with the

¹ Tulufan Jintang Mudi 吐鲁番晋唐墓地, 2019, p. 327.

² Yu Xin, 2012(01), p.181.

³ Yang Jiuxia, 1994(03), pp.37-39.

⁴ Zhao Guobi, 1960(8/9), p.94. Huo Hongwei, Cheng Yongjian, 2006(02), pp. 48-50.

⁵ Huang Jinchun, 2017(03), p. 32.

Han people going to Gaochang. After the Tang Dynasty ended its rule in Xizhou during the Dali(大历) era, with the decrease of Han people in Gaochang, the burial custom of Yiwu Shu gradually disappeared from relevant documents in Turpan.

Some scholars have divided the development of Yiwu Shu into three stages.¹ With the arrival of the Han people, Yiwu Shu was gradually popular in the funeral ceremony of Gaochang; therefore, its initial development stage contained strong characteristics of Han folk beliefs.² This also further proves that since the Western Han Dynasty, especially after many large families of the Central Plains moved to Gaochang in the Jin Dynasty, the Han people and Han culture played a dominant role in Gaochang. Later, with the increase of Buddhism's influence in Gaochang and its penetration into the people, the contents and vocabulary in Yiwu Shu, written in the middle of the 6th century, showed prominent Buddhist elements. However, this burial custom cannot be attributed to Buddhism. In the funeral concept of the Han people in the Central Plains, incineration is a primary way to send and enjoy things for ancestors. Therefore, Yiwu Shu reflects the influence of the Han immigrants in Turpan for a long time, as well as the esteem of the Han culture by the rulers in the Gaochang State period, which has brought an indelible impact on the Sogdians in Turpan.

3. Funeral painting with Fuxi(伏羲) and Nvwa(女娲). A unique silk painting with a Fuxi and Nvwa was unearthed in the tomb M208. The legend of Fuxi and Nvwa is the ancestor of the ancient legend of the Han people. These elements are mostly found in the silk paintings, portrait bricks, and tomb murals of the Han Dynasty in the Central Plains. Chen Anli believed that although the legend of Fuxi and Nvwa was widely spread among the people, it was difficult to see its image in the tombs in the Central Plains since the Han Dynasty; however, from the middle of the Northern and Southern Dynasties to the Tang Dynasty, there were many Fuxi and Nuwa paintings painted on silk in the tombs in Turpan. At the same time, he said that, unlike Turpan, there were more images of dragons, tigers, rosefinch, and sparrows in Xi'an tombs during this period.³ It can be understood that these images were brought in by the Han people who migrated from the Central Plains to Turpan during the Southern and Northern Dynasties and were used in the burial products, reflecting the reflection of the Turpan Han people's attachment to the traditional culture and legends of the Central Plains. However, due to the inconsistency between the speed and degree of development of the Central Plains culture in Turpan and the hinterland of the Central Plains, the image of the dragon and tiger appeared more often in the tombs of the Central Plains in the Tang Dynasty. The Turpan region was still dominated by the burial customs of the Central Plains during the Southern and Northern Dynasties.

Thirdly, the epitaphs unearthed from the two Sogdian family tombs embody the absorption of Central Plains acculturation by the Sogdians in Turpan.

¹ Dang Yan, Weng Hongshou, 2001(01), p. 78.

² Huang Jinchun, 2017(03), p. 33.

³ Chen Anli, 1991(01), p.63.

Seven epitaphs were unearthed in the Sogdian tombs of the Badamu Cemetery, of which 6 are simple lists, and only the epitaph in M217 has the characteristics of writing epitaphs in the Central Plains, and the content is detailed and beautiful. It is still worth analyzing that the epitaph in Tomb M217 was written later than the Yiwu Shu unearthed in Tomb M245. Here, it is reasonable to guess that the owner of M217 does not match the epitaph found in this tomb, and the reasons for this need further investigation.

Among the five epitaphs unearthed in Sogdian Kang family tombs in Jiaohe town, the first three were written in the Gaochang State period under Qu family rule, and the text has a noticeable “Yanchang”(延昌) reign title. Although the fourth was written in the Xizhou period, the writing style and content are the same as those of the first three, and the content is straightforward, which can be called a list. Only the fifth epitaph, the epitaph for Sogdian Kang Yanyuan(康延愿) in tomb No. 04TYGXM20, is clearly influenced by the writing of the Central Plains culture.

The epitaph of Kang Yanyuan(康延愿) is 230 characters and was written in the year 662, the 22nd year after the Tang conquered Gaochang State. Kang Yanyuan(康延愿) died in the second year of Longshuo(龙朔) era(662), at the age of 76. Consider that the Tang only conquered Gaochang in 640 to establish Xizhou. That is to say, the actual time of Kang Yanyuan’s life as a Tang people was only the last twenty years of his life, and most of his life was in the late Gaochang state period. His epitaph is very different from the previous four in writing style, and it can be speculated that in the late Gaochang State where Kang Yanyuan was living, the non-Han people had begun to learn this writing style came from Central Plains to promote the honor of the deceased by enriching the family lineage in the epitaph.¹ When describing his family lineage, Kang Yanyuan’s epitaph mentions that he “came from China and moved to Jiaohe town”², indicating that he was more concerned about his ancestors coming from the Central Plains. However, judging from the exotic names of the owners of the first two tombs unearthed in the Sogdian Kang tombs, his predecessor did not come from the Central Plains, and it is judged that the description of Kang Yanyuan’s tomb to his ancestors from the Central Plains should also be a kind of attachment.

Whether Kang Yanyuan was a Sogdian or not remains a point of discussion. It is related to the birthplace in which it was written. Judging from the five epitaphs unearthed in this Kang family tombs, only the surname of the late one cannot be seen on the epitaph and directly states that his family came from China, and most researchers judge his surname Kang based on his epitaph found in the Sogdian Kang family tombs.

When discussing the process of Sinicization of the Sogdians, it is impossible to equate the degree of their integration with the times rigidly, nor to absolutely compare the situation of the Sogdians of the same era horizontally, but to consider them individually.

¹ Zhang Minxin, 2007(02), p. 58.

² 吐鲁番地区文物局, 2006(12), p. 22.

Among the five epitaphs in the Sogdian Kang family tombs in Jiaohe town, four are leading generals. It can be seen that several generations have positions in office, indicating that this family in Jiaohe has accumulated in Turpan for several generations and should have a specific power. From the tombs of other families unearthed in Turpan, it can be seen that they were all large families during the Gaochang State period, and even had marriages with. The Kang family is still weaker than the Han families but more potent than other Sogdians. In this way, the choices made by the Sogdian Kang family in the face of changes in political and social development are different from those of individual Sogdians.

Compared with the Sogdians in the Turpan document 《唐西州崇化乡点籍样》, the Kang family settled in the Jiaohe town earlier and mixed with the local people, however, the Sogdians in Chonghua Township(崇化乡) during the Xizhou period are different. After the Tang Dynasty established Xizhou, the residents were organized into registered residents. The living places of local people were the same as those in Gaochang State. The conquest of the Tang Dynasty did not change the Turpan area from the village form. Chonghua Township should have gathered to form a residential area dominated by Sogdians in Gaochang state. After the establishment of Xizhou in the Tang Dynasty, the Sogdians in this area were directly and integrally transformed into residents in the Tang Dynasty in the form of villagers. Then, Sogdians in Chonghua Township accepted Han culture more slowly than those scattered among Han people.

The burial of the Sogdian Kang family in Jiaohe town, Turpan, embodies the most distinctive culture of the Central Plains, as well as traditional local beliefs. “It is not easy to completely accept the ideological system of a religious representative, and it is even more difficult to infiltrate into the burial customs determined by the longer traditional forces.”¹ This thesis agrees with this view very much. In the same way, it is not easy to accept a new culture or new religious thought in the funeral custom. For groups with stable religious thought and funeral customs deeply influenced by religion, accepting the new funeral form means giving up their traditional funeral culture to a certain extent and accepting the culture and belief contained in the other way around the funeral form. Although some traces of religion Xian(祆) can be seen in the tomb group of the Sogdian family in Jiaohe town, as previously analyzed, it does not have much religious meaning and can only be considered as the memory of the origin of these Sogdians.

On the whole, the two tombs of the Sogdian Kang family unearthed in Turpan reflect the deepening of their Sinicization during the period from the late Gaochang State to the Xizhou period, while the Sogdians have a stronger sense of identity with the Turpan area and Xizhou society.

The tombs of Sogdians can reflect the national identity attitude of the tomb owners, and the

¹ Meng Xianshi, 2004, p.249.

burial system is the national etiquette system that they should observe first at the funeral¹, which is related to their identity and identity in the state power.

3.3.3 The Religion of Sogdians in Turpan

3.3.3.1 Integration of Xian and local beliefs

At least in the middle of the 5th century, a large number of Sogdians came to Turpan to do trade and live. Therefore, the study and analysis of the Xian faith of Sogdians in Xizhou must be align the grasp of Turpan's historical background, especially the Gaochang State period before Xizhou of the Tang dynasty. As mentioned above, Turpan society has been an immigrant society dominated by government since the Western Han Dynasty. At the same time, it has also formed a small separatist country. Its rulers have absolute rights and worship Buddhism. Based on this historical background, Xian has been in a subordinate position in Gaochang for a long time, under the Han culture and Buddhism. Although it can be seen from the Turpan documents that the Xian Temple existed outside Gaochang town around the year 430, this temple here is also symbiotic with Buddhist temples.

According to the documents unearthed in Turpan, Xian existed in Turpan at least at the beginning of the 5th century with the arrival of the Sogdians. In the document 《某人条呈为取床及买毯事》 written in the year 418, there was a person named Yang Weng(杨翁); at the same time, there are also two people named Si Mingtian(汜明天) and Wang Weng(王翁) in another document 《无马人名籍》 written in the year 436. According to scholars' research, the characters Weng 翁 and Mingtian 明天 are the same word in different writing methods, created by Zoroastrians to show their worship of the god of light. However, there is no clear record of the Han people's belief in Xian in the Turpan documents of the Gaochang State period.² This may prove again that Xian is conservative in preaching, which makes it still concentrated among the Sogdians. Even though some Han people believe in Xian, this religion has not formed a force among non-Sogdians.

The title of *The Suvarnaprabhasa Sutra* 《金光明经》unearthed in the Buddhist pagoda in Anle town, Turpan, in 1965 recorded this scripture was written under the temple of "Hu Tian"(胡天) and "Nan Taihou"(南太后) in the east of Gaochang town.³ According to Rong Xinjiang's research, this scripture was written in 430 years⁴, and Hu Tian is the Xian god⁵. The academic view of the "Nan Taihou" temple is still inconclusive.⁶ This thesis agrees that "Hu Tian" is the Xian god. The writing of the Buddhist classic *The Suvarnaprabhasa Sutra* 《金光明经》 under the temple mentioned in the document shows that Xian and Buddhism existed simultaneously in the east of Gaochang at the beginning of the 5th century. As for the two

¹ Shen Ruiwen, 2019, p. 11.

² Wang Su, 1986(03), p. 170.

³ Tulufan Wenshu Zhenglixiaozu 吐鲁番文书整理小组, 1977(3), p. 26.

⁴ Rong Xinjiang, 2014, p.41.

⁵ Tulufan Wenshu Zhenglixiaozu 吐鲁番文书整理小组, 1977(3), p. 26.

⁶ Jiang Boqin, 1994, p.236.

existed in an ample space, more materials are needed to prove.

It is worth noting that Hu Tian(胡天) temple here is in the east of Gaochang, which is in line with the habit of the Sogdians coming from the west and hoping to continue to set out from Turpan Depression as a stronghold to the east to establish commercial relations with inland cities, which also means that Sogdians were living in the east of Gaochang in the early 5th century. However, the fact that there is an Xian temple in the east of Gaochang can show many Sogdians living here, but it can not prove whether they came from collective migration. This thesis believes that at this time, most of the Sogdians settled for trade in the form of individuals or on a small-scale, so the time they entered the Turpan Depression was not the same. From the beginning of the 5th century to the establishment of Xizhou in the Tang Dynasty, each Sogdians lived here for a different time determining the depth of acceptance of Turpan culture by Sogdians.

Another sacrificial document in the early 6th century also mentioned that the Xian faith existed in Dinggu(丁谷) County, Gaochang. The document 《高昌章和五年(535)取牛羊供祀帐》 recorded:

章和五年乙卯岁正月口日,取严天奴羊一口,供始耕。次三月十一日,取胡未馱羊一口,供祀风伯。次取麴孟顺羊一口,供祀树石。次三月二十四日,康祈羊一口,供祀丁谷天。次五月二十八日,取白姚羊一口,供祀清山神。次六月十六日,取屠儿胡羊一口,供祀丁谷天。次取孟阿石儿羊一口,供祀大坞阿摩。次七月十四日,取康酉儿牛一头,供谷里祀。¹

This document records the many sacrifices needed to sacrifice the gods. It is written in the document that a sheep and a cow were taken from person Kang Qi(康祈) and Kang Youer(康酉儿) to sacrifice to the god Dinggu Tian(丁谷天).² Since the two people worshipped were both surnamed Kang, it can be generally inferred that these two were probably Sogdians, and then it can be concluded that the “Dinggu Tian” worshipped here was the Xian god. The document reflects the situation of offering sacrifices from believers when worshipping Xian god³. According to textual research, “Dinggu”(丁谷) is the name of a place in the east of Gaochang, which is also in line with the fact that the early Sogdians who entered Turpan are likely to live in the east of Gaochang.⁴ The Xian temple in area Dinggu, which existed in the east of Gaochang in the 6th century, seems to have a sure inheritance relationship with the “Hu Tian” temple mentioned in *The Suvarnaprabhasa Sutra* 《金光明经》 written in the 5th century.

There is also a Xian god recorded in the document, that is, “Da Wu Amo”(大坞阿摩). Wang Qitao believes that “Amo”(阿摩) is the translation of “Adlbag” in Sogdian, referring to Ahura

¹ Tulufan Chutu Wenshu 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, p.39.

² Tulufan Chutu Wenshu 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, p.39.

³ Li Jinxin, 2007(01), p. 86.

⁴ Tulufan Wenshu Zhenglixiaozu 吐鲁番文书整理小组, 1977(3), p. 26.

Mazda.¹ In the document, Dinggutian and Amo, the two Xian gods, were juxtaposed with the wind god, the tree god, the mountain god, and other folk belief gods as the objects to be sacrificed. There was no difference from the tribute, which reflected that the Xian gods in the Gaochang State period of the 6th century were not significantly different from the gods in the folk belief system of the Turpan Depression and were recognized by the local government and then recorded in the official sacrificial documents. These phenomena revealed that the Xian god and these natural gods had little difference in the concept of rulers of Turpan Depression and people, at least in the 6th century.

However, compared with the situation where the Hu Tian(胡天) temple and the Nan Taihou(南太后) temple were mentioned together, *The Suvarnaprabhasa Sutra* 《金光明经》 unearthed in the abandoned Buddhist pagoda in Anle town, Turpan, which was written in the 5th century, there is no record that Dinggu temple and Hu Tian (胡天) temple were mentioned together in the other Turpan documents. In this regard, Wang Su believed that Xian, in Turpan Depression in the 5th century, was still weak and needed to rely on and rely on the Buddhist field to survive; by the 6th century, Xian had reached a certain scale in the Gaochang State period, and there was no need to use Buddhist temples to express it. ²However, this thesis believes that Xian at this time of Turpan is not as large as it is. It is more likely that locals will accept Xian because the longer the Sogdians live in Turpan, the deeper the mixing degree of it and folk beliefs are, so Xian will no longer need to rely on other religious sites to survive.

In addition, the information provided by another document also reflects the influence of Xian on the local culture of Turpan. In the later period of the Gaochang State, the document 《高昌乙酉、丙戌岁某寺条列月用斛斗帐历》 recorded that the fixed expenditure of the temple every month included the worship of dogs.³ This document should reflect the accounts of the year 625 and the year 626,⁴ and words such as Sami(沙弥 novice monks) and Buddha are mentioned in the document many times. It can be seen that this is a Buddhist temple. The importance and sanctity of dogs in Xian sacrifice have been proved by research, and the worship of dogs in Buddhist temples here is affected by Xian customs. The appearance of “worshipping dogs and offering sacrifices to heaven” in Buddhist temples also revealed that Xian seemed to be integrated into Buddhist temples, and the Buddhist temples did not exclude certain rituals in Xian. These phenomena prove that before the Tang Dynasty conquered Gaochang State at the beginning of the 7th century, some rituals of Xian had entered Buddhist temples. The information about sacrificial offerings for dogs of Xian is also reflected in the Dunhuang documents. However, the Dunhuang documents recording its contents are later than the period of the Guiyi Army(归义军) regime. This thesis believes many settled Sogdians in the Turpan area appeared earlier than Dunhuang.

¹ Wang Qitao, 2021(01), p.138.

² Wang Su, 1986(03), p. 169.

³ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, pp. 226, 229.

⁴ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, p. 225.

After the establishment of Xizhou in the Tang Dynasty, the Sogdians continued to integrate into the Turpan society, and their belief, Xian, was further integrated with the local culture. There are still records of sacrificing Xian gods in Dinggu County during the Xizhou period. This record can be seen in the Dunhuang documents  X.18937:

“（前缺）

- 1 员通等乡里，今口十五日往丁谷细
 - 2 祆去，须酒。今遣令狐二往彼去，仰
 - 3 何五右，史思本勒，康俗思敬，米义口
- （后缺）”¹

It is mentioned in the document that the goods needed by the people to go to the Xian temple in Dinggu County for sacrifice are wine. The transcribed personnel also include Sogdians with the surname He, Shi, Kang, Mi, and non-Sogdians with the surname Linghu(令狐), all of which prove that Xian existed in the Turpan Depression during the Xizhou period with a typical attitude and was recorded in the official document. From a long observation, Xian has a very early history of being popularized in Turpan, which has proved that the Sinicization of the Sogdians in Turpan also started very early and progressed rapidly. The reason for this phenomenon can not be separated from the absorption of Han culture in Turpan since the Gaochang Commandery period, which means that although there are many ethnics in the Turpan Depression, such as Quci peoples (龟兹人), Yanqi peoples(焉耆人) and Turkic peoples(突厥人) the central culture of society is Han culture.

In addition to the Turpan documents, Zoroastrian burial objects can also be found in Sogdian family tombs in Turpan, but these burials do not contain too much religious meaning.

An ossuary was unearthed in tomb No.04TYGXM22 of the Sogdian Kang family in Jiaohe town, Turpan;² a single-ear pottery pot containing ashes was unearthed in tomb No.04TYGXM28 as well³. The ossuary is a unique instrument used by the Sogdians in Central Asia for burial. The *Sui Shu*(隋书) wrote the burial in Sogdian Shi state, that is: “正月六日、七月十五日，以王父母烧余之骨，金瓮盛之，置于床上，巡绕而行，散以花香杂果，王率臣下设祭焉。”⁴ It can be seen that the gold ossuary was used at the funeral of Sogdian nobels, and the folk used the ceramic ossuary. The kind of burial instrument was found in Khwarizmi and Samarkand in Central Asia. The discovery of the ossuary in the tomb of Sogdian Kang family in Jiaohe town, Turpan, proved that the owner of the tomb was indeed the Sogdians, but it did not show much Central Asian characteristics.

According to the sequence of the tombs with the unearthed ossuary in the Sogdian Kang family in Jiaohe town, the two tombs mentioned above were built later than the tomb

¹ *Ecang Dunhuang Wenxian* 俄藏敦煌文献, No.17, 2001, p. 293.

² *Tulufan Jintang Mudi* 吐鲁番晋唐墓地, 2019, p. 40.

³ *Tulufan Jintang Mudi* 吐鲁番晋唐墓地, 2019, p. 46.

⁴ *Sui Shu* 隋书, 1973, p. 1850.

No.04TYGXM20, where the Sogdians Kang Yanyuan(康延愿) was located. Kang Yanyuan(康延愿) died in the second year of the Longshuo(龙朔) era in the Tang Dynasty (662), so the burial time of the tomb owners of No.04TYGXM22 and No.04TYGXM28 should be later than the year 662. Among them, the tomb No.04TYGXM22 is written as the unearthened ossuary, but it is unclear whether there are bones in it. Meanwhile, the single-ear pottery pot containing ashes was unearthed in tomb No.04TYGXM28, suspected to be a variant of an ossuary. However, in the native land of Sogdiana in Central Asia, they put their bodies in the excarnation when the Sogdians died. Then, they put them into an ossuary for burial again after being gnawed with only bones.

The fact that Xian chose to depend on the local beliefs is inseparable from Turpan's historical and cultural environment. Turpan and Dunhuang have very similar geographical environments, but the living conditions of Xian in the two places are pretty different. In contrast, the Han people in Turpan have always maintained their adherence to the Central Plains culture, and the more they cannot return to the Central Plains, the more strongly they adhere to traditional culture. Therefore, compared with the situation that the people of Dunhuang were in a turbulent place and could easily to accept various beliefs for their use, the people of Turpan did not have a high acceptance of Xian, which also came from the influence of the rulers. As Li Jinxin said when talking about the development of Xian in Xinjiang in history, "In politics, Xian has not been supported by the upper ruling class in all regions, and in the economy, it has not been supported by the monastic economy such as Buddhism and Islam, so it can only gradually shrink and become a part of folk religious beliefs and customs."¹

Moreover, the characteristics of the social structure of the Turpan Depression, dominated by government, also make it difficult for Xian to spread. It is recorded in *Tanglv Shuyi* (唐律疏议) that "诸造袄书及袄言者，绞。传用以惑众者，亦如之；其不满众者，流三千里。言理无害者，杖一百。即私有袄书，虽不行用，徒二年；言理无害者，杖六十。"² Although the above words are the Tang Dynasty regulation prohibiting Han people from believing in Xian, this thesis believes that this regulation should also apply to the Han people of the previous dynasties. So, the Han people in Turpan who are far away from the Central Plains and miss their hometown, they prefer to miss the Central Plains culture in faith and stay away from foreign religions. On the whole, Xian is more prevalent in rural areas in Turpan, and to a large extent, it formed customs with the combination of rituals and festivals of some local people. It can be seen that Xian, who is not good at preaching and conservatism, depends on and integrates into the local culture as its ultimate destination in the face of Buddhism strongly supported by the rulers and folk beliefs closely linked with the local people.³

3.3.3.2 Conversion of the Sogdians to Buddhism in Turpan

¹ Li Jinxin, 2007(01), p. 86.

² *Tanglv Shuyi* 唐律疏议, 1983, p. 345.

³ Li Jinxin, 2007(01), pp. 84-85.

The Sogdians in Turpan do not only believe in Xian. Based on the prosperity of Buddhism in Turpan, some Sogdians also converted to Buddhism.

The belief in Buddhism in the Turpan Depression has a certain historical origin. The rulers of the Beiliang regime(北凉政权)(379-460) believed in Buddhism, which led to the large-scale creation of caves and the construction of pagodas in the Hexi area during this period.¹ After the establishment of the exile regime in Gaochang, the Northern Wei Dynasty continued to promote Buddhism. This move also attracted many Buddhist and eminent monks who migrated west from Central Plain, which laid the foundation for the prosperity and development of Buddhism and Buddhist art in the Gaochang State period. Later, the Qu family(麴氏), the ruler of Gaochang State, worshipped Buddhism even more. As this family ruled Gaochang State for a long time, it also played a decisive role in promoting the development of Buddhism in Turpan. *Daciensi Sanzang Fashizhuan* (大慈恩寺三藏法师传) records the historical facts that when the monk Xuan Zang traveled westward to the Gaochang state, the king personally went out to meet him and made an appointment with Xuan Zang as a brother.² This record is enough to show the prosperity and popularity of Buddhism in Turpan. This is the historical background for some Sogdians who have lived in Turpan for a long time to believe in Buddhism. From the Turpan documents, we can see many names of Sogdians with Buddhist elements,³ which are more evenly distributed in the Gaochang State period and the Xizhou period. It can be seen that the Sogdians in Turpan have been converted to Buddhism for a long time, which is the embodiment of the prosperity of Buddhism in Turpan.

The construction of the Sogdian Family Temple is the best manifestation of the transformation of Sogdians into Buddhism in Turpan. Like people who believed in Buddhism in Dunhuang, a powerful ethnic group in Turpan would choose to build temples and donate money to obtain blessings. These temples have a monastic economy composed of acres of land and population and bear the obligation of government distribution. This kind of family temple has an apparent secular nature. According to the records of the Turfan documents, at least in the early 7th century, the Sogdians began to follow the example of the local ethnic groups to build their home temples, and this tradition continued until the Xizhou period.

The “Kang Temple”, “Cao Temple”, and “Shi Temple” appearing in the Turpan documents are temples established by the Sogdians to pray for blessings for the family. The documents also record the properties these temples own and the obligations to be fulfilled. The relevant documents are listed below:

Table 3 Sogdian Family Temples in Turpan Documents

Documents	Temples	Content
《高昌计人配马文书》	Kang Temple	Raising horses

¹ Yao chongxin, 1996(01).

² Daciensi Sanzang Fashizhuan 大慈恩寺三藏法师传, 2000, p. 18.

³ Wang Qitao, 2021(01).

1		
《高昌张武顺等葡萄亩数及租酒帐(一)》 ²	Kang Temple, Shi Temple	Rent vineyards
《高昌义和二年(615)七月马帐(一)》 ³	Kang Temple	Raise red purple horses
《唐贞观十五年(641)西州高昌县赵相口夏田契》 ⁴	Kang Temple	Arita property trading
《高昌某年郡上马帐》 ⁵	Kang Temple	Raise purple horses
《高昌买驮、入练、远行马、郡上马等人名籍》 ⁶	Cao Temple, Kang Temple	Raising horses
《高昌诸寺田亩帐》 ⁷	Cao Temple, Shi Temple	Owned acres of land
《唐贞观年间(640-649)西州高昌县手实二》 ⁸	Cao Temple	Land occupied

The above table shows that the family temples with the Sogdian surname in Turpan, like the local Han people's family temples, can own farmland and fulfill obligations such as paying taxes and raising horses for the local government.

In addition to establishment Buddhist temples by Sogdians, a Sogdian monk can also be seen among the respected Buddhist monks in Turpan. The most famous is the "Kang Chan Shi"(康禅师) who appeared in multiple documents in the 7th century. Turpan texts record that believers must buy oil, beans, rice, meat, and other foods to contribute to Kang Chan Shi(康禅师).⁹ It can be seen that this Sogdian master received offerings and seemed to have a certain prestige. The Turpan locals did not treat him differently because of his Sogdian origin, revealing that in the 7th century, Turpan had a usual mentality towards Sogdian Buddhism.

Judging from the facts in the documents, the Sogdians who converted to Buddhism would imitate the local Han people and establish family temples. Its function is also to achieve merit as the main purpose while bearing social obligations. In this regard, the Sogdians have not shown any difference from other groups and are also willing to demand their behavior based on local habits.

¹ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, p. 330.

² *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, pp. 50-51.

³ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, p. 159.

⁴ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, p. 47.

⁵ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, p. 164.

⁶ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, pp. 169-170.

⁷ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, pp. 169, 172.

⁸ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, p. 107.

⁹ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1981, pp. 170-171, 173.

In addition to the fact that the Sogdians believed in Buddhism reflected in the documents, there were also Buddhist elements reflected in the Sogdians' family tombs in Turpan. Most pottery funerary objects in the Sogdians' tombs of Jiaohe town have inverted lotus patterns, similar to those in Astana, Xinjiang. As a common element in Buddhist art, "it is natural that the influence of the lotus image extends to funeral customs."¹ The appearance of Buddha lotus pattern in the Sogdian Kang family tombs is enough to see that the Sogdians living in Turpan are not only influenced by the Buddhist culture in their daily lives but also willing to apply Buddhist elements to their tombs and other funeral affairs, reflecting the deep acceptance of Buddhism by the Sogdians here.

On the whole, the historical background that the main body of Turpan society is Han people who migrated from the Central Plains, which makes Turpan deeply influenced by the culture of the Central Plains, and the rulers of the Gaochang State admired Buddhist culture, making these two the mainstream of Turpan culture. Therefore, Xian in Turpan was gradually integrated into the local culture and was practiced by the local people along with natural gods and Buddhism.

Summary

As the gateway to the Central Plains of the Western Regions, the Turpan region in the eastern part of the Tarim Basin is an important node on the Silk Road. Turpan's geographical location is prominent, and the roads that spread out around Turpan provide convenient conditions for Sogdians to make trade, including short-distance commerce connecting the Tarim Basin and long-distance trade from Turpan east through the Dunhuang and Hexi corridors to inland towns.

Turpan is located at the gateway of the Western Regions and can control the Western Regions, so since the beginning of the Western Han Dynasty, the rulers have consciously sent the Han people of Central Plains to this place and settled here, making Turpan deeply influenced by Han culture. At the same time, it benefited from promoting Buddhism by the local government of Turpan since the Gaochang State period; Buddhism has also flourished here.

According to Turpan documents, there was a figure of the god Xian(祆) in the eastern Anle(安乐) Pagoda of Gaochang town in the early 5th century, indicating that a certain number of Sogdians already existed in Turpan at this time, and most of them lived in the east of Gaochang town. In the 6th century, Sogdians and Xian beliefs also existed in Dinggu county(丁谷县), east of Gaochang town, and continued into the Xizhou period. In the 8th century, the Sogdians of Xizhou concentrated in Anle Li(安乐里), Chonghua Township(崇化乡), and the Anle Li here should be in the same area as the Anle Tower in the 5th century, proves the continuity of the Sogdian settlement east of Gaochang for 300 years from the 5th

¹ Liu Hongliang, 1992(02).

century to the 8th century. This continuity suggests that the Sogdians in the Turpan region resulted from continuous commercial migration.

Due to the popularity of Han and Buddhist culture in Turpan, Xian has not received strong support from the rulers here, but it has been allowed. The Turpan documents reflect that Xian gods in the 5th century were already in the same space as Buddhism, and Xian gods in the 6th century were not only sacrificed by non-Sogdians but also juxtaposed with local natural gods in official documents. Turpan documents during the Xizhou period also record the historical fact that the Sogdians sacrificed to the Xian gods, and it is not much different from other local beliefs, which is enough to prove the fact that Xian(祆教) gradually integrated into Turpan society in an usual manner.

The centuries of life of the Sogdians in Turpan allowed them to absorb more local Turpan culture. The feature that was especially reflected in the Sogdian family tombs unearthed in Turpan. Tang Dynasty conquered the Gaochang State in 640. Then, it established Xizhou, but as Turpan maintained a long period of separatist power before Xizhou, coupled with Turpan's distance from the political center of Tang, the Turpan culture absorbed by Sogdians is mainly the Central Plains culture brought by Han immigrants since the Wei and Jin dynasties. Therefore, this thesis believes that for the Sogdians living between the Gaochang state and Xizhou periods, there was a slight psychological fluctuation in the change from Gaochang state to Tang; their identification with the Tang dynasty was weak. This is because Turpan's society was relatively stable before the establishment of Xizhou, and the entire Turpan society changed less after the establishment of Xizhou. At the same time, it should be noted that the culture inherited by the Sogdians in Xizhou is mainly derived from the long-standing customs of Turpan. Although there are many Xian elements, it is no longer the mainstream.

Chapter 4 Near the Western Regions: Sogdians in Dunhuang

As an international metropolis in Medieval China, Dunhuang became an important gathering place for Sogdians to come to China. According to the ancient Sogdian letters unearthed in Dunhuang beacons, there were traces of Sogdians in the early 4th century. According to Dunhuang documents, the principal inhabitants of Conghua Township(崇化乡) in Dunhuang in the mid-8th century were Sogdians and had Xian beliefs. This chapter takes the Dunhuang Sogdian settlements and Xian faith as the starting point, combined with the unique social environment of Dunhuang from the late 8th century to the mid-9th century, reflects the process of identity experienced by the Dunhuang Sogdians from freedom to consciousness

4.1 The settlement of Sogdians in Dunhuang

The Hexi Corridor is the only way that must be passed for foreigners to enter the Central Plains, and Dunhuang has always been the gateway from the Central Plains to the Western Regions. Dunhuang in ancient times was known as an international metropolis. It is located at the western spot of the Hexi Corridor and is an important hub on the Silk Road. It is recorded in the *Biography of Peiju* (裴矩传) from *Sui Shu* 《隋书》:

从西顷以去，北海之南，纵横所亘，将二万里……发自敦煌，至于西海，凡为三道，各有襟带。北道从伊吾，经蒲类海铁勒部突厥可汗庭，度北流河水，至拂菻国，达于西海。其中道从高昌、焉耆、龟兹、疏勒、度葱岭，又经钹汗、苏对沙那国、康国、曹国、何国、大小安国、穆国，至波斯，达于西海。其南道从鄯善，于阗，硃俱波、喝盘陀，度葱岭，又经护密、吐火罗、挹怛、帆延，漕国，至北婆罗门，达于西海。其三道诸国，亦各自有路，南北交通。其东女国、南婆罗门国等，并随其所往，诸处得达。故知伊吾、高昌、鄯善，并西域之门户也。总凑敦煌，是其咽喉之地。¹

The quotations show that being the gateway to the Western Regions and the Central Plains, as early as in the Han Dynasty, Dunhuang was always the first barrier for nations outside the region to enter the Central Plains Dynasty, either they passed the Silk Road by north or south road.

The Sogdians arrived in Dunhuang earlier, as well proved by the several ancient Sogdian letters found by Aurel Stein under the beacon towers of Dunhuang in 1907. Although scholars are still discussing when these letters were written, they infer that the record of attacking Luoyang by the Xiongnu army in the second letter is the “Yongjia rebellion” (永嘉之乱), which happened around the 4th century. By then, “about one thousand merchants with their families and servants from the State of Kang” had arrived and settled down in Dunhuang and even other cities like Liangzhou.² The Sogdians not only arrived in China in the early 4th century but also settled in the hinterland cities of the Central Plains, such as Chang’an (长安), Luoyang (洛阳) and Yecheng (邺城).³

¹ *Sui Shu* 隋书, 1975, p. 1577.

² Ge Chengyong, 2015, p. 209.

³ Yao Chongxin et, 2013, p. 15.

Around the 4th and 5th centuries, Dunhuang, like the Turpan region, had the same footprint as Sogdians. However, information about the Sogdians in Dunhuang before the 8th century is scarce. In the Dunhuang document S-613v 《西魏大统十三年(547年)瓜州计帐》¹, there are two people, Cao Pizhiba (曹匹智拔) and Cao Wudiba (曹乌地拔), who are considered to be likely Sogdians and were rented by the field together with the Han people, indicating that they were already settled.² This is the earliest Sogdians information we can find from the Dunhuang documents. The Turpan document 《武周久视二年(701年)沙州敦煌县悬泉乡上柱国康万善牒为以男代赴役事》³ Also, records that there were Kang Wanshan (康万善) and his son Kang Zhiqian (康处琮) in Xuanquan County (悬泉乡) of Dunhuang. These two should also be Sogdians, and Kang Wanshan seems to be a settled person who undertook obligation. However, due to the lack of materials, it is impossible to determine whether there were many Sogdians in Dunhuang before the mid-8th century. As Chen Haitao believes, perhaps the Sogdian merchants who appeared in Dunhuang during this period mainly passed through Dunhuang to take long-distance trade. However, it is difficult to determine whether they settled or not and the size of their scale.⁴

In the early Tang Dynasty, Dunhuang formed the Conghua Township (从化乡) with the Sogdians as the main body. According to Ikeda On's research, among the thirteen towns, there were about 300 households and 1,400 people in Dunhuang in the middle of the eighth century. Among them, according to the surname of Sogdians, the leading members were Sogdians, which indicates that the Sogdians in this town were the result of collective migration from other places.⁵ This is probably the earliest Sogdian information from the Dunhuang documents.

After Ikeda On researched the Sogdians in Dunhuang, and Cai Hongsheng proposed three types of Sogdian settlement.⁶ These three types do not exist in isolation—for example, naturalized settlements evolved from transplanted settlements.⁷, and the evolution process can explain the change in the lifestyle of Sogdians in Longyou (陇右) and Hexi areas. Dunhuang document S.367 *Shazhou Yizhou Dizhi* 《沙洲伊州地志》 shows: “Shi Town, Loulan (楼兰) in Han Dynasty.....During the Zhenguan (贞观) era, Kang Yandian (康艳典), the leader of Kang state, came and lived in this area, and the clansmen followed him so that developed into a town.” This town is a typical transplanted settlement. Without exception, Dunhuang, an important town on the Silk Road, is also a transplanted settlement. Since then, the Sogdians in Dunhuang gradually become the same as the Tang people regarding obligations and administration. These settlements evolved into naturalized settlements.

The Xian temple built in Dunhuang is also an example of the gathering and life of Sogdians in Dunhuang. After settling down, the Sogdians also brought their religious beliefs to their places of life. An town (安城) is a settlement that Sogdians gathered in Dunhuang. A poem in Dunhuang documents P.2748v contains a narrative: “With the town built, the temple rises here as well.”⁸. It can be seen that with the formation of the settlement, the religion of Sogdians

¹ Ikeda On, Vol. 9, 1993, p. 190

² Rong Xinjiang, 2001, p. 39.

³ *Tulufan Chutu Wenshu* 吐鲁番出土文书, 1986, p. 230.

⁴ Liu Huiqin, Chen Haitao, 2005(02), p. 118.

⁵ Ikeda, Vol. 9, 1993, pp. 156-171.

⁶ CAI Hongsheng, 1998, p. 14-15. The so-called three types are transplant, naturalized, and Turkic.

⁷ Yao Chongxin et, 2013, p. 28.

⁸ *Facang Dunhuang Xiyu Wenxian* 法藏敦煌西域文献, Vol.18, 2005, p. 68.

also landed in Dunhuang. According to the formation time of An town, scholars believed it existed in the late 8th century.¹ or the late Tang period². Although some scholars have different views on whether this town was founded by Sogdians with An surname, based on the existence of the Xian Temple in town, it at least shows that the prominent people of the town are Sogdians and the Sogdian power is considerable.

At least in the early 4th century, the Xian faith took root in Hexi Corridor. Scholars have noted the Xian elements contained in the Sogdians Ancient letters³, such as the second letter containing the name of Goddess Nana⁴. The Xian temple in the Sogdian settlement in Tang is the inheritance of the tradition of Sogdiana⁵, as they lived in towns in Central Asia as well. At the same time, according to the archaeological discoveries in Panjikent and Samarkand, the rituals of Xian are the daily form integrated into their life.

The Xian temple in Dunhuang first appears in Dunhuang documents written in the late 7th century.⁶ In addition to the records mentioned above, the Dunhuang Documents P.2005 writes, “Xian (祆) God, located in the east of the town”⁷. This document mentions that there is a Xian temple in the east of Dunhuang town, and the Temple has a particular land area, which shows that this Xian faith already had a specific power in the late 7th century.

Dunhuang documents P.2005 *Shazhou Dudu Tujing* 《沙洲都督图经》 with original name of *Shazhou Tujing* 《沙洲图经》 was not written at once. It was first completed in 696 AD, then something more was added in the fourth year of the Kaiyuan (开元) era (716).⁸ Therefore, the document was written from the late 7th century to the 8th century. Scholars deduce that document P.2005 was written earlier, and document P.2748v was written at least half a century later. Ikeda On believes there was only one Xian temple between the period of creative time and two documents, the one mentioned by both documents.⁹

According to the Dunhuang document 《天宝十载 (751) 敦煌县差科簿》, Ikeda On inferred that this settlement of Sogdians located on the east side of the town.¹⁰ The Xian temple, recorded in Document P.2005, was built in the east of the city, in coincidence with the Temple in Document P.2749v, so the Conghua Township (从化乡) is the An town with only one Xian temple¹¹

The geographical location of Conghua Township on the east side of Dunhuang town and the historical fact that the Xian temple was located in the east of the city in the *Shazhou Tujing* 《沙洲图经》 can mutually confirm the characteristics of the Sogdian commercial character. They came from Central Asia and traveled east along the Silk Road to Dunhuang, where they lived on the eastern side of the town to expand trade or receive messages from their fellow

¹ Ikeda On, Vol. 9, 1993, p. 141.

² Ma De, 1983, pp. 179-186.

³ Nicholas Sims-Williams, 2005, pp. 72-87.

⁴ W.B.Henning, 1948, pp.602-604.

⁵ Yao Chongxin etc., 2013, p. 39.

⁶ Yao Chongxin etc., 2013, p. 21.

⁷ Tang Gengou, Lu Hongji, Vol.1, 1990, pp. 12-13.

⁸ Li Zhengyu, 2008, pp. 25-26.

⁹ Ikeda On, Vol. 9, 1993, p. 142.

¹⁰ Ikeda On, Vol. 9, 1993,, p. 187.

¹¹ Ikeda On, Vol. 9, 1993,, p. 188.

tribe members to pass back to their homeland in Central Asia. At the same time, Wu Yugui also believes that the Tang Dynasty's incorporation of the Sogdians from Conghua Township of Dunhuang into the household register was mainly due to the role of the Sogdians as commercial intermediaries,¹ which shows that the Tang court was very aware of the importance of the Sogdians in the commercial and transportation network and that their incorporation into the township was also considered for commercial purposes.

The document 《天宝十载 (751)敦煌县差科簿》 is compiled to collect corvee. The Sogdians in the town appear in this document, which shows that Sogdians here need to perform military service like local people. It reveals the process of Sinicization of this group of Sogdians people.²

During the The Tibetan Emire occupation of Dunhuang (AD 786-848) and the reign of Guiyi Army (AD 848-1036), the settlements of Dunhuang Sogdians can still be divided into three forms. The first was to continue the Conghua Township(从化乡) system in the Tang Dynasty. Although the system of Conghua township was abolished after the occupation of The Tibetan Emire, it did not fundamentally change the status quo of their living. The second is the Sogdians, who were originally scattered in Dunhuang. During the occupation of Dunhuang by The Tibetan Emire, they became more mixed with the Han people. The third kind is urban residence, which is also the main living form of Sogdians in Dunhuang in the late Tang and Five Dynasties.³ Although Ikeda On believed that the Sogdian settlements in Dunhuang under the rule of The Tibetan Emire were not extinct, Zheng Binglin found that even in the late Tang and Five Dynasties, there were still a large number of Sogdians in Dunhuang. The original Sogdian settlements were scattered and lived among the local Han people because of the Anshi Rebellion and The Tibetan Emire's occupation of Hexi.⁴

Zheng Binglin then believed that the The Tibetan Emire managed Sogdians with a tribal system and appointed Sogdians as the leader.⁵ During the late Tang Dynasty and the Five Dynasties, many villages were mainly established by Sogdians, such as An town, Cao town, Shi town, Kang town, etc.⁶, which indicates that Sogdian settlements were always maintained in Dunhuang.⁷

The occupation of The Tibetan Emire disrupted the original life pattern of Dunhuang society, which also meant that the isolation and relative independence of Sogdian settlement from the 7th century was broken. While forced to mix with the local people, deep communication and integration followed. At the same time, at least in the late 8th century or late Tang Dynasty, the Temple in An town still existed or was known in other ways that can be known.

¹ Wu Yugui, Vol. 3, 1997, p. 306.

² Ikeda On, Vol. 9, 1993, p. 170.

³ Yang Fuxue etc., 2005, pp. 610-611.

⁴ Yang Fuxue etc., 2005, p. 296. Zheng Binglin, 2006(02), pp. 9-21. Lu Qingfu, 1996(06), p. 34. Jiang Boqin, 1994, p. 192. Han Xiang, 2000(03), pp. 63-72,109.

⁵ Zheng Binglin, 2005, pp. 612-613.

⁶ Zheng Binglin, 2003, pp. 134-144.

⁷ Zheng Binglin, 2003(02), p. 15.

4.2 The Religion “Xian” in Dunhuang

Xian accompanied the settlement of the Sogdians in Dunhuang. As mentioned above, the Xian temple already existed in the east of Dunhuang in the early 8th century, indicating the existence of a Sogdian settlement centered on this Temple. The development of Xian in Dunhuang followed the trend of gradual folk integration with local folk beliefs. It was incorporated into the official sacrifice system by the rulers of Guiyi Army, reflecting the acceptance of Xian deities by Dunhuang society. At the same time, due to the prosperity of Buddhism in Dunhuang, Xian also entered the pantheon of Dunhuang Buddhism by blurring the image of its deity.

4.2.1 Incorporated into the Official Sacrificial System with Folk Faith

As mentioned above, there should be only one Xian temple in Dunhuang before the mid-8th century, so an investigation of the Temple in Dunhuang can reveal the form of Xian in Dunhuang before the mid-8th century.

According to the Dunhuang Document P.2005 “four gods of Folk faith”:

The God of Earth, west of town, praying for avoiding disaster;
The God of Wing, northwest of town, praying to avoid abnormal weather;
The God of Rain, east of town, praying to avoid drought;
The God of Xian, east of town.¹

Two pieces of information are shown above. First, the God of Xian was worshiped with the natural gods in ancient Han local beliefs, such as the God of Earth, the God of Wind, and the God of Rain. The second is that the position of the God of Xian is the same as that of the God of Rain in the east. Some scholars speculate that the reason is that Xian joined late². Seen from the fact that the creation of Dunhuang Document P.2005 lasts several decades, it is also possible that future generations

join Xian.

Personality gods (Xian) are grouped with natural gods in the Dunhuang document because the above three natural gods have been personified.³ “The personification of the natural god was an important feature of the national sacrifice in Sui and Tang Dynasties, officially recognized and advocated by the state.”⁴ “In Tang and Five Dynasties, Dunhuang people were especially devout to the God of Wind and Rain, because of the loss of agricultural production caused by the heavy sandstorms and yearning for the rain due to the low rainfall.”⁵ To ensure the essential production and life of the local society, the government incorporated the worship of the God of nature into the local sacrificial system. The fact that the God of Xian and nature Gods were named together seemed to indicate that Xian was at least accepted by the local

¹ Tang Gengou, Lu Hongji, Vol.1, 1990, pp. 12-13.

² Yao Chongxin etc., 2013, p. 122

³ Yao Chongxin etc., 2013, p. 123.

⁴ Lei Wen, 2009, p. 39.

⁵ Hao Erxu, No.4,2014, pp. 321-322.

authorities and included in the sacrificial system around Dunhuang. However, the God of Xian included in the official sacrifice system is still insufficient to determine whether Xian and its doctrine had lost their original religious spirit. It only shows that around the 8th century, the Dunhuang people also highly accepted Xian and included it in the list of gods who prayed for the land.

It is difficult to conclude that the God of Xian lost his original religious meaning only because he was juxtaposed with nature Gods in the Dunhuang document written around the 8th century. In that case, the poem in document P.2748v may prove that Xian was redefined with new meaning and more readily accepted by the local people in the second half of the 8th century. What new meaning has that been given? The God of Xian was supposed to have the connotation of the rain god when the Sogdians mingled with the natives.

Jiang Boqin noticed that the word Yu Ji (雩祭) in P.2748v was used to describe the habit of Dunhuang Sogdians praying for rain in the Temple.¹ "Xian Temple became a place for praying rain because of the existence of the fire altar. Burning and smoke popping up are common ceremonies to pray for rain. Moreover, the fire altar of Xian often burns and smokes, which will naturally be regarded as a highly effective place for praying for rain."² The Sogdians in Dunhuang also brought this habit to their new residence. In the eyes of the local people, this move is similar to their rain worship behavior. When the Sogdians gradually integrated with Dunhuang society, the God of Xian was naturally introduced into a series of folk worship activities. Some cultural similarities also help foreign Xian integrate into local folk worship.

Since the Medieval Ages, Buddhism and Taoism have strengthened, and religious factors have gradually been incorporated into the official rain-paying activities. The rulers of the Tang Dynasty were remarkably willing to change some religious rituals to the ways of rain praying.³ In this case, Xian temple is associated with praying for rain, which also makes the local government generously include Xian in the folk faith in Dunhuang.

P.4518 (24), the only Xian painting preserved in Dunhuang cave, is now stored in the French National Library in Paris. Jiang Boqin speculates that this painting was drawn under the reign of the Cao family of Gui Yi Jun (归义军)⁴. On the screen, there are two goddesses in the opposite direction, one of them severing a plate with a dog on it⁵. In the funeral picture of the Sogdians, the deceased had to walk across the Chinvat bridge for trial, and at the end of the bridge was a dog highly valued in Xian. This is also one of the reasons for judging this painting as a Zoroastrian.

Scholars have different views about the identity of the two women in the painting, but the rope used in the original image is thought to be related to Sai Xian (赛袄)⁶. In the Tang and Song dynasties, Dunhuang had the custom of Sai Xian (赛袄). For this custom, Jiang Boqin once offered a definition: Sai Xian (赛袄) is a kind of sacrificial activity, with grand scenes such as blessing, banquet, singing and dancing, and magic. It is a temple fair entertainment

¹ Jiang Boqin, 2004, p. 158,160.

² Ikeda On, 1993, p. 189.

³ Yao Chongxin etc., 2013, p.136.

⁴ Jiang Boqin, 1996, pp. 179-195.

⁵ Rao Zongyi, 1993, p. 181.

⁶ Jiang Boqin, 1996, pp. 192-193. Zhang Guangda, 2008, p. 278.

activity with pipa (琵琶) and flute (笛子). This Zoroastrian painting was not used for a particular religion. It results from Xian merging with the local folk beliefs without any original religious meaning.¹ Sai Xian's (赛祆) activity requires lighting, wine, and thesis.



Figure 11: Dunhuang Volume in the Collection of the French National Library P.4518(24)²

Sai Xian (赛祆) was famous in Dunhuang during the period of Gui Yi Jun (归义军), and this regime regarded this custom as even public service supported by the local government.³ The Sai Xian (赛祆) records in Dunhuang documents have been studied,⁴ most of them were written during the late 9th century or even later, and many are official records. Sai Xian (赛祆) participants include Sogdians, Dunhuang Han, and other non-Han people.

Zoroastrian had lost its original religious meaning by then. Only the images of Xian masters and some religious rituals remained, which were accepted by the local people and joined the system of folk beliefs.

4.2.2 Confusion with Buddhism

In the late Tang Dynasty, burning lights can still be seen in Sai Xian (赛祆). For example, Dunhuang document S.2241 《公主君者者状上北宅夫人》 records “Lighting in the Xian temple”. Some scholars believe Xian in Dunhuang in the Late Tang Five Dynasty (五代) has become “Buddhist”⁵. There are two reasons. First, “rain farming” (雨中耕种图) on the west corner of the north wall on the No.23 Mogao Caves, which has something in common with the *Lotus Sutra*, contains a scene similar to the Yu Ji in Xian. Second, “the Festival Competition of Buddha statues, burning of lanterns and scattering flowers had been used as Buddhist rituals in ancient India long before Xian. Later, with the eastward spread of Buddhism, such rituals were also brought to China. However, although Xian’s activity rituals include fire worship, singing and dancing, and magic performances, records of burning

¹ Lin Wenshu, 1999, p. 217.

² *Faguo Guojiatushuguan cang Xiyu Wenxian 法国国家图书馆藏西域文献*, Vol. 31, 2005, p. 288.

³ Zheng Binglin, 1996(04), p. 81.

⁴ Xie Mei, 2005(02), p. 145.

⁵ Shao Mingjie, Zhao Yuping, 2010(02), p. 103.

lanterns and racing Xian cannot be found in the ancient books recording Xian rituals.”¹

It is a mixed form of borrowing some religious rituals from each other. As mentioned above, lighting lanterns in Sai Xian may result from the active and conscious variation of Zoroastrians' original ritual of lighting the holy fire after they left central Asia. There is no direct record of Zoroastrians' worship of the holy fire in the existing Han historical materials², but another custom of lighting lamps, which is different from the traditional ceremony, can still be found in some texts. Liu Hong (刘弘) is recorded in the biography of *Jin Shu* (晋书). He lit a lamp and hung a mirror in the mountain cave to make it bright to confuse the people and accept more than a thousand believers.³ Wang Su thinks that what Liu Hong believes in is Xian⁴. If this judgment is correct, then Liu Hong's “burning a lamp and hanging a mirror as light” in the cave can indeed be regarded as the flexible behavior of Zoroastrians in Central Asia to light the sacred fire and sacrifice light. Through this passage in *Jin Shu* (晋书), Wang Su believed that Xian had spread in ancient China during the Sixteen Kingdoms of the Eastern Jin Dynasty (东晋).⁵ It can be seen that Zoroastrians borrowed the behavior of burning lanterns in Zoroastrian sacrifice very early, and it can still be seen in the Zoroastrian activities in Dunhuang until the late Tang and Five Dynasties. However, it should be noted that this borrowing is more convenient for Zoroastrian sacrifice in China. It is an adaptation that can not prove that Xian is "Buddhist".

Three records of the book *Chaoye Qianzai* (朝野僉载) written by Zhang Zhuo (张鷟) of the Tang Dynasty:

河南府立德坊及南市西坊皆有胡袄神庙。每岁商胡祈福，烹猪羊，琵琶鼓笛，酣歌醉舞。酹神之后，募一胡为袄主，看者施钱并与之。其袄主取一横刀，利同霜雪，吹毛不过，以刀刺腹，刃出于背，仍乱扰肠肚流血。食顷，喷水咒之，平复如故。此盖西域之幻法也。⁶

(Henan Province has Hu Temple. Every year, when praying for blessings, Sogdian merchants cook pigs and sheep, play music, and dance. After offering sacrifices to the gods, Hu was recruited as the Zoroastrian Lord. He took a knife and cut his abdomen to remove his intestines. At the same time, he recited the mantra, and his abdomen remained intact. This is the magic of the Western Regions.)

In this passage, no matter whether in Luoyang or Liangzhou, believers of Xian use fire during the sacrifice, which seems to be an adaptive change of Zoroastrians' original fire sacrifice after they entered ancient China, just like the above-mentioned "lamp burning" behavior.

In addition to some specific rituals among different religions, the images depicting gods can also be used for reference. Dunhuang document s.2729v is a continuous copy of an anonymous divination document. One of the documents in the period of Tibetan occupation, *Taishi Zazhanli* (太史杂占历), has the sentence, "In the year Chou (丑), Xian was regarded

¹ Yang Fuxue etc., 2021, p. 304.

² Xie Mei, 2005(02), p. 146.

³ *Jin Shu* 晋书, 1974, p. 2230.

⁴ Wang Su, 1985, pp. 225-233.

⁵ Wang Su, 1985, pp. 225-233.

⁶ *Zhuo Ye Qian Zai* 朝野僉载, 2005, pp. 64-65.

as Buddhism."¹. Lu Qingfu believes this is "A portrayal of the Sogdians' conversion to Buddhism"². However, it seems that this can only explain that "some of the Gods in Xian and Buddha are very similar.", it would be inappropriate to take this as evidence to judge the Sogdians' conversion to Buddhism and further to believe that Xian has become Buddhism. The confusion between Zoroastrians and Buddhism can be explained by "the confusion between images".

In the course of the development of religion, images will inevitably be confused. It is expected that religious images of different religions coexisting in the same regional space sometimes learn from each other and play tricks on each other.³ Xian in the Sogdiana of Central Asia also have the practice of incorporating pagan gods into their religious iconography, and there is no doubt that Zoroastrians in Central Asia have borrowed Buddhism and Hinduism for their statues. When Buddhism, deeply influenced by Hinduism, entered the Sogdiana, Sogdians incorporated Hindu and Buddhist Gods into their pantheon. West Asia, the birthplace of Xian, initially had no idol worship and no statues. However, Xian introduced into Central Asia was inherited from the tradition of Xian in the Achaemenid Dynasty. Therefore, Xian introduced into ancient China was a Sogdian Xian, which had the tradition of multi-God worship and was used to worship gods only on the carrier. Borrowing images from other religions is the customary method of Sogdians in Central Asia.

Xian, which has only an unavoidable reference to Buddhist Gods, has entered Dunhuang, a region where Buddhist culture is prevalent. In order to survive, this borrowing behavior will be more so that the local people have a confused feeling that "Xian is similar to Buddhism". For example, Jiang Boqin believes that local people recognize Xian as Buddhist because of the similarity between the two and the fact that people are more familiar with Buddhist images.⁴

Xian, which the Sogdians believe in, was also integrated into the folk beliefs of Dunhuang with the interactions between Sogdians' settlements and local people. This point can be discussed with what Rong Xinjiang called the "mixed form of religion". Some scholars have studied that Xian of the Central Asian Sogdians is not as common as other foreign religions in China in Medieval times and aims to expand religious groups by spreading doctrines.

The conservatism of Xian in missionary work has been recognized by academic research. For example, Chen Yuan says there were three foreign religions in the Tang Dynasty: Xian, Manichaeism, and Nestorianism. The most obvious difference is that Manichaeism and Nestorianism are very active in translating classics and preaching, so there are both Hu people and local people among the followers of the two religions in China. However, Xian hardly translates classics and does not preach, so almost all Zoroastrians in Central China are Hu people.⁵

This conservatism of Xian also contributes to the merging of Xian and local beliefs. As mentioned above, even in Medieval China, the main body of Zoroastrians was still the Sogdians. Their religious culture can be preserved when the Sogdians are in a stable, open,

¹ *Yingcang Dunhuang Wenxian* 英藏敦煌文献, Vol. 4, 1991, p. 230.

² Lu Qingfu, 1996(06), p. 32.

³ Yao Chongxin etc., 2013, p. 102.

⁴ Jiang Boqin, , 1994, p. 248.

⁵ Chen Yuan, 1980, p. 320.

and inclusive social environment. However, when a region is in turmoil or a religion is in an absolute power position due to the change of political power, the Sogdians will seek self-protection by changing their identity. Meanwhile, their belief in Xian will change to adapt to the situation. At this time, the spiritual death of Xian will be earlier than the death of the physical form¹, and the entity will also transform itself towards an acceptable form.

"Xian with Sogdians living in Dunhuang as the main believers and Xian temple are not completely independent of Dunhuang society." ² Over time, until the late Tang and Five Dynasties, the gods in the original Xian in Dunhuang gradually became a kind of local gods or native gods and were incorporated into the local folk and official sacrifice system. Of course, Zoroastrian worship at this time can not be equated with Zoroastrian idol worship of religious righteousness. ³ Xian has lost its original meaning and was replaced by the sacrificial meaning given by the local people. That is, it has gradually become worldly.

4.2.3 The Reason for the Change in Beliefs of the Dunhuang Sogdians

Why was Xian incorporated into local folk beliefs and sacrificial traditions after it arrived in Dunhuang? Its religious spirit has long been far from the original Zoroastrian spirit in Central Asia, but its form has been preserved through images, sculptures, and some local sacrificial behaviors. On the one hand, it is based on the diverse culture formed by Dunhuang's unique historical geography. On the other hand, it is based on the tradition of the Sogdians.

First, Dunhuang was the starting point of the middle section of the land Silk Road in the Tang Dynasty. At that time, it was already an international city. Buddhism was introduced into China from India through Central Asia. On the way to the Central Plains, it will pass through Dunhuang, a significant barrier. Therefore, Buddhism developed and flourished in Dunhuang and was highly recognized by the people there. There are many secular documents with Buddhist flavor and seriously secularized Buddhist application documents in Dunhuang documents, which illustrates that the religious rituals of Buddhism have a trend of secularization and popularization in Dunhuang. The profound mixing of Buddhist and Han traditional cultures affects local people's social life. Dunhuang was home to a large number of Sogdians in Medieval China. "On the one hand, Dunhuang is the first stop for Sogdians to enter the Central Plains after passing through Tianshan Mountain and Gaochang. On the other hand, tributes and spices used in religious ceremonies are also important commodities for long-distance transportation."⁴ The prosperity of Dunhuang Buddhism and the people's enthusiasm for religious ceremonies have also become one of the reasons why the Sogdians set up their commercial base in Dunhuang.

Dunhuang was deeply influenced by Buddhist culture. "Dunhuang Buddhism's rites and customs at the age merged with those of the common people"⁵, this is the manifestation of the folklorization or secularization of Dunhuang Buddhism. As Yu Xin, a scholar, said, Dunhuang was a city where many religions were mixed, interacted, and blended. To regard Dunhuang as a pure Buddhist city and the religious beliefs of the Dunhuang people as pure Buddhism is to

¹ Yao Chongxin etc., 2013, p. 44.

² Yao Chongxin etc., 2013, p. 119

³ Lin Wenshu, , 2005, pp. 327-331.

⁴ Moriyasu Takao , Shi Xiaojun trans., 2020, p. 59.

⁵ Yu Xin, , 2010, p. 195.

ignore the international urban status of Dunhuang.¹ "The folk beliefs in Dunhuang are mixed, not falling to the ground at one side. In addition to Buddhism, Taoism, Xian, Nestorianism, Manichaeism, and the worship of natural gods are popular in the region. With the existence of these religions in Dunhuang, this polytheism phenomenon became increasingly confusing."² This phenomenon of confusion was gradually highlighted along with the contraction of defense strength in the west of the Tang Dynasty and The Tibetan Empire's invasion of the Hexi Corridor.

Dunhuang is an important node connecting the western regions and the Central Plains in the eastern part of the Silk Road. The area to the west of Dunhuang is the western border area where the Central Plains Dynasty is only sometimes strong. The Hexi Corridor with Dunhuang and Liangzhou as the core also maintains the characteristics of multi-ethnic mixed living after the Anshi rebellion. At the same time, it was the frontier battlefield that The Tibetan Emire wanted to occupy and fight against the Tang Dynasty. Therefore, the people in Dunhuang, who were in turmoil, were highly eager for a stable life in their hearts. When they cannot meet their wishes in real life under the competition of various forces, they place their hopes on religious beliefs.

In Dunhuang, apart from the beginning of spring, Sai Xian is the main content of sacrifice at the age of Dunhuang. Buddhism also actively set up temples for sacrifice on specific occasions. However, it should be noted that the infiltration of foreign religions in Dunhuang is not "conquering".³ Faced with the reality that Dunhuang society can bring any religion to pray for blessings, foreign religions will make certain concessions. Xian and Buddhism actively participated in Dunhuang on specific occasions, and their purposes were not directly related to disseminating doctrines. Although Buddhism is deeply integrated with Dunhuang local customs, and some of its commemorative festivals are integrated into Dunhuang seasonal sacrifice, not all audiences are Buddhists, indicating that Buddhism has been "folklore" in Dunhuang. Its blessing significance still exceeds the religious significance.⁴ As the only way for foreign nations to enter the Central Plains, Dunhuang has various religions. The people placed it on the gods and Buddhas based on their desire for stability. Most religious deities and ideas that can contribute to the peace and stability of Dunhuang can be used and prayed. Similarly, to gain a place in Dunhuang, foreign religions will also change themselves to meet the needs of Dunhuang society.

Since the worship of gods in general daily life is commonly believed by the public, folk beliefs can not avoid utilitarianism. The unstable social environment makes the people of Dunhuang attach great importance to the gods. In this case, the belief has the characteristics of pragmatism. For sacrifice, "it is not so much a spiritual exchange between human and God as a reciprocal exchange of interests"⁵. According to Dunhuang documents, the gods of wind and rain in the temples around Dunhuang control nature and directly control people's daily life and destiny. Putting these natural gods in the Dunhuang people's forefront reflects their faith's pragmatism.

Besides the practical function of "praying for rain", the reason why the Zoroastrian God can be listed in the *Sha Zhou Tu Jing* (沙州图经) together with the natural gods included in the

¹ Yu Xin, 2006, p. 53.

² Rong Xinjiang, , 2001, p. 225.

³ Yu Xin, 2010, pp. 188-195.

⁴ Yu Xin, 2010, p. 195.

⁵ Yu Xin, 2006, p. 75.

official sacrificial system is that it benefits from the permission of the rebel rulers.¹ According to Lei Wen, the second level of ancestral rites in prefectures and counties in the Tang Dynasty was the ancestral rites endowed with legal status by the local government. This kind of sacrifice is official because the local government not only supports and participates in these acts.² This was the case during the Guiyi Army period. It is precisely because the Guiyi Army regime is a local regime dissociated from the vassal towns and foreign countries³, therefore, in Dunhuang during the late Tang and Five Dynasties, Sai Xian (赛祆) got the support and participation of the Guiyi Army, which virtually established the official status.

Secondly, the transformation of Xian localization was completed by the Sogdians, who entered China on their initiative to a certain extent. Rong Xinjiang, taking the image of the site of Dandan Uiliq as an example, believes that the Sogdian merchants in the western regions originally had Xian as their religion. However, Khotan had been the Buddhist holy land of the Southern Road in the western regions since ancient times. In this way, Sogdians who came from afar either gradually converted to Buddhism or only pretended to recognize the strong position of Buddhism in the local belief system but did not wholly give up their faith. Therefore, by depicting the Zoroastrian deity in an image similar to the Buddhist deity or placing it in an inconspicuous place in the Buddhist Temple, they continued to worship the deity in their hometown subconsciously in this way and retained the traditional belief.⁴ Therefore, it is reasonable to speculate whether the "Buddha-like Buddha" behavior in Dunhuang was caused by Dunhuang Zoroastrians placing Zoroastrians in the pantheon of Dunhuang in a form similar to Buddhist gods.

Before the Guiyi Army ruled Dunhuang, that is, after The Tibetan Emire occupied Dunhuang, the identity of the Sogdians in Dunhuang had gradually changed, and many Sogdians had become Temple households. According to Dunhuang documents S.542 (戌年六月沙州诸寺丁仕车牛役簿), among 184 records of names enlisted in the army, 52 are Temple households.⁵ The reason may be that after the An Shi rebellion, the power of the Tang Dynasty in the western regions contracted, resulting in the cut-off of the traffic between China and the West and the apparent reduction of commercial activities⁶. As immigrants, the Sogdians themselves cannot own much land⁷. Therefore, after The Tibetan Emire occupied Dunhuang, becoming a temple household for survival was an inevitable choice. As many Sogdians became temple households during this period, the Sogdians who believed in Buddhism greatly influenced the local Buddhist monks. According to the Dunhuang document S.2729 (吐蕃辰年(788)三月沙洲僧尼部落米净辩牒), there are 310 monks and nuns in Dunhuang temples, including 49 Sogdians. This inventory list made in the year after the Tibetan occupation of Dunhuang proves that many Sogdians believe in Buddhism, which is no longer an exception.⁸

The researchers have long argued about the phenomenon of cultural confusion. "Where there is cultural contact, there will be religious confusion", and "A religion is not a pure belief, but a fusion of various belief elements, which is not only reflected in the formation stage of the

¹ Yu Xin, 2006, p. 84.

² Lei Wen, 2003, p. 110.

³ Rong Xinjiang, 1996, p. 2.

⁴ Rong Xinjiang, 2015, p. 327.

⁵ Ikeda On, Gong Ze trans., 2007, pp. 523-524.

⁶ Fujieda Akira, 1961, pp. 252-259, quoted from Yang Ming, 2014, p. 51.

⁷ Kikuchi Hideo, pp. 171-172, quoted from Yang Ming, 2014, p. 50.

⁸ Tang Gengou, Lu Hongji, Vol.4, 1990, p. 209.

religion but also reflected in its future development”.¹ In fact, in the ancient world, from the perspective of the prevalence and distribution of various religions, it was not the opposition and conflict between various religious beliefs that occupied the mainstream position but the confusion and coexistence among them.²

If Xian wants to survive in Dunhuang, the first thing is to transform Xian gods so that they can be incorporated into the pantheon of the local people, that is, the localization of Xian. This is the case with the above example of putting the Zoroastrian God together with the natural Gods of Land, Wind, and Rain. The folk belief is the oldest religion in the region, and the people's worship of the natural God has lasted for years.

4.3 The Cultural Identity of the Sogdians in Dunhuang

The identity of Sogdians in Dunhuang went through a process of freedom to consciousness, which was caused by the The Tibetan Emire occupation of Hexi Corridor, including Dunhuang, and the establishment of Guiyi Army regime. The occupation by The Tibetan Emire caused Sogdian settlements to be dispersed and mixed with the locals, accelerating the integration of Sogdians into Dunhuang society. In the process of jointly opposing The Tibetan Emire rule, The Sogdians’ self-identity weakened while deepening their identity as Dunhuang people, so the Sogdians played an essential role in the reconquest of Dunhuang. With the establishment of the Guiyi Army regime and the implementation of Confucianism at the social level, the Sogdians also accepted and abided by the social rules and integrated into the social organization of Dunhuang.

4.3.1 Sogdians Identification with Confucianism in Dunhuang

The Tibetan Emire occupied Dunhuang in the second half of the 8th century and early 9th century. After recovery by Guiyi Army, it was returned to the Tang Dynasty as a local power. Out of the need to shape the legitimacy of its regime, the Guiyi Army regime accepted and recognized the traditional culture of the Central Plains to a certain extent. The admiration for the culture of the Central Plains is essentially a recognition of Confucianism.

After the recovery of Dunhuang, the rule of Guiyi Army began to promote enlightenment at the social level. According to the Dunhuang documents, promoting Confucian classics and some enlightenment popular reading materials was how the Guiyi Army regime developed social education in the Dunhuang area. Confucianism is a vast system. In addition to the well-known Confucian classics and basic concepts, Confucianism is more embodied in the governance principles and policies obtained by those in power combined with the ruling. Social education is a kind of top-down external reinforcement from those in power. In that case, the private mass organizations in Dunhuang are the internal moral constraint that the local people consciously accept and spontaneously observe to carry out self-moral education

¹ R. J. Zwi Werblowsky, 1987, p.2.

² Rong Xinjiang, 2015, p. 328.

and norms.¹ Such self-indoctrination is prominently reflected in the Dunhuang social documents.

The Dunhuang social documents contain the content of rules and states, which generally state the “purpose, organizational method, and basic principles of organizations”². These regulations are binding on every member of the society, and some of them can reflect the rites of respect, inferiority, loyalty, and filial piety advocated by Confucianism and can also genuinely reflect the actual situation of private social education and education³.

Talking about the Sogdians, according to the previous research, it can be seen that although Sogdians already existed in Dunhuang before the 8th century, they should be different from the Sogdians in Conghua Township (从化乡) recorded in the document 《天宝十载敦煌从化乡差科簿》. The Sogdians who had already lived in Dunhuang before the 8th century settled in Dunhuang more widely in individual at different times; since these Sogdians were scattered among the local population, their integration with the local society was a natural and subtle occurrence. On the contrary, the Sogdians of Conghua Township migrated to Dunhuang as a whole and were uniformly incorporated into the registered residents by the Tang Dynasty, so they were more closely connected with their ethnic group, which also made them slower in the process of integration with Dunhuang society than the scattered Sogdians.

After the The Tibetan Emire occupation and the reconquest of Dunhuang by Guiyi Army, the Sogdians of Conghua Township were scattered and mixed in Dunhuang society, forming new social organizations such as Kangjiazhuang (康家庄), Caojiazhuang (曹家庄), and Anjiazhuang (安家庄) with the people of Dunhuang, including those Sogdians who had long been scattered among the Han people. Such social organizations are more based on communities with the same surname rather than settlements with ethnic characteristics formed by ethnic origin as a link, like Conghua Township. When the Sogdians and the locals under the Guiyi Army regime accelerated their integration, they also continued to accept the long-standing traditions of Dunhuang society in terms of lifestyle and social organization, which was the result of the natural integration, on the one hand, it is also the result of the promotion of the Guiyi Army rules through social education.

First, Sogdians, like the locals, participated in a series of activities in social organizations dominated by Han Han, which is the result of social enlightenment received by the Sogdians in Dunhuang. Many of the Dunhuang documents contain Sogdian figures.

Dunhuang document P.3889 《社司转帖》 is a funeral notice document, the time of which is unknown. That is:

社司转帖

¹ Qi Xiaoqin, 2011, p. 138.

² Meng Xianshi, 2002(01).

³ Hao Chunwen, 2006, pp. 303-315.

缘贺保新父身故

准例合有赠

送 人各先鲜净绛揭色物三丈 柴、粟、饼、油。

幸请诸公等 中占至 限今月二十四日卯时于兰若内

取齐 捉二人后到，罚酒一角；

全不来 罚酒半瓮。其帖各自示名递过者。¹

The persons mentioned in this document include the organization's manager and there are ordinary members. The An Shan ju (安善住), Shi Liuxin (石流信), Cao Akou (曹阿口), Shi Jinzi (石进子), Kang Dingnu (康定奴), Shi Qingzi (史庆子) etc. mentioned are all Sogdians. This funeral aid document specifies the items each person needs to carry, the time and location of the event, and the punishment for being late or absent. The regulations in this social organization are similar to those of other organizations with Han people, which means that such social regulations have been gradually formed in Dunhuang society for a long time and are not only observed by Han people. The fact that the Sogdians mentioned in this document also need to comply with the regulations indicates that the Dunhuang society did not distinguish them from the Han people. Like the Han, Sogdians also participate in social activities according to the norms.

The documents related to the association of relatives 《亲情社转帖》 reflects that there are also Sogdians involved in the family organizations in Dunhuang. For example, document S.2242 《某年七月三日亲情社转帖》² Records the content of condolences to Zhang Changjin (张昌进) by other members of the organization, of which Zhang Changjin is Han people. The list of members notified includes Sogdians such as "Kang Lang (康郎), Da Kang Lang (大康郎), Kang Langnan (康郎男), Cao Lang (曹郎)" etc., proving that there is no group separation between Han people and Sogdians. The difference between this kind of organization and the above-mentioned "funeral aid organizations" is that the former members have relatives or in-laws with each other. Document S.2242 contains facts about Sogdian mourning for Han relatives, indicating that Sogdian descendants intermarried with Han people and formed a family association with Han relatives.

Document S.3164 《乙酉年十二月廿六日亲情社转帖》 reflects the opposite of S.2242 mentioned above. The context of this document is the death of the son of a Sogdian surnamed Zaikang. The members of the organization go to mourn for a Sogdian with the surname Kang. The list of persons listed at the end are all Han people, which shows that this organization's main body is Han. These Han people went to mourn the Sogdians in the same organization, indicating that this Sogdian surnamed Kang intermarried with the Han people and joined the family society with Han people.³ It can be seen that there was not much separation between the Sogdians and the Han people during the rule of Guiyi Army regime. It was widespread to marry and become members of the family organizations through marriage and participate in

¹ Tang Gengou, Lu Hongji, Vol.1, 1986, p. 342.

² Tang Gengou, Lu Hongji, Vol.1, 1986, p. 352.

³ Tang Gengou, Lu Hongji, Vol.1, 1986, p. 353.

the mutual aid of the society, which reflects the fact that the Sogdians have been well integrated into Dunhuang society.

Dunhuang document S.2894 (1V-2V) 《壬申年(972)十二月廿二日常年建福转帖抄》¹ and document S.2894v 《壬申年(972)十二月社司转帖》² are two Jianfu reposts. Half of the members of these two documents are Sogdians, indicating that Sogdians actively participate in the daily blessing activities in the Dunhuang area. Moreover, the official of document S.2894 is surnamed Cao. The president is surnamed An, which shows that the Sogdians have the same right as the Han to become the head of society and manage the members, which also shows that there is no difference in status and rank between the Sogdians and the Han in society during the period of the rebel army.

The Sogdians even become witnesses of the Dunhuang Han people's contract division of family property. Document S.2174 《天复九年董加盈兄弟三人分家契》 is a deed of division of property by the brothers of the Dong family, and the text reads: "Witnesses are the uncle Shi Shenshen (石神神), an old man Kang Changqing (康常清), an official in charge of troops and horses Shi Shunfu (石福顺)"³. The protagonists of the document, the Dong brothers, are Han people, and the three witnesses to their division of property are Sogdians. The people mentioned here chose three people with different identities. Shi Shenshen is the uncle of the Dong family brothers, Kang Changqing is similar to the prestigious older man in the township, and Shi Shunfu is an official of the rebel military regime. This document selects the relatives of the Dong brothers, clan elders, and government representatives as witnesses of the division of property, which is a typical village system in China under the influence of Confucian culture. The example of these three Sogdian witnesses shows that Dunhuang society at that time did not distinguish between Sogdians and local people, and they had the same rights as Han people.

The role of the Dunhuang social organization in educating the people is self-evident, which is also the result of the local government's implementation of indoctrination guided by Confucianism. The reason why the social organization restricts and supervises each other through Confucianization is to protect traditional rituals.⁴ Many people in Dunhuang joined these organizations to strengthen their etiquette, and some of the rules clearly state that the teachings were to respect parents, preserve etiquette, and cultivate themselves.⁵ As for the Sogdians' participation in the social organizations in Dunhuang to organize Buddhist blessings, mutual aid, and other activities, Lu Qingfu believes that this reflects their identification with the cultural customs of the Central Plains. The existence of many Sogdians in the organization documents shows that they accepted and abided by the rules of the society and lived in an orderly manner in Dunhuang society with the rules advocated by Confucian culture. This point is the result of the rebel army's vigorous promotion of indoctrination after

¹ Tang Gengou, Lu Hongji, Vol.1, 1986, p. 332.

² Tang Gengou, Lu Hongji, Vol.1, 1986, p. 333.

³ Tang Gengou, Lu Hongji, Vol.2, 1990, pp. 148-149.

⁴ Qi Xiaoqing, 2011, p. 157.

⁵ Qi Xiaoqing, 2011, pp. 156-157.

the reconquest of Dunhuang.

After the Guiyi Army regime recaptured Dunhuang, in addition to the indoctrination of the people externally and internally, the selection of officials was based on the Confucian standards and classics that the Central Plains Dynasty had always followed.

The Sogdians of Dunhuang were also recorded and commended for their behavior by Confucian rituals. Dunhuang's *Miao Zhen Zan* 《邈真赞》¹ is a record of the character who conforms to the model of loyalty and filial piety during the Guiyi Army regime. Kang Tongxing (康通信) "be faithful and filial to his relatives, works personally, impartially and impartially, and does practical things for the people."², this is the embodiment of the Sogdians' acceptance of Confucian loyalty and filial piety, and this acceptance result also made Kang Xuan the object of commendation by the rebel military regime. Another Sogdian recorded in the Dunhuang document, *Miao Zhen Zan* 《邈真赞》, was an official of Guazhou (瓜州), Kang Shijun (康使君), and the praise text said that he "takes himself as an example and do farm work personally, making the society in the village stable"³. During his tenure, his actions of persuading farmers, promoting the concept of loyalty and filial piety, and appeasing the people met the requirements and standards of the Dunhuang rulers at that time.

This thesis believes that whether the indoctrination of members by Dunhuang private organization comes from the government or the heart, it reflects the members' approval of the regulations. Since such private organizations are formed spontaneously by the public to seek help, the members participating in the private association must have approved the rules and some matters related to the private society before joining the association. Since it is voluntary, there is not much external pressure from government officials. As Sogdians of Central Asian origin, when they voluntarily joined the Dunhuang communities, they represented their acceptance of the Confucian-based social indoctrination process, which was also the result of the long-term integration of the Sogdians and the Dunhuang natives.

4.3.2 Transformation of the Cultural Identity of Sogdians in Dunhuang

The Sogdians of Dunhuang have gone through a process from freedom to self-awareness about their identity. Before the The Tibetan Emire occupation of Dunhuang, the Sogdians were incorporated into the Xizhou as registered residents, engaged in similar occupations, and carried the same obligations as the locals. According to the household registration document from Conghua Township (从化乡) in the early 8th century, the younger the Sogdians, whose names are close to the Han style, indicate that these Sogdians were undergoing Sinicization.

The Tibetan Emire occupation of Dunhuang broke up the original Sogdian settlements, mixing it with the locals. The Guiyi Army regime was helped by the Sogdians in recovering

¹ *Miao Zhen Zan* 《邈真赞》 was a kind of document of recognition record.

² Zheng Binglin, 1992, p. 114.

³ Zheng Binglin, 1992, p. 151.

Dunhuang, and the intermarriage between the Dunhuang Sogdians and the Dunhuang surname became a prominent phenomenon during this period.

The marriage between Zhang Qianyi (张谦逸), the father of Zhang Yichao (张议潮), and the Sogdians surnamed An, has been confirmed by the Dunhuang document p.3551 《药师琉璃光如来赞并序》¹. The governor Zhang mentioned in the Dunhuang document is Zhang Qianyi (张谦逸),² and his son Zhang Yichao (张议潮) also married with the Sogdians surnamed Kang³. The role of the Sogdians in helping Zhang Yanchao recover Hexi and establish the regime of the Guiyi Army is self-evident. Among them, An Jingmin (安景旻) is the representative of the Sogdians in the uprising forces of Zhang Yichao (张议潮),⁴ whose status is inferior to that of him. As mentioned above, An Jingmin (安景旻) held the post of governor in The Tibetan Empire Period. His post of governor should be inherited from his father's official position. At the same time, Zhang Yichao (张议潮) also inherited his father's original governor post, recovered Hexi, and established the Gui Yi Jun regime under the condition of uniting various local forces in Dunhuang.⁵ "Most of the Sogdian clan on which the Zhang family relied were great people who grew up during the The Tibetan Empire rule. Among them, the An clan was the most powerful and influential."⁶

Among those who participated in and supported the Zhang Yichao (张议潮) uprising were the Buddhist monks from Dunhuang. After The Tibetan Empire occupied Dunhuang, many Sogdians changed to Buddhism for self-protection. "Many famous Sogdian monks in the Dunhuang Buddhist group once controlled the highest position in the monk order."⁷ However, it can not be concluded that because of the fear of the forces of The Tibetan Empire, many Sogdians in Dunhuang have devoted themselves to temples and become Temple households. Most of them have become households of Dunhuang tribes⁸. Among the missions sent to the Tang court during the Gui Yi Jun (归义军) period, there were Sogdians, including eminent monks and traders mixed in the missions⁹. It can be seen that Sogdians and their brilliant diplomacy in a regime complement each other. For example, in the 6th century, the Turkic Khanate sent Sogdians to move to the Byzantine Empire to establish direct trade between the two countries.

The relationship between the Guiyi Army (归义军), controlled by the Cao family, and the Sogdians is also a research focus.¹⁰ Whether the Cao family have Sogdian attribute is still controversial. Among them, the issue of their clan involves another issue that needs to be explored: whether the Han people dominated the regime of Gui Yi Jun (归义军) and Dunhuang during this regime and whether the Han culture dominated the Dunhuang society.

Zheng Binglin said, "Fundamentally speaking, the Gui Yi Jun (归义军) regime is a multi-ethnic United regime with the Han people as the main body, and the Sogdians are the

¹ *Faguo Guojia Tushuguan Cang Dunhuang Xiyu Wenxian* 法国国家图书馆藏敦煌西域文献, 2002, p. 230.

² Zheng Binlin, 2004(01), pp. 64-65.

³ Zheng Binlin, 2004(01), p. 64.

⁴ Rong Xinjiang, 1986(02), p. 25.

⁵ Lu Li, Lu Qingfu, 2011(01), p.104.

⁶ Yang Fuxue etc., 2021, p. 311.

⁷ Yang Fuxue etc., 2021, p. 293.

⁸ Yang Fuxue etc., 2021, p. 315.

⁹ Zheng Binlin, Feng Peihong, 1995(01), pp. 17-28. Zheng Binlin, 2000, pp. 1-39.

¹⁰ Rong Xinjiang, 2001(01), pp. 65-72. Feng Peihong, 2001(01), pp.73-86.页

most influential part of the ethnic minorities.”¹ Indeed, as he said, the number and power of the Sogdians in Dunhuang can be seen from whether they lived together in Conghua Town(从化乡) in the early Tang Dynasty or gradually lived together with local people during the Guiyi Army. Even though the Cao family is indeed a Sogdian, after more than two centuries of integration, the Sogdians who settled early and local folks in the census register in Dunhuang were not significantly different.

The marriage between the Gui Yi Jun (归义军) rulers and the Sogdians shows that in the late period of The Tibetan Emire rule over Hexi, the Sogdians in Dunhuang formed their forces, but how much of this force still retained their own national identity is worth studying. Regarding the powerful forces of the Sogdians who poured out during the revolt against The Tibetan Emire, the commentators believed it could be discussed according to Fei Xiaotong's view. He pointed out that "People living in a common community will not consciously identify if they do not contact with the outside world. In the history of nationality, a community of people with a common way of life must contact with non-native outsiders before national identity can occur, that is, the so-called national consciousness, so there is a process from freedom to consciousness."². Zhang Yichao (张议潮), the commander of Guiyi Army, advocated the restoration of the old system in the Tang Dynasty when he rebelled against The Tibetan Emire. When faced with the plundering of the population and heavy economic burden imposed by The Tibetan Emire, like the Han people, Sogdians' consciousness of defending their living place awoke. In addition, the separation of the Dunhuang Sogdians from their traditional religion, Xian, after the middle of the 8th century weakened their sense of traceability to their ethnic affiliation and living place. At the same time, the identity generated by the sense of belonging in Central Asia also weakened and was replaced by the surname-based union for self-protection in troubled times.

For the Dunhuang Sogdians, the undeniable trend is to have more frequent contact with the local Han people. During the period when The Tibetan Emire and Guiyi Army ruled Dunhuang, although many Sogdians turned into registered households or became Temple households, many Sogdians still engaged in commercial activities. They did not give up their traditional means of livelihood.³ Some Sogdian settlements in the eastern section of the Silk Road in the Tang Dynasty experienced a process of transformation from urban settlements to rural settlements, which contained two changes: the way of life of Sogdians in China changed from commerce to agriculture and the change of identity from an overseas Han to a household.⁴ In fact, behind this change is the mutual infiltration and integration of Sogdian and local cultures. The two cultures have evolved and formed a state of coexistence.

Summary

From Xizhou to the east, the Sogdians passed through Dunhuang and entered the Central Plains through the Hexi Corridor to do trade. According to ancient Sogdian letters unearthed from the Dunhuang beacon fire, the Sogdians arrived in Dunhuang at least in the 4th century and used it as a base for commercial trade between Liangzhou and the Western Regions. However, there is no record of whether Dunhuang lived in large numbers of Sogdians before

¹ Zheng Binlin, 1996(04), p. 80.

² Fei Xiaotong,, 1989, p. 7.

³ Yang Fuxue etc., 2021, p. 327.

⁴ Yao Chongxin etc., 2013, p. 39.

the 8th century and the Dunhuang documents record that the Sogdians from Conghua Township in the mid-8th century should be the result of the overall migration. This is very different from the formation of the Sogdian Chonghua Township of Xizhou of Tang, as mentioned in the previous chapter. In contrast, Chonghua Township in Xizhou inherited from the Sogdian settlement in the east of the town during the Gaochang state period, indicating that the Sogdians in Xizhou were gradually formed after arriving in Turpan in the form of individuals or small caravans due to scattered commercial activities.

Their commercial national character determined the situation of Sogdian settlements. Dunhuang was a transit point on the Sogdians' eastward journey to do trade. If the Sogdians arrived in Dunhuang from the Western Regions, they would inevitably go to farther hinterland cities to engage in commercial activities. While the Turpan area quickly formed a small commercial circle, with Gaochang as the center and the Tarim Basin forming a trade network, many Sogdians who arrived in Turpan settled down and could also develop trade. Therefore, before Dunhuang Conghua Township, it did not see a settlement dominated by Sogdians. Sogdians came by individuals or a few companions mixed with the people of Dunhuang society, so it has yet to find a Sogdian settlement similar to Conghua Township before the mid-8th century Dunhuang documents.

The historical background of Dunhuang's frequent wars is also why no Sogdians settled in large numbers in Dunhuang before the 8th century. It is precisely because of the different periods when large-scale Sogdians settled in Turpan and Dunhuang that the Sogdians in the two places have different degrees of Sinicization and different expressions of cultural identity. Before The Tibetan Emire occupied the Hexi Corridor, the Sogdians of Dunhuang lived in society as Sogdians themselves, and from the perspective of settlement distribution, they formed a concentrated living Conghua Township. The Tibetan Emire occupation of Dunhuang brought about a change in the cultural identity of the Sogdians in Dunhuang. For reasons of shared resistance to The Tibetan Emire, the Dunhuang Sogdians participated in some of the acts of Guiyi Army to retake Dunhuang, and after the establishment of the Guiyi Army regime, the Dunhuang Sogdians identified themselves more as Dunhuang people. At the same time, it shows positive acceptance and participation in Dunhuang's local society and culture. Fundamentally, Dunhuang originated from the westernmost point of the Hexi Corridor, far from the political center of the Tang Dynasty. Although it was administratively subordinate to the Tang Dynasty, it received less political radiation from the Tang Dynasty. Correspondingly, the strength of the local regime in Dunhuang after the 9th century, the Guiyi Army regime, these political factors prompted the Sogdians of Dunhuang to be deeply influenced by the local politics and regime in developing their identity.

Chapter 5 Near the Central Plains: The Sogdians of Liangzhou

Liangzhou was an important stronghold of the Sogdians in ancient times. According to history, “Liangzhou is the capital of Hexi Corridor, connecting the western regions and the countries west of the Pamir Plateau, where there are always traveling traders and monks.”¹ Ancient Letters written by Sogdians discovered under the beacon towers of Dunhuang in the early 20th century can prove that, at least in the 4th century, Liangzhou was the stronghold of Sogdian merchants, managing their trade network in the northwest. In history, the administrative system of Liangzhou and the size of the area under its administration were constantly changing, probably due to its military significance. The Liangzhou studied in this section is now Wuwei City in Gansu Province, China. Historically, the mutual appellation between Wuwei and Liangzhou did not exist initially but was formed in the historical development. This chapter analyzes the characteristics of the formation of Sogdian settlements in Liangzhou from the geographical location of Liangzhou and further explores the geographical identity of Sogdians in Liangzhou in the Tang Dynasty and the reasons for its formation.

5.1 Liangzhou: Outpost for the Sogdians to enter the Central Plains

Based on the critical geographical location in terms of politics and military, it was easy for the Sogdians to form a family of generals with an armed group based in Liangzhou, and the Sogdian family in Liangzhou promoted the formation of Liangzhou as a Sogdian county. This section starts with the important geographical location of Liangzhou and analyzes the essential prerequisites for forming Sogdian settlements in Liangzhou.

5.1.1 Significant Location of Liangzhou

5.1.1.1 Administration of Liangzhou

Liangzhou was originally the Guzang town (姑臧城) built by the Khan of Xiongnu in the Western Han Dynasty (西汉). It is recorded in Hexi Jiushi(河西旧事): “In the past, the Huns built the Gaizang town (盖臧城), and later generations were falsely named Guzang(姑臧).”² Gaizang town is located at the eastern end of Hexi Corridor and is very close to the living area of the Han people. Therefore, because of its geographical location, in addition to using it for political and military purposes, the Huns also used it as a commercial place to exchange animal products for production tools and daily necessities of the Han people.³

In the third year of the era of Yuanshuo (元朔) (126 BC), Emperor Wudi of the Western Han Dynasty changed Yongzhou (雍州) in Zhou Dynasty (周朝) into Liangzhou with the idea of being located in the west and often cold. Later, when Huo Qubing(霍去病) destroyed King

¹ *Da Ciensi Sanzang Fashizhuan 大慈恩寺三藏法师传*, 2000, p. 11.

² *Liangzhou Fuzhi Beikao 凉州府志备考*, 1988, p. 23.

³ Xu Qin, Chen Aizhu, 1988(02), p. 78.

Xiutu(休屠王), Emperor Wudi of the Han Dynasty renamed Wuwei, implying that the prestige of the Han Dynasty was spread west to the Hexi Corridor. In the second year of Yuan Ding (115 BC), after Zhang Qian returned from the Western Regions, Wuwei became a county with ten prefectures, Guzang being one of them. Emperor Wudi of the Han Dynasty ordered the army to open a wasteland and grow food in Wuwei County, aiming to garrison the frontiers. At this time, the important strategic position of Wuwei for defense in the northwest has been highlighted.

In the fifth year of Yuan Feng (104 BC), the governor of Liangzhou was set up, administrating almost the whole northwest. Wuwei is one of the twelve counties of the Liangzhou Area. After the establishment of a county in Wuwei, there were few wars in Hexi area. Through resettlement and water conservancy, production and population developed greatly. It can be seen that the environment of Liangzhou was very superior. *Han Shu* 汉书 recorded: "Liangzhou has a vast land and sparse population, and its water and grass are suitable for animal husbandry. Therefore, Liangzhou's animal husbandry is very developed. Benefiting from a stable social environment, the people of Liangzhou are stable and the officials and people are close as one family."¹ The geographical environment suitable for animal husbandry, coupled with the social stability of Liangzhou under the management of the Han government, provided a solid foundation for the Sogdians who did business to settle in Liangzhou after entering the Hexi Corridor and use the area as a base to expand around.

During the Three Kingdoms Period, Cao Pi, Emperor Wen of Wei, set up Liangzhou in Hexi, including Guzang, now Wuwei. Since then, Wuwei was named Liangzhuo, and by the time of the Sui Dynasty, Wars and chaos continued throughout the country, resulting in a significant reduction in the population.² In the second of the Wude (武德)era (619) of Emperor Gaozu (唐高祖) in the Tang Dynasty, Liangzhou Area Command(凉州总管府) (a type of executive branch) was set up, governing Guzang (now Liangzhou District, Wuwei City). In the seventh year of the Wude era (624), it was changed into Liangzhou Commandery (凉州都督府). In the first year of Emperor Taizong's Zhenguan era (627), ten Circuits (also the type of executive branch) were set up in the country. Lingzhou belonged to the Dao on the right side of Long (a shortened name of Gasun Province). In the first year of the Tianbao era of Xuanzong(742), Liangzhou was changed to Wuwei County. In the first year of the Qianyuan era (758), Wuwei County was restored to Liangzhou. Later, in the second year of the Guangde era (764), The Tibetan Emire occupied Liangzhou and set up Xiliang House. Despite the administrative system changes, the core area is today's Wuwei City, Gansu Province.

In the Tang Dynasty, Liangzhou was formed by connecting the hinterland of the Central Plains to the east, the Western Regions regime to the west, nomadic peoples to the north, and The Tibetan Emire to the southwest. It was located in a military fortress. Therefore, to manage the Western Regions, the highest administrative organ established in the region by the Tang Dynasty, the Liangzhou Commandery, was designed to strengthen the Tang court's defense and management of Hexi and Longyou(陇右). Examining the institutional evolution and historical and cultural background of Liangzhou is a prerequisite for interpreting the formation of armed forces by the Sogdians in Liangzhou.

¹ *Han Shu* 汉书, 1964, pp. 1644-1645.

² *Jiu Tangshu* 旧唐书, 1975, p. 1384.

5.1.1.2 Important Town along Silk Road

Liangzhou has always been an important town in the northwest. It is an advantaged place for farming and warfare.¹ In ancient times, if the northern grassland people wanted to move southward or westward, they had to pass through Liangzhou, an ideal habitat because of its superior natural environment.

As the gateway of the eastern end of the Hexi Corridor, Liangzhou is significant to the local regime occupying Hexi.² At the end of the Western Han Dynasty, the Central Plains was in turmoil, and separatist regimes were established one after another. Under Dou Rong's rule (窦融), Hexi formed a relatively stable separatist regime in the chaos of the Central Plains at the end of the Western Han Dynasty.³ Due to its crucial geographical location in the Hexi Corridor, Liangzhou became the center of many regimes. The rulers of the separatist regime often developed the economy, attached importance to Confucianism, and absorbed talents, promoting the social stability of Liangzhou and making Liangzhou an important commodity trading place in the northwest.

As a northwest military town, Liangzhou is also an important town on the Silk Road and the communication between China and the West. The famous Mountains covered with snow all year round are the north and south sides of Hexi Corridor, which is challenging to climb. In ancient times, when people traveled on foot or by horses, it took much work to walk outside the north and south of the corridor. Being a spot inside Hexi Corridor, it can be seen that Liangzhou is the center of the transportation network of Hexi Corridor, which makes its role in the Silk Road trade irreplaceable by other towns.⁴

As the easternmost town of the Hexi Corridor and close to the central Shaanxi Plain, Liangzhou was very important to the Sogdians, who traded long distances. The Wei, Jin, Southern, and Northern Dynasties were the period in the continued development of the Silk Road. During this period, the country was divided and turbulent, but the separatist ruling regime in Hexi kept the Silk Road open as much as possible. However, due to the long-term turmoil in the Central Plains, monks, envoys, and merchants from the West often had difficulty entering the Central Plains, and they often used Liangzhou as their destination, either to trade locally or to stay for a long time. Therefore, for the Sogdians, Liangzhou was their base camp for trading with the cities in the hinterland of the Central Plains to the east and maintaining contact with the homeland of Central Asia to the West. The importance attached to Confucianism by the rulers of the separatist regime and the continuation of the Central Plains culture in Liangzhou provided an opportunity for the Sogdians who settled here to contact and learn from the Central Plains culture.

Beginning in the 4th century, the Sogdians chose Liangzhou as the base of their commercial network. In addition to the critical geographical location mentioned above, another reason is that Liangzhou was a preferred place for horse breeding. Since the Han Dynasty, Liangzhou

¹ Xu Qin, Chen Aizhu, 1988(02), p. 78.

² *Hou Hanshu 后汉书*, 1965, p. 1876. *Zi Zhi Tong Jian 资治通鉴*, 2011, p. 6975. *Wei Shu 魏书*, 1973, p. 1542.

³ *Hou Hanshu 后汉书*, 1965, p. 797.

⁴ Wang Naiang, Cai Weimin, 1997(04), p. 28.

has been a natural pasture for the development of animal husbandry because of its rich grasslands.¹ Until the Tang Dynasty, Liangzhou was still an essential place for producing military horses and high-quality pastures have always provided the Dynasty with the good horses needed for warfare. The Sogdians played an essential role in the trade of horses. For example, the Sogdians in Xizhou not only transported the good horses of the Kang state of Central Asia to Turpan to trade in the Tarim Basin but also further sold horses to the Hexi Corridor, the Central Plains, and other critical military towns, according to the needs of the Central Plains Dynasty.

The northern nomads also had a great demand for horses because of their living characteristics of living on grass, so these groups also competed for horses and other livestock resources with the Central Plains regime to seize Liangzhou. The Sogdians were good at trading between various forces and famous translators on the Silk Road, and they traded with the nomads of the Mongolian plateau with their excellent language skills, so Liangzhou was also a preferred region for Sogdians to trade north.

After the Sogdians arrived and settled in a place, the social network also expanded as the commercial network extended. According to the Sogdian ancient letters I and III, ² Liangzhou in the 4th century was the headquarters of Sogdian trade caravans. At the same time, Dunhuang seemed to be just a transit station connecting Liangzhou with other towns in the western regions and Samarkand, the hometown of Sogdian. Unlike Liangzhou, there had not been organized Sogdians in Dunhuang till the 4th century. According to the Sogdian Ancient letter II, the sender of the letter sent a trade caravan from Liangzhou and sent people to Dunhuang. The sender is most likely to live in Liangzhou.³ According to the identity of the merchant recorded in the letter, Vaissière believed that the merchant group of Sogdians could be divided into three classes: addressee - a member of the trade caravan in Samarkand; sender - the manager of the trade caravan in China; agents in Dunhuang, Liangzhou and Jincheng(金城). ⁴

Given Liangzhou's important military status, the Sogdians had an unusual relationship with the separatist regime to maintain their trade network in Liangzhou and the Hexi Corridor. The construction of this relationship not only helped the Sogdian merchants to maintain and expand but also served as the basis for accumulating their strength. Therefore, in Liangzhou, the Sogdian brothers with the surname An(安) played a significant role in the political situation of the late Sui and early Tang dynasties, and the historical environment foundation can be found.

5.1.2 The Settlements of Sogdians in Liangzhou

Liangzhou has long had a certain armed Sogdian group. At present, it can be determined that the earliest Sogdians in Liangzhou should be Kangju Huhou Zhifu (康居胡侯支富) and Kang

¹ *Han Shu* 汉书, 1963, p. 1645.

² Nicholas Sims-Williams, 2005, pp.72-87.

³ Chen Guocan, Vol.7, 1985, pp.10-18.

⁴ Étienne de la Vaissière. *Sogdian Trader*, 2005, pp. 43-50.

Zhi(康植) mentioned in the *Sanguo Zhi* 《三国志》 in year (227).¹ The Kangju HuhouZhifu (康居胡侯支富) and the armed forces of more than 20 people here, according to Wu Yugui's research, are the Sogdian armed group that settled in Liangzhou in the early days.² Chen Guocan believed that the Kang Ju Huhou here should be Yueshi Hu(月氏胡), and Kang Zhi was sure to be a Sogdians.³ Regardless of the ethnic origin of Kangju Huhou, the fact that Kang Zhi was indeed a Sogdians suggests that Sogdian footprints may have existed in Liangzhou in the early 3rd century. However, they were small in number and mixed with the indigenous Yueshi Hu around Liangzhou, and had not yet developed into the vast Sogdian commercial network as reflected in the ancient Sogdian letters of the 4th century.

In the early 4th century, Sogdian merchants traded from Liangzhou, and their network extended to the hinterland of the Central Plains and towns in the Western Regions. Around the fifth year of the Taihe era(370), the Former Liang regime sent the general Kang Miao(康妙) to ally with the Eastern Jin Dynasty,⁴ and the Kang Miao mentioned here went to the Eastern Jin Dynasty as an envoy, presumably a Sogdians who had lived in Liangzhou for a long time and was trusted by the rulers in the Former Liang regime. Kang Miao's ability to act as an envoy was probably inseparable from his relationship as a merchant who was good at traveling long distances.

Kang Bada (康拔达) also served as Sabao in Liangzhou.⁵ According to the epitaph of Kang Ada (康阿达) unearthed in Liangzhou, his grandfather Kang Bada (康拔达) once accepted an official from the Southern Liang Dynasty(南朝梁). Liangzhou at that time did not belong to any political power in the north or the south. The Southern Dynasty also thought highly of Kang Bada's extensive transportation network based on commercial trade and its military strength as the Sogdians.

In addition to Sogdians surnamed Kang in Liangzhou, the Sogdians with the surname An were also an earlier group that entered Liangzhou. An Tugen(安吐根), who lived in Jiuquan(酒泉), traveled between Northern Wei and Rouran(柔然), and should have travel experience for trade.⁶ The famous Sogdians, An brothers of the late Sui and early Tang dynasties, traced their ancestors to the record that "their ancestor An Nanda(安难陀) lived in Liangzhou as Sabao during Northern Wei Dynasty"⁷. It can be seen that the An brothers in the late Sui and early Tang dynasties had a power that echoed everything because there must be a long-term accumulation of the same ethnic source strength. Such historical origin and accumulation enabled the An Xinggui(安兴贵) and An Xiuren(安修仁) brothers in the late Sui and early Tang dynasties to grasp the initiative in political support.

It can be found that the Sogdian settlements in Liangzhou is based on the characteristics of the formation of armed groups. The Sogdian settlements in Liangzhou show different

¹ *Sanguo Zhi* 三国志, 1959, p. 895.

² Wu Yugui, 1997, pp. 295-338.

³ Chen Guocan, 1988(01), p. 198.

⁴ *Jin Shu* 晋书, 1974, p. 2251.

⁵ Zhou Shaoliang, Zhao Chao, 2001, p. 124.

⁶ Chen Guocan, 1988(01), p. 201.

⁷ *Yuanhe Xingzuan* 元和姓纂, 1994, pp. 500-501.

characteristics from those in Turpan and Dunhuang. Suppose the Sogdian settlements in Turpan and Dunhuang changed to rural settlements. In that case, the Sogdian settlements located in important military areas, Liangzhou, will gradually develop into military towns with Sogdian chiefs as commanders due to the influence of political and military strategies¹. Compared with the Sogdians, who were transformed into townships, the Sogdian settlements with the military style maintained their ethnic characteristics more clearly and durably.² Compared with Dunhuang, Liangzhou has become a place where armed forces are entrenched because it has been a military powerhouse since the Southern and Northern Dynasties.

Because of such a critical strategic position of Liangzhou, the Sogdians of Liangzhou gradually formed an armed force after settling in the form of caravans and played a non-negligible role in establishing the Tang Dynasty.

5.2 Merchant Settlement and Armed Force

As an important town at the eastern end of the Hexi Corridor, Liangzhou is the main way for the Sogdians to enter the central Plains from Central Asia to trade. From the perspective of commercial geography, there were three towns Suyab (碎叶), Gaochang (高昌) and Liangzhou (凉州) which are most closely related to tribute trafficking.³ According to the eastward migration of Sogdians into China, they once reached Liangzhou along the Silk Road at the east end of the Gansu Hexi Corridor. Then, they went eastward to Chang'an and Luoyang in the hinterland of the Central Plains.⁴ Related evidence can be found in *Wei Shu* (魏书): "There are many merchants in Sogdiana who came to Liangzhou for trade."⁵ It shows that Hu merchants were engaged in a lot of trade here.⁶

Given its significant geographical location, the Sogdians must recognize the strategic significance and economic status of Liangzhou. Especially in the 6th century, with the firm control of Turkic peoples forces over the vast areas from the Mongolian Plateau to Central Asia, the Sogdians expanded their trade network with the help of Liangzhou's superior geographical location connecting east and West, south and north, as well as the military protection of the Turkic Khanate.

The geographical location of Liangzhou, accessible from north to south, is the junction of nomads and farmers and the center of vitality.⁷ Connecting several towns similar to Liangzhou can form a banded "reservoir" proposed by Owen Lattimore. This area was significant for the stability of the Central Plains Dynasty. Because of its two different life and production patterns connecting the north and the south, the nomadic people in the northern grasslands and the agricultural people in the south, it brought about frequent conflicts between the two. For nomads, the rapid change of climate and the lack of living resources became the reasons for their invasion to the south. For the Central Plains Dynasty, as long as they controlled the major passes of the Qilian Mountains (祁连山), they could block the attacks of the ethnic minorities from the Tibet Plateau. As for the north, as long as heavy troops are set

¹ Rong Xinjiang, 2009, pp. 30-31.

² Yao Chongxin etc., 2013, p. 40.

³ Cai Hongsheng, 2007, p. 4.

⁴ Rong Xinjiang, 2014, p. 68-74.

⁵ *Wei Hui* 魏书, 1974, p. 2270

⁶ *Da Ciensi Sanzang Fashi Zhuan* 大慈恩寺三藏法师传, 2000, p. 11.

⁷ Moriyasu Takao, trans. by Shi Xiaojun, 2020, p. 49.

up in the river valley source area and Liangzhou, where the grassland people go south, the possibility of their further southward journey will be blocked, and their invasion will be prevented. Therefore, when it can be effectively controlled and the Dynasty is strong, this area will become a crucial defensive place to defend the hinterland of the Central Plains. On the contrary, it will become a threat that can contact other minority regimes. For example, at the end of the Sui Dynasty, Li Gui allied with Tuyuhun (吐谷浑) and developed eastward. It became a serious threat to the Tang Dynasty, trying to complete the great cause of national reunification.¹

At the end of the Sui Dynasty and the beginning of the Tang Dynasty, there were many Sogdians in the armed forces,² An Xiuren (安修仁) and An Xinggui (安兴贵) brothers of Liangzhou are vital among them. As for the process of supporting Li Gui (李轨) and surrendering to the Tang Dynasty later, Wu Yugui (吴玉贵) conducted research and drew brilliant conclusions in his study. It should be noted that the Sogdian An brothers and their group played an essential role in helping Li Gui establish his political power in Liangzhou, so Li Gui gradually had a strong influence on the power³. After the founding of the Tang Dynasty, An Xinggui even volunteered to go to Liangzhou to persuade Li Gui to surrender. Living among several powerful political bodies in Eurasia, the Sogdians can make decisions according to the situation, like the An Brothers, who judge the occasion and make quick choices. This capability, like ethnic characteristics, is also shown in the Sogdians in China.

An Xinggui once told Tang Gaozu that he was born into a wealthy and influential family in Liangzhou and had many followers.⁴ From this point of view, the Sogdian An brothers should have a relatively sizeable armed group that can be driven at will. “This armed group has its military strength mainly composed of cavalry. Moreover, these armed groups are not only used to guard their caravans but also actively and continuously provide military assistance to those forces that they think are promising in order to seek common development.”⁵ This kind of power that can stir up the situation can not be formed overnight but is based on the historical and cultural background of Liangzhou and the power accumulated by the Sogdians here for a long time.

According to records, in the second year of the Wude era(619), An Xiuren used his land to surrender, and the Tang Dynasty established an army in his hometown.⁶ It can be seen that the Tang Dynasty, while appeasing An Xiuren, also required the establishment of the armed groups that surrendered with him, which is sufficient evidence of An Xiuren’s significant influence in Liangzhou.

The armed forces of the Sogdians in Liangzhou existed and continued during the Tang Dynasty. In the spring of 757, more than a year after the outbreak of the An Shi rebellion (安史之乱), a rebellion led by An Menwu (安门物), a Sogdian surnamed An, took place in Liangzhou, which was recorded in *Jiu Tangshu* (旧唐书). According to the historical records,

¹ Wu Yugui, 1997, p. 299.

² Wu Yugui, 1997, p. 297.

³ Wu Yugui, 1997, p. 298.

⁴ *Jiu Tangshu* 旧唐书, 1975, p. 2251.

⁵ Moriyasu Takao, trans. by Shi Xiaojun, , 2020, p. 127.

⁶ *Tang Huiyao* 唐会要, 1955, p. 1861.

the rebellion was soon put down, and its impact on society was less than the An Shi rebellion. However, after the An Shi rebellion was put down, the Sogdians in Liangzhou still had the intention to rebel. An Menwu (安门物) had gathered local indigenous armed forces, Turkic peoples and others¹, whose great influence indicated that the Sogdians in the Hexi area with Liangzhou as the center, still had strong power. It should be noted that the identity of An Menwu (安门物) was not a military general or other people with official rank but a Sogdian merchant. Chen Guocan speculates that “An Menwu(安门物) may also be a descendant of the Sogdian An family who lived in Liangzhou as Sabao during the Zhou and Sui dynasties”².

From the An brothers’ persuading Li Gui to surrender at the beginning of the Tang Dynasty to the An Menwu incident after the An Shi rebellion, those who played significant roles were all merchants. The merchants had great power and the ability to respond to all calls because of the intelligence network established by the Sogdians who entered the Hexi Corridor in the 4th century³. However, these two events have their characteristics. The political situation greatly influenced the long-distance trade conducted by Sogdian merchants, so they would actively seek the protection of powerful forces while building their armed forces based on their high ability to judge the situation. When collecting information, there must be a vast network of relationships. In order to make efficient use of this network, which included intelligence and economy, it was necessary to effectively allocate relevant personnel at all interfaces of trade roads, namely, urban strongholds. For this reason, Sogdian merchants had to form a team with their families, relatives, and fellow citizens of the same city-state to help each other.⁴ Therefore, we can also find from the relevant historical materials and archaeological results that when the Sogdians entered China in the early stage, they often gathered together with their surnames as the link, such as the tombs of Sogdians with the surname of an in Liangzhou and the tombs of Sogdians excavated in Guyuan, Ningxia. As mentioned above, they needed to support each other in a team to make the established trade intelligence network operate smoothly. At the same time, armed groups were formed.

Sogdian merchants in the same region or different regions might have exchanged information with each other. At that time, An Xinggui, who had already lived in Chang’an, took refuge in the Tang Dynasty through his keen political insight, which was also a choice for self-protection, or as Moriyasu Takao thought, “the Sogdian An brothers bet on different regimes by stepping on two boats at the beginning.”⁵ In the middle of the 8th century, Sogdian An Menwu (安门物) relied on the Sogdians’ wide range of information networks to cooperate with the An Shi rebellion. It can be seen that from the Sogdian An brothers in the early 7th century to An Menwu, who rebelled in the middle of the 8th century, it is proved that there were a large number of Sogdians in Liangzhou.

5.3 Identity of Sogdians in Liangzhou

Because of its political and military-strategic significance, various soldiers constantly contested Liangzhou, and its status as a transit station on the Silk Road was also highly valued by Sogdian merchants. As mentioned above, the Sogdians have a relatively solid historical

¹ Feng Peihong, 2020(06), pp. 106-107.

² Chen Guocan, 2002, p. 88.

³ Moriyasu Takao, trans. by Shi Xiaojun, 2020, pp. 107-110.

⁴ Moriyasu Takao, trans. by Shi Xiaojun, 2020, p. 102.

⁵ Kazuo Mori, trans. by Shi Xiaojun, 2020, p. 124.

foundation in Liangzhou, and many Sogdians have formed settlements in Liangzhou while also adapting to the situation in Liangzhou and having a specific armed force and mass base. Since the period between the Northern Wei Dynasty and the Northern Zhou Dynasty, many Sogdians had already lived in Liangzhou. Most of them were Sogdian families who had lived for several generations in the Tang Dynasty. This was the basis for forming the Sogdian armed forces in Liangzhou and why the area around Liangzhou had a meaningful geographical connection with the Sogdians.

In addition to the well-known An Xinggui(安兴贵) and An Xiuren(安修仁) and their family, the excavated epitaphs also provide many Sogdians from Liangzhou. For example, An Wei(安威), who lived in the late 5th century and early 6th century, was posthumously given the title “the government of the Wuwei Prefecture”(武威太守) when he died.¹ “Wuwei people” An Yan(安延).² “Wuwei County people”(武威郡人) An Yu(安玉).³ “Wuwei County Man”(武威郡人) Li Guozhen (安暉)⁴. Combined with the Kang Zhi(康植) and An Tugen(安吐根) mentioned above, Liangzhou was indeed an important place for many Sogdians to live before they entered the Central Plains.

Here, a Sogdian came to our attention, namely An Xuanlang(安玄郎) in Lingnan(岭南), who died in the second year of Qianfu era(875).⁵ The epitaph of An Xuanlang states that his ancestor lived Liangzhou, and his great-grandfather was general with titles “Fengtian Dingnan Gongchen(奉天定难功臣), Zhouzhen Guojun(州镇国军)、Tongguanzhen Eshi(同关镇遏使)”.⁶ According to scholars’ research, only the Sogdians Li Yuanshu 李元谅 (An Yuanguang 安元光) can meet both titles.⁷ However, through checking epitaph of An Xuanlang, it can be found that An Xuanlang’s family has lived in the junction of today’s Guangdong(广东省) and Guangxi(广西省) Provinces for a long time since the beginning of his ancestor An Jing(安靖).⁸ Connecting his great-grandfather with Li Yuanshu in such a living area seems complicated.

Li Yuanliang is a typical Sogdian who changes his surname. According to the epitaph, the Li Yuanliang family has lived in Liangzhou for generations, and the family name is An.⁹ From the first generation, An Xian(安羨), through several generations, until Li Yuanliang, they all held military positions in the government. Li Yuancheng, originally named An Yuanguang(安元光), was born in the fifteenth year of the Kaiyuan era (727). The emperor gave him the surname Li because of his achievements in military merit.¹⁰ Only the great-ancestor recorded the title when An Xuanlang recorded his ancestors, but the name is unknown. Living in the

¹ Jia Zhen, 2011, pp. 162-163.

² Beijing Tushuguan Jinshizu 北京图书馆金石组, 1989, p. 87. Zhou Shaoliang, 1992, p. 180. Li Yongqiang, 2011, pp. 215-216.

³ Mao Yangguang, 2013, pp. 526-527.

⁴ Wu Gang, 1996, p.30.

⁵ Zhou Shaoliang, Zhao Chao, 2001, p. 1122.

⁶ Sun Lanfeng, Hu Haifan, 1992, p. 158.

⁷ Liu Senkui, 2019, p. 55.

⁸ Liu Senkui, 2019, p. 56.

⁹ Zhou Shaoliang, Zhao Chao, 2001, pp. 754-755.

¹⁰ *Jiu Tangshu* 旧唐书, 1975, p. 3916.

remote Lingnan, An Xuanlang attached his great-ancestor to Li Yuanliang, whom military achievements had given the surname, probably also to glorify the clan, which shows the significant influence of Liangzhou as a county for Sogdians in the Tang Dynasty.

Another Sogdian with the surname An who changed his surname after the Anshi Rebellion was Li Baoyu(李抱玉), a descendant of An Xiuren(安修仁) and An Xinggui(安兴贵). The Sogdian An brothers were honored after helping the Tang pacify Li Gui(李轨), and from then on, this An family began to prosper and move to Chang'an. An Yuanshou(安元寿), the son of An Xinggui, was even more helpful in the seizing of the throne by Li Shimin(李世民).¹ Subsequent generations, such as An Shengan(安神感), An Huailuo(安怀洛), and others, also received favors for family honor. This An family in Liangzhou changed the descendants Li Baoyu(李抱玉) and Li Baozhen(李抱真), that is, “in the second year of Zhide(至德) era (757), surname Li was given to Li Baoyu” and changed their native place to Chang'an County(长安县), the West of Chang'an.² When the Liangzhou An family developed into Li Baoyu and Li Baozhen, they divided their native place(Guan 贯) and ancestral home(郡望) by changing surnames. The development of the Sogdian An family of Liangzhou can reflect two aspects: one is that the origin of Sogdians will have an impact on their cultural identity; the second is the identity of the Sogdian family, which is recognized and valued by the rulers, is likely to manifest as a separation of their own family identity and dynasty identity.

First, the level of origin and whether the family inherited royal favor had a crucial influence on the Sogdian dynastic identity. When recording the origins of An Xinggui and An Xiuren, *Yuanhe Xing Zuan* 《元和姓纂》 writes: “Sogdian An family came from An state in Sogdiana, its prince came to the Han Dynasty as a hostage. This is the ancestor of Sogdian An bothers in Liangzhou. From An Nantuo(安难陀) to Sun Pansualuo(孙盘娑罗), their ancestors were always held the position of Sabao(萨宝).”³ *Xin Tangshu* 《新唐书》 also recorded this origin like *Yuanhe Xing Zuan* 《元和姓纂》.⁴ *Xin Tangshu* and *Yuanhe Xing Zuan* both trace their origins to An Shigao(安世高) in Western Han Dynasty but also mention that their ancestors were from the ancestor of the Han people, Hang Di(黄帝), which is consistent with the behavior of most Sogdians who attached their origins to the ancestors of Han people and famous families. The attachment of the Liangzhou Sogdians is recorded in the official records of the Tang Dynasty, indicating that the Tang rulers approved of this behavior, and this acquiescence was probably based on the Tang ruler's recognition of the achievements of Sogdians An brothers. The imperial court's official recognition of the ancestral home of Sogdians with the surname An was an important reason why many Sogdians later chose to return their homeland to Liangzhou.

After the Sogdian An brothers were submitted to Tang ruler's authority, their descendants gradually became officials in the dynasty. They took a road different from that of An

¹ Zhaolin Bowuguan, 1988(12), p. 47.

² *Jiu Tangshu* 旧唐书, 1975, p.3646.

³ *Yuanhe Xing Zuan* 元和姓纂, 2008, p. 500.

⁴ *Xin Tangshu* 新唐书, 1975, pp. 3445-3446.

Menwu(安门物). An Yuanshou(安元寿), An Xinggui's son, was first under Li Shimin's(李世民) command. Later, he helped Li Shimin(李世民) seize power and made many military achievements in the struggle between the Tang Dynasty and Turkic force. In the second year of era of Yongchun (683), he died in Luoyang and was specially buried with Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty. ¹An Zhongjin(安忠敬), the grandson of An Yuanshou(安元寿), successively held several military positions and moved to the northwest frontier to fight against Turkic peoples and The Tibetan Emire in the Tang Dynasty. In the 14th year of era Kaiyuan (726), he died in Shanzhou and was buried in the ancestral tombs of Liangzhou.² The names of the ancestors of An Xiuren and An Xinggui still had the special element of Sogdian, like An Nantuo(安难驼), An Bi(安弼) and An Luofangda(安罗方大). In the generation of the An Brothers, there has been a certain degree of Sinicization in their names. The names of the later generations are completely Han style, and Li Baoyu(李抱玉) was given a surname "Li" by the emperor. The reason why Li Baoyu(李抱玉) asked for a surname was to avoid the involvement after the Anshi rebellion.

Historical records that Li Baoyu requested a surname in the second year of Zhide era (757) of Emperor Suzong(唐肃宗), and the An Menwu(安门物) incident occurred in the fifteenth year Tianbao era (756) of Emperor Xuanzong(唐玄宗), and the two events occurred at very close times. The comparison of the two events reveals that the Sogdians with family support had a certain degree of autonomy in choosing from the prevailing anti-Hu culture after the Anshi Rebellion, and the merits accumulated by their ancestors and the official positions they obtained were enough to provide them with a basis for separating from the rebel An Lushan by changing their surnames.

Corresponding to Sogdians mentioned above is the protagonist of the An Menwu Incident. Although the life of An Menwu, who launched the rebellion, cannot be explored, it should have a certain appeal in the local area from the group it responded, but it is fundamentally not comparable to the Sogdian Li Baoyu family, which has a solid foundation. In the face of the impact of the Anshi Rebellion, the Sogdian civilians represented by An Menwu did not have much choice and embarked on the road of rebellion. The difference between the two reflects the differences in identity between powerful Sogdian families and individuals in the face of the political vortex and the reasons for their differences.

In the face of the political situation, there are also the officials of Wei Bo(魏博), Shi Xiancheng(史宪诚) and Shi Xiaozhang(史孝章) family, who lived in Wei Bo(魏博), Hebei after the Anshi Rebellion, who also have the right to choose independently. When Shi Xiancheng was appointed as the officials of Wei Bo, it was in the historical background of attempting to solve the problem of the separatist forces by Tang rulers. Shi Xiancheng participated in the Three Towns Rebellion(三镇叛乱) in the first year of Changqing(长庆) era(821). Faced with the attack of the Tang court, Shi Xiancheng eventually surrendered to Tang under the persuasion of his son Shi Xiaozhang, but still showed a vacillating attitude in the process.³ Later, after Shi Xiaozhang entered the Chang'an, he successively served as officers of many prefectures, and died in his private residence in Chang'an, which shows that the Tang court treated the Shi family favorably. From the perspective of the Tang rulers, it can be regarded as a wooing in the political situation of the late Tang Dynasty; however, from the

¹ Zhaolin Bowuguan, 1988(12), pp. 37-49.

² *Wen Yuan Ying Hua* 文苑英华, 1966, p. 4828.

³ *Jiu Tangshu* 旧唐书, 1975, p. 4687. *Xin Tangshu* 新唐书, 1975, p. 5936.

view of Sogdian Shi family, it is based on the right to make their own choices, which are not available to the Sogdian people living in society.

Shi Xiancheng and Shi Xiaozhang are not only members of the Heshuo group(河朔集团) with Hu characters, but also Sogdians who have lived in the core areas of Tang for several generations, this dual identity makes it inevitable that there will be contradictions in the face of political game.¹ However, they still agreed with the rule of the Tang Dynasty after weighing the pros and cons and then surrendering to the Tang Dynasty.

At the same time, it should also be seen that the Sogdian Shi family in Weibo Military Commissioner(魏博藩镇) has shown the characteristics of being deeply influenced by Han culture in many aspects, the most prominent of which is the marriage with the famous Han family. The surname of Shi Xiancheng's wife is Zhao(赵), and the surname of Shi Xiaozhang's wife is Cui(崔). Both were Han families with muscular strength during the Tang Dynasty. It can be seen that these two expanded their power through marriage with famous families after entering the town of Hebei Fanzhen, and this way of consolidating their power through family marriage is also an essential means for Han people to consolidate their families since the Wei and Jin dynasties. The Sogdians' acceptance of the traditional culture also expresses their identification with Han culture.

Second, the Sogdian family shows the separation of familial and dynastic identities. Some parts of the Sogdians in Tang galvanized the fact that they were from Central Asia by changing their surnames and homeland or associating with the Han people, a phenomenon particularly pronounced after the Anshi Rebellion.

The request from Li Baoyu(李抱玉) for the surname Li is believed to be a decision made by descendants of the Sogdian An family of Liangzhou to obscure the Sogdian origin. It can be seen that even if favored by the rulers like Li Baoyu, in the face of the fact that the leader of the Anshi Rebellion is a Sogdian people, it is necessary to show an attitude of drawing a clear distinction with An Lushan, which can be described as the epitome of survival strategy for Sogdians at that time. However, examining the descendants of this Sogdian An family, An Yuanshou(安元寿) gave up his career in Chang'an. He chose to return Liangzhou to inspect the family business, which is enough to show that "for the descendants of this family, the ancestral business in Liangzhou is more important than obtaining an official position in Chang'an."² An Zhongjing(安忠敬), the grandson of An Yuanshou, once served as the horse inspection officer in Chishui Army(赤水军),³ which also had the meaning of returning to the ancestral business of Liangzhou from Chang'an. Although Li Baoyu was given the surname Li, the information that the ancestor was from Liangzhou can still be raised from his epitaph.

We can think that before the Anshi Rebellion, the descendants of the Sogdian An family in Liangzhou have a deep sense of identity with the Tang Dynasty while still having a deep sense

¹ Tanigawa Michio, 1989, p. 913.

² Wu Yugui, 1997, p. 4828.

³ *Wen Yuan Ying Hua* 文苑英华, 1966, p. 4828.

of identity with their Liangzhou origin, which is based on the tolerance to the Sogdians by Tang society. In this situation, there is no separation between the identification with the Tang Dynasty and that with their origin. However, after the outbreak of the Anshi Rebellion, Li Baoyu's change of surname expressed his loyalty to the Tang rulers and his identification with the Tang dynasty, but this did not mean that he avoided mentioning his family origins. Li Baoyu stated that his ancestor came from Liangzhou and emphasized his Chang'an identity, which shows the separation of the native place, Junwang(郡望), and the living place, Guan(贯).

Regarding the relationship between Junwang(郡望) and Guan(贯) in the Tang Dynasty, Cen Zhongmian believes that the separation between Junwang(郡望) and Guan(贯) was widespread in the Tang Dynasty.¹ The epitaph traces its family place to one place and its living place to another. After the Anshi Rebellion, the emphasis on Sogdian identity can still be seen in some Sogdian epitaphs.² These Sogdians did not shy away from their Sogdian origin; their common feature was that they had prominent families.

This is the case with the descendants of the Anshi Sogdians of Liangzhou. This family has continued its prosperity since An Xinggui and An Xiuren, so it also maintains a sense of pride in the family glory for the descendants who lived after the Anshi Rebellion. A Zhongjing, grandson of An Yuanshou, who was active during the Zhenguan period, naturally did not shy away from his origin as a Sogdian in Liangzhou.³ Although the descendants Li Baoyu and Li Bi said they were from Chang'an, they still clearly stated their Liangzhou origins. This is the inheritance of the family memory of the meritorious service that his ancestors helped establish during the Tang Dynasty. Although they needed to weaken their ties to An Lushan, who was also a Sogdian after the outbreak of the Anshi Rebellion, the family's prosperity allowed them to retain the memory of their ancestors.

It is worth noting that the merits of the Liangzhou Sogdian An brothers in helping the Tang Dynasty benefited precisely from the armed forces formed by the Sogdians in Liangzhou for a long time.

When discussing the essential geographical location of Liangzhou mentioned earlier, the reason why separatist forces value Liangzhou, in addition to its essential strategic geographical location, another important reason is that Liangzhou is easy to breed excellent horses. As it turned out, An Zhongjing and An Yuanshou held positions related to supervising horse breeding in the Liangzhou area.⁴ Yamashita Shoji believed that An Yuanshou returned to Liangzhou to inherit the family business, referring to the Sogdians, and was good at horse herding.⁵ The Sogdians had close ties with the early Tang dynasty. For example, Shi Zhao, a

¹ Can Zhongmian, 2004, p. 229.

² *Quan Tangwen Buyi 全唐文补遗*, 1997, p. 128. *Quan Tangwen Buyi 全唐文补遗*, 1997, p. 143. *Quan Tangwen Buyi 全唐文补遗*, 1994, p. 36. *Quan Tangwen Buyi 全唐文补遗*, 1994, p. 282.

³ *Wen Yuan Ying Hua 文苑英华*, 1966, p. 4828.

⁴ *Wen Yuan Ying Hua 文苑英华*, 1966, p. 4828. Zhaoling Bowuguan, 1988(12), pp. 46-47.

⁵ Masashi Yamashita, 2008(04), p. 18.

descendant of the Sogdians, served as the “second supervisor of the left” to raise horses and improve horses. Not only that, but Shi Zhao also used his status as a Sogdian to use this convenience to raise more funds and trade horses based on his extensive social network. ¹

Liangzhou, with its important geographical location, easy-to-raise pasture for horses, and crucial strongholds in the northwest trade and transportation network, the trinity formed the basis of the Sogdian armed forces in Liangzhou. The fact that the Sogdians traced their ancestry back to Liangzhou is not so much a Han identity as an imaginary family identity. In this way, through family bonding, they can confidently live in the Tang Dynasty with good ancestral memories, parallel to identification with the Tang Dynasty, and there is no situation of “one or the other”. Therefore, the fact that many Sogdians trace their family place back to Liangzhou reflects the power accumulated by the Sogdians over a long period, so the importance of Liangzhou to the geographical identity of the Sogdians is self-evident. However, for the descendants of the Sogdian families who were influential in Liangzhou and consolidated in the Tang Dynasty, when they had to cut off with Sogdian rebels for social reasons, there was a practice of changing their lineage but still retaining the record of native place. This behavior is primarily based on continuing the family's honor while not hindering their efforts to show identification with the Tang Dynasty after the Anshi Rebellion.

Summary

Liangzhou was one of the earliest areas where the Sogdians settled, and the reason for this is the important geographical location of Liangzhou on the Silk Road. According to the ancient Sogdian Letters unearthed in Dunhuang, at least since the beginning of the 4th century, a specific size of Sogdian settlements existed in Liangzhou, using Liangzhou as a stronghold, connecting the towns of the Central Plains, the Hexi Corridor, and further afield Central Asian homelands. The essential strategic position of Liangzhou made the Sogdians gradually form an armed force after settling in the form of caravans and played a non-negligible influence in establishing the Tang Dynasty.

The topographic containment of Liangzhou has made Liangzhou a place of military strife in history, and it is prevalent for the separatist regime to be the capital of Liangzhou. Under such an environment, the unique characteristic of the Sogdians living in Liangzhou is that they have a certain amount of armed forces. Because of this, Liangzhou became a place for many Sogdian families, a phenomenon that was more obvious after the Anshi Rebellion, which is based on the Sogdians' geographical identification with Liangzhou.

Fundamentally, compared with Dunhuang and Turpan, Liangzhou was closer to the center of the Tang Dynasty's rule. However, it still became a place of contention for separatist power due to its important strategic location. These two circumstances allowed Liangzhou to be deeply influenced by dynastic politics and, to a certain extent, to have local power. When the

¹ Li Jinxiu, 2012, pp. 272.

Central Plains dynasty was weak, the local power and armament of Liangzhou developed. If the Central Plains Dynasty were strong, the local forces in Liangzhou would also actively move closer to the Central Dynasty to gain more living space. This is the case with the development of the Sogdian An family in Liangzhou, and based on the power formed in Liangzhou for a long time, An Xingui and An Xiuren were able to rise to prominence in the politics of the early Tang Dynasty and gained family glory by helping the Tang royal family seize the throne. When the Anshi Rebellion dealt a blow to the Tang Dynasty, the Sogdians of Liangzhou rebelled again. This is a manifestation of the identity of Sogdians based on the state of being neither near nor far away between Liangzhou and the center of the Dynasty.

Chapter 6 Steppe style: Turkic Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures

After the Tang Dynasty conquered the Eastern Turkic Khanate, the court settled the people of the Khanate in Liuhu Prefectures. The Sogdians who lived in tribes in the Eastern Turkic Khanate were also moved to Liuhu Prefectures, and these Sogdians were very close to the Turkic people. The steppe culture profoundly influenced them in terms of living customs. As Liuhu Prefectures were located in the middle of the northern steppe and the land south of the Great Wall of Han people, it was highly vulnerable to the political situation on both sides, and their identification with the Tang Dynasty also wavered, which was entirely the result of the Sogdians of Liuhu Prefectures being caught up in politics.

6.1 Organizational System and Geographical Environment in Liuhu Prefectures

6.1.1 Change of Organization and Personnel Migration

Liuhu Prefectures(六胡州) were where Emperor Taizong of the Tang Dynasty settled after conquering the Eastern Turkic Khanate. Studies have shown that the prominent people who settled in Liuhu Prefectures were Sogdians who lived in the Eastern Turkic Khanate before. Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures were the most influential group in the political life of the Tang Dynasty¹. Scholars have made relevant summaries of the research of Liuhu Prefectures.² Onogawa Hidemi and E. Pulleyblank studied Liuhu Prefectures earlier.³ The records of the organizational system of Liuhu Prefectures can be found in the illustrated records of Yuanhe *Junxian Tuzhi* 《元和郡县图志》, *Tong Dian* 《通典》, *Xin Tangshu* 《新唐书》 and *Jiu Tangshu* 《旧唐书》, and have been summarized in relevant studies.⁴ There is the record in *Xin Tangshu*:

调露元年，于灵、夏南境以降突厥置鲁州、丽州、含州、塞州、依州、契州，以唐人为刺史，谓之六胡州。长安四年，并为匡、长二州。神龙三年置兰池都督府，分六州为县。开元十年复置鲁州、丽州、契州、塞州。十年，平康待宾，迁其人于河南及江、淮。十八年复置匡、长二州。二十六年还所迁胡户置宥州及延恩等县，其后侨治经略军。至德二载，更郡曰怀德。乾元元年复故名。宝应后废。元和九年于经略军复置，距故州东北三百里。⁵

According to the quotation, in the first year of era of Tiaolu(调露)era (679), the Tang Dynasty conquered the Eastern Turkic Khanate and set up Liuhu Prefectures to govern those surrendered people. It is believed that “Liuhu Prefectures were set up for those surrendered people from the Eastern Turkic Khanate”⁶, the fact that its main group is the Sogdians has

¹ Zhang Guangda, 1986(02), p. 72.

² Li Danjie, 2004(04).

³ Zhuang Guangda, 1986(02). Li Danjie, 2004(04). Zhong Han, 2017.

⁴ Zhuang Guangda, 1986(02). Wang Beichen, 1992(05).

⁵ *Xin Tangshu* 新唐书, 1975, pp. 974-975.

⁶ Chen Haitao, 2003(05).

been confirmed by scholars.¹ Liuhu Prefectures were established from the first year of Tiaolu era(679) to the 26th year of Kaiyuan era(738), during which there were mergers and separations, and the organizational system changed several times.

There are two views on the establishment time of Liuhu Prefectures: the first year of era of Tiaolu (679) and the year during era of Zhenguan. At present, there is no final conclusion. According to the *Xin Tangshu* 《新唐书》, the Tang court set up Liuhu Prefectures in the south of Lingzhou(灵州)and Xiazhou(夏州)in 679 AD, but it is believed that those six states were set up in this area about 30 years after Taizong's rebellion against the Eastern Turkics, though it is not recorded in historical documents. In 679 AD, after putting down the rebellion of two tribes of Turkics, Ashina Wenbo(阿史那温博)and Ashina Fengzhi(阿史那奉职), the Tang Dynasty changed the Liuhu Prefectures from an autonomous prefecture to an official and normal prefecture, and let the Han people manage the administrative affairs here.² Scholars who hold this opinion believe that it was the Turkics rebellion that led to the urgent establishment of Liuhu Prefectures in the Tang Dynasty to strengthen this area.³

Liuhu Prefectures were actually set up earlier than year 679. This fact was confirmed by scholars after the discovery of the epitaph of An Pu(安菩), a Sogdian.⁴ And the records of Liuhu Zhou in historical materials appear earlier. According to the records of *Taiping Huangyu Ji* 《太平寰宇记》, about the second year of era of Jiande(建德)in Northern Zhou Dynasty (573), “Emperor Wu once established six states for Hu people at the boundary of Lingzhou and Xiazhou. In the Sui Dynasty, it was divided into Lu(鲁), Qi(契), Yi(依) and other three states. Before the Yonghui of the Tang Dynasty, the name of seven continents still existed.”⁵ According to Zhang Guangda, from the point of view of the state name alone, “the name of “Liuhu Prefecture” appeared early, which can be seen in the historical records of the Northern Zhou Dynasty”⁶. In addition, there is also a saying in the imperial edict(遣牛仙客往关内诸州安辑六州胡敕) that the Liuhu Prefecture “was a place where “Hu people had gathered together for more than one hundred years”⁷. This royal decree was issued in the 26th year of era of Kaiyuan (738). According to this, 100 years before 738 was earlier than year 679. Also based on the epitaph of An Pu⁸, the great leader of Liuhu Prefecture in the Tang Dynasty, records that An Pu died earlier than the year 679. In this way, if only based on the name of Liuhu Prefectures, its actual time of appearance is indeed earlier than the official record of year 679.

However, the Liuhu Prefectures established as early as the Northern Zhou Dynasty mentioned in *Taiping Huanyu Ji* (《太平寰宇记》) does not refer to the Liuhu Prefectures established in Tang

¹ Rui Chuanming, 1998, p. 253. Li Danjie, 2004(04), p. 103.

² Zhang Guangda, 1986(02), p. 74. Ai Chong, 2005(06), pp. 73-74.

³ Mu Weisheng, 2007(03), p. 25.

⁴ Ai Chong, 2003(02). Zhang Guangda, 1986(02).

⁵ *Taiping Huangyu Ji* 太平寰宇记, 2007, p. 825.

⁶ Zhang Guangda, 2008, p. 9.

⁷ *Quan Tangwen* 全唐文, 1982, p. 391.

⁸ Zhao Zhenhua, Zhu Liang, 1982(02). Luoyangshi Wenwu Gongzuodui 洛阳市文物工作队, 1982(03).

Dynasty, but to the six prefectures in the Tang Dynasty, which was proposed by Zhou Weizhou.¹ These six prefectures were set up much earlier than Liuhu Prefectures in Tang. As for the record in An Pu's epitaph, some scholars believe that the status title was added by An Jinzang (安金藏),² the son of An Pu, but it still reflects the importance of Liuhu Prefectures to the Sogdian descendants who immigrated from Eastern Turkic Khanate when An Jinzang wrote his father's epitaph in the third year of Jinglong era (709)³.

This thesis believes that An Pu was not called the leader of Liuhu Prefectures when he was alive. This can be seen from his official rank and the fact that his wife die not get any post because of him. However, this cannot negate that Liuhu Prefectures existed as early as the period of Emperor Gaozong. The name of Liuhu Prefectures has existed for a long time, but different groups of people dominated the place in different historical period.

In 679, there is no record of the specific time of "appointing Han people as officers" in Liuhu Prefectures. In October of that year, there was a revolt between the two tribes of the Turkics, Ashina Wenbo (阿史那温博) and Ashina Fengzhi (阿史那奉职). Obviously, Emperor Gaozong changed the management mode of Liuhu Prefectures in response to this emergency, so the decree to promote Liuhu prefectures to a normal prefecture may also be issued in October or soon after. Therefore, it is an indisputable fact that the Tang government strengthened its control over the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures by "appoint Han people as officers" regardless of whether the setting time of Liuhu Prefecture was the first year of era of Tiaolu(调露)era. Mu Weisheng believed that at the time of the Turkic uprising, Tang government still had the energy to manage Liuhu Prefectures, which also showed that Liuhu Prefecture was not involved in the Turkic uprising⁴, and managing Liuhu Prefectures as normal prefecture was also a defense method made by Tang ruler in advance based on the rebellion of the two Turkics tribes.

The organizational system of Liuhu Prefecture changed frequently during Tang period. According to the records in the *Xin Tangshu* 《新唐书》, it can be roughly summarized the establishment and evolution of Liuhu Prefecture and the migration of Sogdians from 679 to the 26th years of Kaiyuan period. From the first year of Tiaolu era to year 722 in Kaiyuan era, the organizational change of Liuhu Prefecture was basically a quantitative merger or split. During the Kang Daibin (康待宾) rebellion (721), the Tang Dynasty forced the migration of "more than fifty thousand Hu people in Hequ area southward to central plains with Han people."⁵ The direct cause of the unrest recorded in historical materials is that the residents of Sogdians in Liuhu Prefecture suffered from taxes and servitude.

In second month of the 26th year of Kaiyuan era (738), the Sogdians in Liu Hu Zhou that were moved to the area between the Changjiang River and Huai River due to Kang Daibin's

¹ Zhou Weizhou, 1988(03), p. 54.

² Zhou Weizhou, 1988(03), p. 55.

³ Liu Danjie, 2004(04), p. 102.

⁴ Mu Weisheng, 2007(03), p. 25.

⁵ *Jiu Tangshu* 旧唐书, 1975, p. 183.

rebellion were returned to their native land, settled in the former place Lan Chi Commandery (兰池都督府), and built You Zhou (宥州) in the name of forgiveness. You Zhou here is different from the Yuzhou set up later at the end of Tang to manage the party, but the starting point for managing minority tribes based on the important position of Yuzhou is the same, that is, it can command the vassal department and contact the Tiande Army (天德军) in the north in time if necessary. At this time, Youzhou has an obvious military nature.

In the first year of Zhide era (至德) of Suzong (肃宗) (756), Ashina Congli (阿史那从礼) forced with Hu people in the north to prepare for military action against emperor who went to Lingzhou to transfer troops due to the An Shi rebellion. After the rebellion was put down, the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefecture was gradually forced to move out of Lingzhou (灵州) and Xiazhou (夏州) area¹. Among them, some Sogdians fled to Luoyang to join the rebel Army of An Lushan. After the two capitals were recovered, they followed An Qingxu (安庆绪) to the north or were placed in Fanyang (范阳)², which returned to the command of Shi Siming (史思明) and Shi Chaoyi (史朝义) later.

After the Anshi rebellion was put down, Sogdians in Liuhu Prefecture did not appear in historical records any more. Later, it was recorded that These Sogdians went to Shizhou (石州) and later to Yunshuo (云朔) area³. After Sogdians in Liuhu Prefecture went to Yunshuo (云朔) area, it gradually got in touch with Shatuo (沙陀), who moved eastward from the Western Regions, which became an important part of the “three tribes of Shatuo” during the last few decades of Tang dynasty.

The process of establishment and abolition of Liuhu Prefecture and the migration of the Sogdians in Liuzhou are “the epitome of the ups and downs of the military and political situation in the northern part of Guan-nei Dao region (关内道) and even the entire northern frontier in the early Tang Dynasty”⁴. The reason for its evolution and change is that “The Tibetan Emire and Turkics invaded Guan-nei Dao from the north and west respectively, making Tiele tribes and Tangut people and other nationalities go to Liuhu Prefecture to avoid disasters”⁵.

6.1.2 Geographical Location of Liuhu Prefecture

Liuhu Prefectures are located in the south of Lingzhou (灵州) and Xiazhou (夏州), both of which belong to Guan-nei Dao of Tang (关内道)⁶. Lingzhou is located in today’s Wuzhong City, Ningxia, and Xiazhou was located in the east of Lingzhou, now Jingbian County (靖边县), Yulin, Shaanxi. The two prefectures passed through Shou Xian Cheng (受降城) to the north and reached the old haunt of Eastern Turkic Khanate. Therefore, the location of

¹ *Zi Zhi Tong Jian 资治通鉴*, 2011, pp. 6997-6998.

² Wang Yikang, 1998(04), p. 151.

³ *Zi Zhi Tong Jian 资治通鉴*, 2011, p. 7477.

⁴ Mu Weisheng, 2007(03), p. 25.

⁵ Zhang Guangda, 1986(02), p. 75.

⁶ *Xin Tangshu 新唐书*, 1975, pp. 974-975.

Lingzhou and Xiazhou is of great military significance. In the Kaiyuan period of Emperor Xuanzong, Shuofang Army (朔方军) was set up to defeat the second Turkic Khanate. The core office of Shuofang Jiedushi (朔方节度使) was in Lingzhou, and there were massive forces in and around the city.¹ Liuhu Prefectures are located in the south of these two prefectures.

According to the *Historical Atlas of China* 《中国历史地图集》, Liuhu Prefecture is distributed close to the Great Wall, roughly between the south of today's Otog Front Banner (鄂托克前旗) in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (内蒙古自治区) and the Great Wall, showing the east-west distribution. Wang Beichen pointed out "during the 7th and 9th centuries, the Tang Dynasty once set up military and political regions such as Liuhu Prefecture in the territory of today's Otog Front Banner."²

It can be seen that whether the Turkics or Sogdians who lived in Eastern Turkic Khanate originally were migrated southward within the borders of Tang, it was very beneficial to maintain the stability of the surrendered people by placing them in an area close to the north of the great wall and surrounded by military strategic areas. Based on the considerations above, it is possible to send these people here after the destruction of the Eastern Turkic Khanate by Emperor Taizong, including the Sogdians. Moreover, there have been traces of Sogdians between Lingzhou and Xiazhou. When the Northern Wei Dynasty (北魏) defeated the regime Da Xia (大夏), the Hu people in Dia Xia (大夏) were collectively moved to town in the north of today's Ningxia province for management.³ At the end of Tianbao era (天宝), the Tang government set up an army in Yuzhou for the purpose of managing the nomadic people living in the north better.⁴ It can be seen that the change of organizational system is still due to strategic considerations.

When it comes to the geographical location of Liuhu Prefectures, we have to talk about another concept, namely "six prefectures". As mentioned earlier, Liuhu Prefectures have been recorded as early as the Northern Zhou Dynasty. Zhang Guangda believes that Liuhu Prefectures appeared very early simply as a geographical name. In this regard, Zhou Weizhou refuted that the "Liuhu Prefectures" in the *Taiping Huanyu Ji* 《太平寰宇记》 actually refers to the six prefectures in Hequ area during Tang Dynasty period.⁵ Six prefectures here are Fengzhou (丰州), Shengzhou (胜州), Lingzhou (灵州), Xiazhou (夏州), Shuozhou (朔州), Daizhou (代州), mentioned in figure 2 with red circle.

As shown in the figure 2 below, Liuzhou is located in a wide area surrounded by the Jiziwan of the Yellow River and the Great Wall. On a larger scaler, if the whole Ling, Xia area and Liuhu Prefectures are included, the area to the south of the Great Wall is a good place for the development of animal husbandry. "The sandy grassland on the plateau and the dry and

¹ *Jiu Tangshu* 旧唐书, 1975, pp. 1415-1416.

² Wang Beichen, 1992(05), p. 58.

³ Wu Zhongli, 2009, p. 284.

⁴ *Yuanhe Junxian Tuzhi* 元和郡县图志, 1983, p. 106.

⁵ Zhou Weizhou, 1988(03), p. 54.

eroded areas in the middle and West are mainly suitable for the development of animal husbandry economy, including Liuhu Prefectures.”¹ Some scholars also pointed out that the land use mode of the Sogdians people in Liuhu Prefecture belongs to the resident animal husbandry economy.² The importance of horses in nomadic warfare is self-evident. Liuhu Prefectures are also one of the horse supply bases of the Tang Dynasty.³ The historical sources from *Jiu Tangshu* illustrate that Kang Yuanzi (康愿子), who once followed Kang Daibin, established himself as a Khan, rebelled and plundered horses in Liuhu Prefectures. Obviously, the local horses became the strategic resources that the central and local governments competed for when there was a conflict, and the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures were the herdsmen governed by the Tang Dynasty.

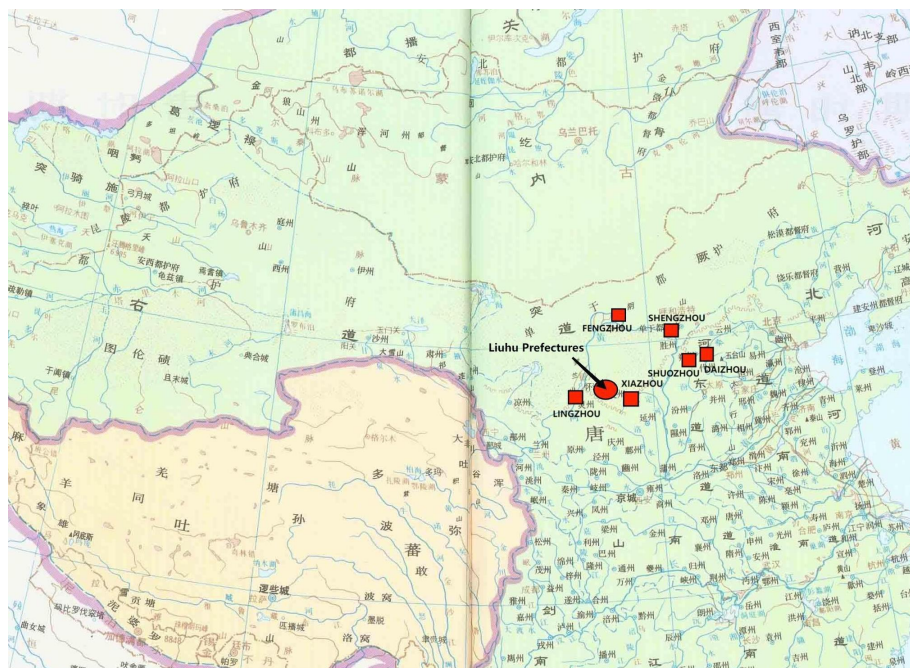


Figure 12 Liuzhou And Liuhu Prefectures⁴

Due to the rapid development of official animal husbandry in Xiazhou (夏州) and Yan Zhou (盐州), the Tang Dynasty appointed some Sogdian herdsmen who were skilled in animal husbandry to serve them. In 7th months of the second year of Yonglong era (681), An Yuanshou (安元寿) who served as Qun Mu Shi (群牧使) of Xiazhou (夏州) said to Emperor Gaozong: “From the 9th months in the first year of Tiaolu era(679), 184900 horses and 11600 cattle were lost.”⁵ From this record, it can be seen that the loss of horses in Liuhu Zhou can also reflect the large number of horses raised here and the attention of the rulers of the Tang Dynasty. An Yuanshou (安元寿) here is the descendant of Sogdians with surname An who helped Tang rule against rebel forces, Li Gui (李轨).

¹ Mu Weisheng, 2007(03), p. 24.

² Ai Chong, 2004(03).

³ Wang Yikang, 1998(04), p. 155.

⁴ Piao Hanji, Li Chunhao trans., 2010(02), p. 31.

⁵ *Tang Huiyao* 唐会要, 1985, pp.1542-1543.

After the rebellion of the two tribes of Turkics in the first year of Tiaolu era (679), the Tang Court responded quickly and appointed Han people as the governor instead of Hu people who were leaders in their tribes originally. This rebellion took place in the Dingxiang Area Commandery (定襄都督府), not far from Baichi (白池), which caused a strong sense of crisis in rules of the Tang Dynasty. This sense of crisis was a lingering fear of the rebellion that had already taken place. At the same time, it was also a worry that Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures might take advantage of the convenience of raising horses in this region to rally forces again to rebel.

6.2 The Sogdians from Eastern Turkic Khanate

According to *Xin Tangshu* 《新唐书》, when Khan Xieli (颉利可汗) became the king of East Turkic Khanate, he appointed Tong Te Qin (统特勤) to manage Hu tribes.¹ The Hu tribe here is the Sogdians, which indicates that the Sogdians who migrated to the Eastern Turkic Khanate also exist in the form of tribes.² The emergence of this tribal form adapts to the internal social organization of the Eastern Turkic Khanate.

In the East Turkic Khan, the so-called “Hu tribe” Sogdian settlement was indeed formed. Among them, the Sogdians led by famous figures such as Shi Shuhuxi (史蜀胡悉), An Suijia (安遂伽), An Wuhuan (安乌唤), Kang Shaoli (康鞘利) and Kang Sumi (康苏密) served in the Turkics court. They instigated Turkics to hate the Central Plains Dynasty. This situation just shows and proves that the Sogdians in the Eastern Turkic Khanate affects the political development of the Eastern Turkic Khanate to a certain extent, and became good advisers in the fields of politics, economy and diplomacy.³

In the fourth year of Zhenguan era (630), after the Tang Dynasty conquered the Eastern Turkic Khanate, its survivors were settled in the intermediate zone between agricultural and pastoral area. There was a heated debate about how to settle them. Finally, Emperor Taizong adopted the opinion of Wen Yanbo (温彦博), the secretary, and settled the survivors in Jimi Fuzhou (羁縻府州) along the northern Great Wall, appointing their original upper leaders to continue to govern their folks remotely, while these leaders lived in Chang’an and enjoyed wealth and glory. The main body of Liuhu Prefecture were the Sogdians, which has long been accepted by the researchers. The rulers and officials of the Tang Dynasty set up Jimi Fuzhou for managing based on the view of controlling Yi (夷) with Yi (夷)⁴, which is also in line with the concept of the rulers of the early Tang Dynasty to prevent foreigners against rebelling.

These Jimi Fuzhou (羁縻府州) are mostly at the junction of farming and grassland, which puts them within the control of the imperial court. Because it was different from the way of life of the people in the Central Plains, the Tang government could not completely imitate the

¹ *Xin Tangshu* 新唐书, 1975, p.6038.

² Li Danjie, 2004(04), p. 103.

³ Moriyasu Takao, Shi Xiaojun trans., 2020, pp. 116-117.

⁴ This means manage foreigners in a way that is acceptable.

administrative management mode of the Central Plains when formulating management measures, so it adopted measures adjusting to local conditions to deal with it properly.

Although the Sogdians engaged in settled agriculture in the Central Asian oasis, the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefecture also changed their way of life and production because they entered the Turkic Khanate earlier, that is, they engaged in animal husbandry organized by tribes. The grassland between Lingzhou and Xiazhou, where Liuhu Prefecture is located, is conducive to grazing. Tang rulers placed these Sogdians there in the hope that they can give full play to their horse breeding skills, so that Liuhu Prefecture would become the area for providing war-horses for Tang Dynasty. However, in year 679, the rebellion of the two Turkic tribes alerted the Tang ruler, so the court changed the way of management and appointed Tang people as officials, and Liuhu Zhou also changed into a normal prefecture.

Wang Yikang (王义康) believes that the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefecture have features like Zhe Jie¹(柘羯), ²probably because the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefecture in the form of tribes have the characteristics of “Turkic army” and are good at riding and shooting³. In this regard, some scholars believe that Sogdian-Turkics with nomadic and militarized characteristic are related to their contact with the Eastern Turkic Khanate. However, it should be noted that since the Northern Dynasty (北朝), the Sogdians who entered Medieval China have gradually formed armed groups in some town along the Silk Road, such as the Sogdian An brothers in Liangzhou mentioned in the previous chapter.

In the ninth year of Kaiyuan era (721), the Sogdians Kang Daibin (康待宾) headed more than seventy thousand people to attack Liuhu Prefecture, then there still was rebellion of Sogdians Kang Yuanzi (康愿子).⁴ After rebellions were put down, so many Sogdians, about fifty thousand, were migrated from Liuhu Zhou forced by government in order to avoid other rebellions. The historical document also showed that another 15 thousand Sogdians were killed in the war. Adding the two numbers together reveals that there were 65 thousand Sogdians living in Liuhu Prefecture.⁵ Based on these figures, it is safe to say that there were a large number of Sogdians involved in the rebellion in Liuhu Prefecture.

After the rebellion, the Tang court sent them to areas south to the Huanghe River (黄河) and other places in order to disperse their forces and let them live among the Han people in order to assimilate them. However, only in the 26th year of Kaiyuan era (738), these Sogdians were moved back to their original places and set up Youzhou (宥州) by Tang court in the name of forgiveness. This part of Sogdians, which was moved back to its hometown, did not integrate into the local Han people as expected by the ruler, and the court had to move them back to their original place. However, it should be noted that there were not a few Sogdians who led the tribe to the Tang Dynasty from the Eastern Turkic Khanate and lived in Chang'an after

¹ Zhe Jie 柘羯, can be written as 拓羯, 赭羯, the title of the warrior of Central Asia in Tang Dynasty documents.

² Wang Yikang, 1998(04), pp. 149-156.

³ Cai Hongsheng, 1998, pp. 124-125.

⁴ *Zi Zhi Tong Jian 资治通鉴*, 2011, p. 7477.

⁵ Wang Beichen, 1992(05), p. 61.

being granted official positions. For example, the well-known “leader of Liuhu Prefecture” An Pu (安菩), who gradually integrated into the life of the Tang people with his family, and his son An Jinzang (安金藏) was commended for his loyalty and filial piety. It can be seen that the Sogdian An Pu (安菩) family and Sogdians Kang Daibin (康待宾) took a different path. The tribal leaders represented by An Pu (安菩) are the objects of appeasement of the imperial court. They are granted official positions and preferential treatment. Their descendants can also obtain official positions so that they will not embark on the road of rebellion.

Subsequently, in the historical records, there was a record of these Sogdians in Shizhou (石州). Tang and The Tibetan Emire launched a fierce battle in the Yan Zhou(盐州) and Xia Zhou(夏州) at the beginning of 12th months in the second year of Zhenyuan era 贞元 (786). The Tang Dynasty appointed Ma Sui (马燧) to attack The Tibetan Emire. After arriving in Shi Zhou (石州), Ma Sui subdued Sogdians who moved here from Liuhu Prefectures and forced them to move to Yun Shuo (云朔).¹ Some scholars believe that the appearance of these Sogdians in Shi Zhou(石州) may be the result of The Tibetan Emire’s invasion of Liuhu Zhou.² Scholars argued about where Sogdians in Shi Zhou came from. For example, Onogawa Hidemi believes that after the first year of Zhide era 至德(756), the Sogdians who was induced to rebel in Liuhu Zhou, was pacified in next year (757), some of them followed the Anshi rebels, and some were exiled to Shi Zhou. However, Wang Yikang believed that they moved to Shi Zhou from the rebels after the An Shi rebellion was pacified.³ On this issue, at present, the researchers mostly agree with view of Onogawa Higami, that is, some Sogdians have been scattered in Shi Zhou after An Shi rebellion was pacified. They chose to go to Shi Zhou not only for military and natural reasons, but also for commercial reasons⁴.

Lingzhou is blocked by Yinshan Mountain, sandy moraine and desert to the north and west respectively, which makes the road difficult, while the road to Bingzhou along the Wuding River Valley to the East is flat and easy.⁵ For example, Yan Gengwang said: “although Yanmen and Taiyuan roads are circuitous, the south of Taiyuan is flat, the economy is prosperous, and its north is also quite rich, so the supply along the way is relatively easy. Although Lingzhou road is relatively straightforward, but the south of Lingzhou is blocked by Hengshan Mountains, the journey is difficult and the area is sparsely populated, and its north is a sandy desert, so the supply along the way is difficult.”⁶ Therefore, Liuzhou Prefectures settled in Shizhou for commercial reasons. Although the Sogdians who went to Liuhu Prefecture were mainly engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry, the Sogdians, as a commercial nation, were still unable to give up their traditional industries. Therefore, although people in Liuhu Prefectures moved frequently, they did take commercial factors into

¹ *Zi Zhi Tong Jian 资治通鉴*, 2011, p. 7477.

² Zhang Guangda, 1982(02), p. 75.

³ One view can be seen in Onogawa Hidemi, Vol. 1, 1942, pp. 957-990, cited from Li Danjie, 2004(04). Another view can be seen in Wang Yikang, 1998(04).

⁴ Yue Dong, 2015(04), p. 13.

⁵ Yue Dong, 2015(04), p. 13.

⁶ Yan Gengwang, 2007, pp. 1335-1336.

consideration when they are choosing a place of residence.

The Sogdians in Liuhu Prefecture moved to areas between Yun Zhou (云州) and Shuo Zhou (朔州), and settled in He Shuo area (河朔) after An Shi rebellion. The process of migrating of Sogdians in Liuhu Zhou after An Shi rebellion was divided into three stages by Yutaka Moribe (森部豊), that is during the An Shi rebellion period, from Jianzhong era to Zhenyuan era (780-804), at the beginning of the 9th century.¹ As for why these Sogdians went to Hebei Fanzhen (河北藩镇) in the latter two periods mention above, Onogawa Hidemi (小野川秀美) believes that their original place of residence was occupied by Dangxiang (党项) and they had to move out.² Zhong Han believes the reason may be The Tibetan Emire's competition for Guannei Dao (关内道) during that period, especially for the Lingzhou and Xiazhou, which can provide animal husbandry resources. Apart from that, due to the weakness of Tang Dynasty at this time, the court cannot guarantee the safety of Liuhu Prefecture under the competition with The Tibetan Emire. In this situation, Sogdians in Liuhu Zhou moved to Hebei Fanzhan (河北藩镇) and settled down.

Sogdians of Liuhu Prefectures became part of the military power of Shatuo(沙陀) in the late Tang dynasty.³ For the Sogdians in the Eastern Turkic Khanate, it took two hundred years from the time they were moved to Liuhu Prefecture, and finally met and merged with Shatuo in the Yunshuo area. When they became part of the Shatuo power with their courage and good fighting, they still reflected the deep influence of grassland culture.

6.3 Cultural Identity of Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures

The Tang rulers positioned Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures as surrendered and potentially threatened, so they eliminated the threat by promoting Liuhu Prefectures to normal prefecture and sending this group to Jianghuai. In addition, Liuhu Prefectures are located in the transition zone between the land of the Central Plains and the northern grassland, so it is very easy to show a vacillating state in the face of the pull of political forces in the north and south, which also directly affects the identification of the Sogdians of Liuhu Prefectures with the Tang Dynasty.

6.3.1 Differentiation of the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures

The final destruction of Liuhu Prefecture was closely related to the outbreak of the An Shi rebellion. Before An Shi rebellion broke out, there had been a riot organized by the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefecture, namely the Kang Daibin (康待宾) rebellion. There have been some special studies on Kang Daibin's rebellion.⁴ According to historical sources, in the ninth year of Kaiyuan era (721), Kang DaiBin united with all the surrenders to attack and capture Liuhu

¹ Moribe Yutaka, 2010, p. 10, cited from Zhong Han, 2017, p. 357.

² Moribe Yutaka, 2010, pp. 98-110, pp. 179-181, pp. 233-234, cited from Zhong Han, 2017, p. 357.

³ *Jiu Tangshu* 旧唐书, 1975, p. 714.

⁴ Zhou Weizhou, 1988(03). Yuan Shu, 1984(01).

Prefecture, the number of insurgents reached seventy thousand. In October of the same year, after Kang Daibin was captured, the rest of the party Kang Yuanzi(康愿子)rebelled again and was immediately pacified. The result of these two rebellions was that the Sogdians in Liuhu prefecture were moved out of their living places and to the Central Plains. As mentioned above, the rulers of the Tang Dynasty intended to promote the integration with the Han people by moving Sogdians internally, but it did not work out. Later, these Sogdians in Liuhu prefecture were moved back to their hometown.

The rebellion of Kang Daibin (康待宾) reflected the severe situation of the northwest frontier in the Tang Dynasty. After the second year of Chang'an era (702), the Second Turkic Khanate went south, invading the border of Tang and encroached on the area along the Guannei road (关内道). In response to the possible crisis, the Tang Court integrated Liuhu Prefecture into Kuangzhou(匡州)and Changzhou(长州), and ordered the construction of Shou Xiang Cheng (受降城) in the north of Hequ as military fortresses. According to the history, "the three towns, Shou Xiang Cheng, were located on three sides of the Huanghe River, and were equipped with heavy military and sufficient horses for wartime needs."¹ In this way, the Shuo Fang Jun(朔方军)set up in the first year of Yanzai era (694) was used as the Western defense, and the Shou Xiang Cheng (受降城) defended the north. Coupled with the natural barrier of the Huanghe River (黄河), it formed an encirclement to Hequ (河曲).

Later, in the third year of Kaiyuan era(715), Mo Chuo (默啜) Khan of the second Turkic Khanate was killed because tribes within the Khanate were dissatisfied with him frequently starting wars. Most of his subordinates fled to Liuhu Prefectures, which brought new destabilizing factors to Liuhu Prefectures.² In this regard, the official Wang Jun (王峻) put forward his opinions predictably. In his comments, he directly pointed out the core of the problem, that is, these surrender people are very likely to jointly rebel. His suggestion can be said to be extremely predictive, and then the outbreak of the Kang Daibin (康待宾) rebellion can be seen that this statement is not alarmist. At the same time, he also believed that although in the early years of Zhenguan era, the Tang Court settled the Turkics surrender people in the Hequ area, these people had no desire for restoration because their leader, Jieli Khan (颉利可汗), had been conquered. However, in year 715, Mo Chuo Khan's subordinates were also moved south to the Great Wall, this move undoubtedly brought hidden dangers to the Tang Dynasty. The reason is that the second Turkic Khanate still exists and retains certain forces, which undoubtedly have a great interference with these surrender people.³

As Wang Jun predicted, Kang Daibin(康待宾)rebellion occurred in the ninth year of Kaiyuan era(721). In the process of assembling the rebels, Kang Daibin called himself Ye Hu (叶护)⁴. Kang Daibin, as a Sogdian, launched a rebellion under the name of a Turkic official, which

¹ *Jiu Tangshu 旧唐书*, 1975, p. 1386.

² *Jiu Tangshu 旧唐书*, 1975, p. 2986.

³ *Jiu Tangshu 旧唐书*, 1975, pp. 2986 -2987.

⁴ *Jiu Tangshu 旧唐书*, 1975, p. 1382. Ye Hu (叶护) was an official and civilian in the Turkic Khanate and was mostly held by the clansman.

also shows that the Turkic official has a great influence on the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefecture. The formation of this influence should be closely related to the above-mentioned settlement of Turkic surrender people opposed by Wang Jun. In order to strengthen the control over the Hequ area, military defense was set up around Hequ by Tang Dynasty. ¹At the same time, Sogdians who came from Eastern Turkic Khanate were also moved to the central area. This is the first large-scale relocation of these Sogdians after being settled here.

Among the Tang generals who suppressed Kang Daibin's rebellion, there was Kang Zhi (康植), a Sogdians surnamed Kang. Kang Zhi once led the troops to help Tang suppress the rebellion, captured Kang Daibin, which enable him to meet Emperor Xuanzong and be appointed as the senior general. His grandson Kang Rizhi(康日知)was a military commander and had an important connection with the military activities in today's Ningxia province during the middle and late Tang Dynasty period. The Sogdians with Kang surname are a relatively powerful branch of the Sogdians in Lingzhou (灵州). The research on the Sogdians with Kang surname in Lingzhou are sufficient. Moribe Yutaka, Xinjiang, Zhou Weizhou and other scholars have certain discussions on the migration route of the Sogdians in Lingzhou.²

The Sogdians with Kang surname in Lingzhou recorded that their hometown was Kuaiji County (会稽郡), but the record of hometown here is supposed to be the imitation behavior aiming to weaken their origin commonly used by foreign ethnics in the Tang Dynasty. In the third year of Jianzhong era (782), Kang Rizhi was promoted to be the observation envoy of Shenzhou(深州)and Zhaozhou(赵州)for his meritorious service in the rebellion. In addition, Kang's epitaph recorded that Kang Rizhi was the lord of Yulin County (榆林郡).³ Yulin County here is the Sheng Zhou (胜州), which is also one of the places to settle the surrender people from Eastern Turkic Khanate. ⁴It is speculated that the Kang Zhi' family were also the Sogdians who were resettled southward due to the Tang Dynasty's conquest of the Eastern Turkic Khanate. Yutaka Moribe believes that the Kang family in Lingzhou is Sogdian-Turkics.⁵ Although Lingzhou is not one of the Liuhu Prefecture set up by Emperor Gaozong, because Liuhu Prefecture is located between Lingzhou and Xiazhou, the connection between Kang's family and the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefecture certainly exist.

Sogdian Kang's family in Lingzhou started from Kang Zhi(康植)was another Sogdian family who chose the right party and embarked on an official career because of military merit. As the Sogdians with surname Kang, Kang Daibin who fought against the imperial court in Liuhu Prefectures formed a sharp contrast with Kang Zhi, who fought against the rebellion in Lingzhou.

As the Sogdians with the surname Kang, the path chosen by one to rebel against the Tang

¹ *Xin Tangshu* 新唐书, 1975, p. 1761.

² Moribe Yutaka, Wen Zegen trans., 2005 年, pp. 226-234. Chen Wei, 2013, pp.131-147. Gao Wenwen, 2012.

³ Shi Xiaoshuai, Vol.4, 1997, pp. 206-210.

⁴ *Xin Tangshu* 新唐书, 1975, p. 6045.

⁵ Moribe Yutaka, Wen Zegen trans., 2005 年, pp. 226-234.

Dynasty and the other to help the Tang Dynasty suppress the rebellion is completely different. The life of An Pu (安菩) as Sogdians of Liuhu prefecture, who had settled in the Eastern Turkic Khanate like Kang Daibin(康待宾), is also completely different from Kang Daibin. The reason is that their social status determined that either the Sogdian Kang' family in Lingzhou or the An Pu family in Liuhu Prefectures cannot rebel against the Tang Dynasty. In addition, this thesis believes that another very important factor is that Liuhu Prefectures, where Kang Daibin lives, is the place where East Turkics live together, and this kind of gathering life has potential dangers.

Not only the Sogdians in Guan Nei Dao (关内道), the tombs of the Sogdians surnamed Shi were excavated in the archaeology of the southern suburb of Guyuan (固原) in the Hexi corridor. Through the investigation of their family epitaphs, it is safe to say that the Sogdians surnamed Shi in Guyuan are also good at military achievements. "The descendants of Shi Shewu (史射勿) have served as horsemen, and some have engaged in translation. Although these careers can reflect the skills of the Sogdians, they have separated from the main body of the Sogdian settlement and gradually integrated into the culture Han people."¹ It can be seen that when the family receives preferential treatment, the vast majority of Sogdians will choose to move closer to the Tang Dynasty to continue their glory. In contrast, Sogdians with ordinary status and no official rank do not have many choices.

However, due to different political destinations, their social status are also completely different. This is because the cultural distinction of social class is far greater than the influence of racial kinship. Chen Yinke (陈寅恪) said, "when it comes to the separation of Han and Hu people in the Northern Dynasty, culture is more important than blood. Those who are sinicized are regarded as Han people, and their blood/birth is not taken into consideration."² Whether the Tang Dynasty recognizes foreign ethnics as Tang people depends on their recognition of identity of Tang people, that is, their recognition of Han culture. For the rulers of the Tang Dynasty, as long as foreigners show admiration for Han culture, and accept their own identity of Tang folk, it is easier for the members within the family to become officials and ensure the prosperity of the family.

Through the analysis of the rebellion route of Kang Daibin and others, some studies believe that the ultimate purpose of their rebellion is to take refuge in Turkics to the north.³ Can this movement explain that they still retain the identity with Eastern Turkic Khanate? Does it mean that the Sogdians of Eastern Turkic Khanate who had been settled in Liuhu Prefectures during the Zhenguan era (贞观) still have a high recognition with Turkics after more than half a century? This thesis holds a negative view, that is, the Sogdians who have gathered in Liuhu Prefectures do not maintain a deep cultural identity with Turkics, but it cannot be ignored that the cultural connection between Sogdians and Turkics still exists because Sogdians have lived in Turkic Khanate for a long period.

¹ Yang Fuxue etc., 2021, p. 290.

² Chen Yinke, 2001, p. 200.

³ Zhao Fang, 2011(02), p. 78. Bao Hongbiao, 2014(05), p.64.

As for the Sogdians who came from Central Asia to the Mongolian grassland and lived in the form of tribes, Japanese scholars call them “Sogdian-Turkics”, that is the Sogdians with living habits of Turkics.¹ Although this term has long been proposed, it has not been accurately defined. Moribe Yutaka (森部豊) summarized this term in his works, mainly referring to the Sogdians in three stages. One is the Sogdians who were settled in Liuhu Prefecture after the collapse of the East Turkic Khanate; the second is the Sogdians who moved south after the decline of the second Khanate of Eastern Turkics; the third is the Sogdian group that moved to Hebei Fanzhen (河北藩镇) after the An Shi rebellion.² However, the use of “Sogdian-Turkics” may lead to the mechanical understanding that pays too much attention to the origin and descent.³ This thesis agrees with this assessment. It is feasible to use “Sogdian-Turkics” to summarize the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures before the Anshi rebellion. However, after the 8th century, the descendants of Sogdians have mixed up with other ethnics in Liuhu Prefectures. If this term is still used, the integration between nationalities is ignored.

Talking back to the rebellion of Kang Daibin (康待宾), it had been 40 years since Emperor Gaozong changed Liuhu Prefectures into normal prefecture in the year 721 when the rebellion occurred. According to historical records, Kang Daibin and his followers rebelled because they could not bear the heavy taxes of the Tang Dynasty. However, considering the proposal by Wang Jun (王峻) mentioned earlier, it was precisely because some Turkics were resettled in area, Hequ (河曲), that they played an inducing role in the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures. In essence, the complex political situation faced by the Tang Dynasty at that time gave Kang Daibin and others enough space to breed rebellion. Since the reconstruction of the Second Turkic Khanate after year 682, it has constantly invaded the border of the Tang Dynasty, making the strategy of Tang Dynasty contract in the northwest. Meanwhile, the area around Liuhu Prefectures was originally located between agricultural areas and nomadic areas, which was unstable. When the power of the Central Plains Dynasty was in full swing, it can remain stable, but as the political situation of the Dynasty itself was complex, this area became a potential danger.

After a large-scale southward migration, Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures was moved back to hometown in the 26th year of Kaiyuan era (738). After that, the last time Sogdians moved out was after the Anshi rebellion. With the pacification of area Lingzhou (灵州) and Xiazhou (夏州), many Sogdians turned to army of An Shi, and then entered Heshuo areas (河朔一带). After the Anshi rebellion, part of the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures moved to Heshuo areas. With the formation of military system here, the assimilation of Sogdian descendants has been going on and was finally completed in the late Tang and Five Dynasties⁴. Its sign is that the native identity of the Sogdians descendants tends to disappear and they merge with the Shatuo Turkics (沙陀突厥) who originally came from other parts of the Western Turkics, and thus

¹ Moribe Yutaka, 2010, p. 4, cited from Zhong Han, 2017, p. 357.

² Moribe Yutaka, 2010, pp. 98-110, pp. 179-181, pp. 233-234, cited from Zhong Han, 2017, p. 357.

³ Zhong Han, 2017, p. 358.

⁴ Zhong Ha, 2005(01), p. 81.

finally integrate into the Han population in North China.¹

It can be seen that the Sogdians of Liuhu Prefectures, due to their own characteristics and the particularity of the geographical environment in which they lived, forced them to be involved in the political confrontation between the Tang Dynasty and the surrounding forces. Faced with this situation, Sogdians with different status often have different choices. For the Sogdians with the support of family, attaching themselves to the Tang Dynasty was the best choice for them to maintain their family honor. But for the average Sogdian public, there is often not much autonomy. As mentioned above, the rebellion of Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures, in the face of the chaotic situation and the inducement of the outside world, finally embarked on the road of rebellion. The formation of two different attitudes is also the embodiment of the cultural identity differentiation of the Sogdians of Liuhu Prefectures based on their special living environment.

6.3.2 Transitional nature of Liuhu Prefectures

As a commercial nation originally living in the oasis of Central Asia, some of Sogdians entered the Turkic Khanate and lived on the border of Tang Dynasty, and lived together with the northern nomads all year round, which endowed their lifestyle and habits with some characteristics of Inner Asia. Through historical materials and some epitaphs, it is found that many of them, including those in Liuhu Prefecture, who originally moved to the Eastern Turkic Khanate and surrendered to the Tang Dynasty, are military generals. Some scholars believe that this is a reflection of the Turkization of these Sogdians, that is, they are influenced by the nomadic culture because they live in the northern steppe Empire for a long period.²

The meaning of Inner Asia mentioned here is very complex, which has been interpreted by scholars since the concept was proposed. Since the concept of Inner Asia was put forward by Alexander von Humboldt, its connotation has also changed constantly. This thesis agrees with the definition and connotation of Owen Lattimore and Denis Sinor. Lattimore believes that Inner Asia is a vast grassland area composed of Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union, the people's Republic of Mongolia and the part of China including Xinjiang, Tibet and Inner Mongolia.³ Denis sinor believes that Central Eurasia is Inner Asia.⁴

This thesis believes that the core area of Inner Asia is the grassland zone in the north of ancient China with the Mongolian Plateau as the center. In the Tang Dynasty, the people living in Inner Asia were mainly Turkics, Tie Le (铁勒), Qi Dan (契丹) and other ethnics. The ethnic groups living in Inner Asia have formed a contrast with the fine and civil agriculture in the core area of China with their extensive and militarized nomadic production

¹ Zhong Ha, 2005(01), p. 81.

² Moribe Yutaka, 2010, pp. 98-110.

³ Owen Lattimore, 1950, ix.

⁴ Denis Sinor, 1990, p.2.

and lifestyle. ¹Although Inner Asia expresses a concept of geographical space, it is by no means equivalent to an objective description of geographical space, and it also includes all aspects of politics, ethnic, civilization, ecology, religion, economy and so on.² Although there are differences in language and culture among the multi-ethnic groups in the society of Inner Asia, the large cultural landscape they form is enough to form a common character and distinguish them from the Sogdian civilization of oasis commerce.³

There is a transition zone between the Inner Asian world and the agricultural area, which takes on various forms with the growth and decline of the two civilizations and the regimes formed based on the two civilizations. The lifestyles in the transition zone are diverse, and the ethnic groups on both sides of the region actively adjust their identities under the changing international situation, so the identity of ethnic groups living in this region is not fixed. Therefore, it is difficult to define the scope of Inner Asia simply from the perspective of ethnic groups. At the same time, the boundary of Inner Asia has also narrowed with the expansion of the boundary of agricultural civilization.⁴

For the ethnic groups living in the north of China during Medieval period, they are significantly different from the farming groups south of the Great Wall. The Great Wall is regarded by Owen Lattimore as a geographical space that divides China's historical activities. Inner Asia often becomes an arena for the barbarians challenging the major civilizations of Eurasia,⁵ and also a stage that promotes the historical process. The reason why the conception, Inner Asia, attracts people's attention is that the groups and regimes living in this region have played a role beyond people's expectations in history. Because of these nomadic, belligerent social structure, Inner Asia society shows regional characteristics. The barbarism of grasslands and mountains creates a fearless and brave group, which is the exclusive attribute of Inner Asia. ⁶Therefore, on the stage of Inner Asia, conflict and confrontation have become the driving force to promote the development of history.

Scholars especially advocate using the perspective of Inner Asia to study the interaction between the northern grassland people and the Central Plains Dynasty. For the traditional Han records of dynasties, people who acted outside the central plains are often placed in a subordinate position, resulting in the neglect of their importance. The perspective of Inner Asia enables us to focus more on the marginal areas of the Dynasty and the groups in the frontier settlement.

For social groups living in the transition zone along the Great Wall, they are very vulnerable to the influence of the northern grassland regime, especially groups like Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures, who came down from the Eastern Turkic Khanate. This can be seen from the

¹ S.A.M.Adshead, Jiang Zhiqin trans., 2009, pp. 4-5.

² Cheng Xiujin, 2016(06), p. 24.

³ Zhan Han, 2005(01), p. 68.

⁴ Denis Sinor, 2006, p.3.

⁵ Li Hongbin, 2021(03), p. 200.

⁶ Li Hongbin, 2021(03), p. 200.。

Tang court's several changes to the establishment of the system in Liuhu Prefecture. Although there is still no absolute conclusion about the specific time of the establishment of Liuhu Prefectures at present, it is undeniable that the decision of the government to use Tang people to manage Liuhu Prefecture in year 679 was the reflection of rebellions of two Turkics tribes. At this time, the reason why Sogdians did not take part in the rebellion was that on the one hand, the Turkics tribes who rebelled did not have the strength to restore the Khanate, on the other hand, the Tang Dynasty at this time still actively implemented the concept of "the world is one family", and the wise image of Tang Taizong still existed in the hearts of the grassland people, which prevented the Sogdians from being induced by the rebels.

From the perspective of the rulers, Tang implemented the policy of Jimi Fuzhou (羈縻府州) to the surrender people along the frontier and ruled them by their leaders, which was a kind of appeasement and preferential treatment policy. However, from the perspective of nomads, things may be different from the traditional perspective of the Central Plains Dynasty. For example, the profound reason for the Turkics tribes riots in the first year of Tiaolu era (689) was the Tang Dynasty's interference in the tribal autonomy of the Eastern Turkic Khanate and the compulsive military service to Turkics since it was conquered. This can be seen from the Turkics inscriptions.¹ The true state of mind of the Turkics was recorded in the Turkic inscription 《阙特勤碑》: "After the collapse of the country, we became slaves to the Han people, and the Turkic nobles helped the Tang rulers to march east and west, while the Tang Dynasty wanted to destroy us. Fortunately, there were gods who kept us, so that we could recover the country and our nation was not destroyed."²

It can be seen that instability has always existed in Jimi Fuzhou (羈縻府州) along the frontier. "It is a geopolitical trend for the nomadic regime to expand outward after its prosperity, and the Jimi (羈縻) tribe to rebel after its growth."³ Many Turkics responded to the two rebellions in the first year of Tiaolu era, when fifty years had passed since the conquest of the Eastern Turkic Khanate in the Zhenguan period (贞观). It can be seen that the strong sense of national identity rooted in the hearts of ordinary was rooted deeply in the hearts of ordinary Turkics. In the buffer zone along the Great Wall, when the forces of the Tang Dynasty crossed the great wall and went straightly into the northern grasslands, the confrontation and conflict of this area weakened. However, once the forces of the Tang Dynasty shrink inward and some minority tribes have a trend toward returning to power, the conflict and potential danger in this transition zone will increase.

As the buffer zone between the Tang Dynasty and the second Turkic khanate, Liuhu Prefecture is prone to swing because of the political tension between the two sides. The influence of the An Shi rebellion and the pressure brought by the Tang Dynasty's redeployment of Guan Nei Dao (关内道) under the harassment of The Tibetan Emire have all

¹ Mu Weisheng, 2007(03), p. 26.

² Ma Changshou, 1961, pp.48, 67. Rui Chuanming, 1998.

³ Wang Xiaofu, 1992, pp. 289-292.

become the reasons for Sogdians in Liuhu Zhou to migrate to another area.¹

The connection between Sogdians and Turkic Khanate is also quite strong. When entering the East Turkic Khanate, the Sogdians naturally brought Sogdian culture into the Turkics grassland, and a large number of Sogdians living in the East Turkic Khanate also reveal the fact that cultural similarities enable foreign groups to live more comfortably in a new society. Various signs show that the spread of Zoroastrianism among Turkics is also due to the Sogdians. “One of the important reasons why Turkics can rise from the Tiele people and become the ruling group of the northern grasslands is the conversion to Xian, which makes Turkics break through the old social tradition and obtain new spiritual strength of ethnic cohesion.”² What is more, the behavior of cutting face mentioned above belongs to the burial customs of both Sogdians and Turkics. Cultural exchanges based on similar or homologous customs is supposed to be more unhindered, and the sense of identity is stronger than that between cultures that have no similarities.

For the early Tang Dynasty, the most powerful resistance on its road of outward development and reunification was the power of the Turkic Khanate. The vast territory of the Turkic Khanate in the 6th century made the small nomadic and oasis countries from the Mongolian Plateau to the middle of the Central Asian River depend on the Turkic Khanate. Therefore, when the Tang Dynasty conquered the Turkic Khanate, the small regimes originally attached to the Turkics would turn to the Tang Dynasty. However, this is only temporary when the dynasty is strong. Once the dynasty declines, or fails to govern the border area, or when it is strongly countered by its opponents, other weak groups will respond to the regimes around Tang. This is because “for the Tang Dynasty, the motivation that led to its sending troops to conquer East and West Turkics and even other surrounding forces was aimed at the group forces composed of regimes in those areas.”³ Therefore, Liuhu Prefectures as the transitional zone have potential danger, this danger comes from the confrontation between the two major forces of the North and the South. The people mixed in it, especially Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures, often do not have too many choices, whether it is to participate in the rebellion or suppress the rebel, both are forced participation based on the political situation at that time.

Summary

The politics of the Tang Dynasty drew the Sogdians of Liuhu Prefectures from the beginning of their migration to the south since they came from the East Turkic Khanate. Unlike the Sogdians in the previous chapters, Liuhu Prefectures were established entirely for political reasons, which also indicates that the Tang Dynasty rulers could not treat these Sogdians equally with those in other regions. Therefore, if the Sogdians of Liuhu Prefectures are placed within the scope of Inner Asia, the fact that they are influenced by Inner Asian society will be revealed.

¹ Li Hongbin, 2015, pp. 30-31.

² Wang Xiaofu, 2007(01), pp.33-34, 37.

³ Li Hongbin, 2017(02), p. 14 .

The Sogdians of Liuhu Prefectures were trapped between the steppe forces and the Tang Dynasty. Although the Tang court tried to incorporate them into the Tang Dynasty and dissolve their ties with the Turkic Khanate in different ways, due to their particular geographical location, the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures could not easily give up their ethnic identity like the Sogdians who settled in Dunhuang, Turpan, and Chang'an, which was a helpless move of the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures. From the perspective of the Tang Dynasty, the inclusion of people from border areas and even further afield into the territory, whether they were organized into Tang or were subjected to taxes, livestock, and horses, was based on the consideration of maintaining the dynasty's rule.

Under such circumstances, the ethnic and cultural identities of Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures are very easy to waver. As they are caught up in the political vortex from the beginning, they have almost no autonomy to choose, and everything is for self-preservation and survival. Therefore, when the Sogdians of Liuhu Prefectures received a call from the northern powers, and at the same time could not ensure that the Tang Dynasty would recognize them, their identity with the Tang Dynasty would decrease, and the cultural identity generated by living in the Eastern Turkic Khanate would surge, in this way, the rebellion would have occurred. Since Liuhu Prefectures were under the influence of grassland and Tang Dynasty forces, the political radiation feedback to the Tang Dynasty needed to be stronger. Tang culture cannot produce a strong appeal in Liuhu Prefectures, which naturally makes the non-Han people living in this area unable to form a stable sense of identity with the Tang Dynasty, which brings potential dangers to the Tang Dynasty.

Chapter 7 Chang'an: Sogdians in the Han Cultural Center

Like the previous dynasties, Chang'an in the Tang Dynasty continued to be the gathering place of Sogdians. In addition to the merchants who came from trade, there were also envoys, tribal leaders, and followers who came with the Turkic peoples to settle in Chang'an. Chang'an, as one of the two capitals of the Tang Dynasty, is the center of Han culture. Living in the atmosphere of strong Han culture has affected Chang'an's Sogdians more deeply by the dynasty's and Tang culture's politics regarding life and ideas. This has accelerated the integration of Sogdians here with the Tang people and Tang culture and weakened their cultural identity. Xian, the belief of the Sogdians, also exists in the places where the Sogdians live together in Chang'an. However, it is generally presented in a folk way and gradually integrates with social customs.

7.1 Settlements of Sogdians in Chang'an

Chang'an, the capital of the Tang Dynasty, continued to become a place where foreign ethnic groups settled in the previous generation, many of whom came for trade, and many Sogdians came directly to the capital Chang'an based on the stable social environment of the Tang Dynasty,¹ creating possibilities for the prosperity and development of commerce in Chang'an. A document from the Xizhou period unearthed in Turpan records that a Sogdian named Kang Wei Yi Shiluo brought his family to Chang'an to do trade,² reflecting the convenience of trade and communication between Turpan and Chang'an, and the Tang Dynasty's permission and acceptance of merchants from outside the region to go to the capital.

The Sogdians had settled in Chang'an before the Tang Dynasty, and the Tang Dynasty continued this tradition by placing foreigners, including the Sogdians, in the west of Chang'an. Many Sogdians lived around the Xishi(西市), and the names of communities such as Chongde Fang(崇德坊) and Huaide Fang(怀德坊) can be seen to show that the ruler intended to appease outsiders and stabilize society. Arranging foreigners to the west of Chang'an has multiple meanings and purposes, which determines that the reasons for the formation of Chang'an Sogdian settlements are different from those in Xizhou, Dunhuang and Liuhuzhou.

Due to the characteristics of Sogdian settlements in Chang'an, comparing the differences Sogdian settlements between Chang'an, Dunhuang and Liuhu Prefecture, some scholars believe that the boundaries of Sogdian settlements in Chang'an are more blurred and closed³, that is, the Sogdians of Chang'an had to mixed with other foreign ethnic groups in the west of Chang'an. However, this thesis believes that this characteristic of ambiguous boundaries has not been formed at the beginning, as Sogdians as an alien group still prefer to live closely with the same ethnic group after entering a new society, but due to the particularity of Chang'an, the Sogdians are forced to live in the same communities as the Tang people, and

¹ Han Xiang,

² Tulufan Chutu Wenshu,

³ Chen Haitao, Liu Huiqin,

cannot form a relatively independent settlement like the Sogdians in Dunhuang and Turpan, so the boundary of living area between Sogdians and local people in Chang'an is more blurred. It should be thought that whether the Sogdians or other foreign groups, when they migrate to the new society independently, whether out of survival or living needs, they will obtain a certain living space through their own ethnic unity, and as the group is gradually accepted by the local society, the living space of the foreign group and the local people begins to intersect and the boundaries are gradually blurred.

The Sogdians lived mainly in the west of Chang'an, and this concentrated phenomenon had appeared and formed since at least the Sui Dynasty. Although there has been a trend of movement from west to east since the mid-seventh century, foreigners, especially Sogdians, still live on the west side mainly. One of the important reasons why the Sogdians lived around the Xishi(西市), West Market, is that the Xishi has been a place of concentration of commercial activities since the Sui Dynasty.

The planning of Chang'an of Tang inherits the Daxing city of the Sui Dynasty, and the east and west markets are located in the southeast and southwest of the imperial palace respectively, connecting the two markets by the east-west traffic artery - Chunmingmen Street. *Liangjin Xinji* 《两京新记》 mentions that the West Market was called “market given benefits” in Sui Dynasty and was a “place for selling mixed goods”,¹ indicating that the West Market was already a place where commerce and trade concentrated in Sui Dynasty. Regarding the residents around West Market, the relevant materials are referred to in *Liangjin Xinji* 《两京新记》:

崇贤坊。西门之南。按：法明尼寺，开皇八年。长安富商王道买舍宅所立。²

怀德坊。东门之北，惠日寺。开皇六年立。本富商张通宅，舍而立寺。通妻陶氏常于西市鬻饭，精而价贱，时人呼为陶寺。³

崇化坊。东门之北，经行寺。本隋长安令屈突盖宅，开皇十年。邑人张绪市之立焉。⁴

Chong Xian Fang, in the south of west gate, merchant Wang Dao brought a house here.

Huai De Fang, in the north of East gate, merchants Zhang Tong had a house here. His wife always sold Congee and rice.

Chong Hua Fang, in the north of East gate, Qu Tugau had house here.

The inhabitants of these communities mentioned above were both wealthy merchants and non-Han people, including Sogdian merchants. In addition to the Sogdians who settled in the West Market for trade, many Sogdian generals in the Eastern Turkic Khanate originally were also placed around this area, which can be confirmed by the epitaphs written in Tang Dynasty. Since the Sogdian tomb owners with more detailed epitaphs generally have a higher status and are not ordinary merchants in society, most of the Sogdians living around the West Market that are currently investigated through the epitaphs are people with official ranks.

¹ *Liangjin Xinji* 两京新记, 2020, p. 111.

² *Liangjin Xinji* 两京新记, 2020, p. 101.

³ *Liangjin Xinji* 两京新记, 2020, p. 128.

⁴ *Liangjin Xinji* 两京新记, 2020, p. 130.

In the early Tang Dynasty, the Sogdians chose to live in the west of Chang'an for profound reasons, the first of which was for commercial considerations. The West Market was more attractive to the Sogdians in terms of commercial interests than the East Market, which made them prefer to live around the West Market after arriving in Chang'an. The advantages of the West Market in favor of benefit have led Sogdian merchants to settle here, and settlements will inevitably form as the number of people increases. The fact that the Sogdians lived in the west of Chang'an can be compared to the phenomenon that the Sogdians of Turpan and Dunhuang lived in the east of the town. Far from the imperial palace and the residential area of dignitaries, West Market was the first stop along the Silk Road to Chang'an, which was easier to communicate with Sogdian merchants from the Hexi Corridor and Western Region.

The West Market has always been a gathering place for all kinds of merchants and shops. According to Su Bai's statistics, there are various food stores, pharmacies, tailor shops, etc., as well as Sogdian merchants and Persian residences that collect treasures.¹ Commercial activities also existed in the east of Chang'an. However, Chang'an county(长安县), where West Market is located, has more population than Wannian county(万年县), where East Market is located.² The former's commercial needs and commercial value are more attractive to Sogdians than those of the latter, so the Sogdians chose to live more around the West Market.

In addition to commercial considerations, the rulers also had a major reason for the settlement of Sogdians in the west of Chang'an for the safety of the capital. So what are the considerations of the rulers? This thesis believes that it is due to the need to protect the imperial palace and maintain stability in Chang'an.

The Chang'an of the Tang Dynasty was built on the basis of the Daxing town(大兴城) of the Sui Dynasty, which inherited the Northern Wei rulers' arrangement for Luoyang town and Ye(邺). *Luoyang Qielan Ji* 《洛阳伽蓝记》 records the converts in the city of Luoyang in Northern Wei: “道西有四馆(里): 一日归正, 二日归德, 三日慕化, 四日慕义……西夷来附者, 处崦嵫馆, 赐宅慕义里。自葱岭已西, 至于大秦, 百国千城, 莫不款附; 商胡贩客, 日奔塞下, 所谓尽天地之区已。乐中国土风, 因而宅者, 不可胜数。是以附化之民. 万有余家。(There are four halls in Daoxi: one is Guizheng, the other is Guide, the third is Muhua, and the fourth is Mucha... All the surrounding groups came to Luoyang, and the rulers placed them in Muye Li. People who come to do trade like Han customs and buy houses to leave)”³ It can be seen that the rulers of the Northern Wei Dynasty had consciously planned and managed the residence of outsiders, and the name of the four communities also showed the ruler's intention to hope outsiders can truly admire the dynasty. Therefore, the rulers of the Sui Dynasty inherited the previous dynasty and concentrated the foreign groups in a more concentrated area,⁴ so as to facilitate the unified management of this group.

The Tang rulers also concentrated the main foreign groups, including the Sogdians, in the west of Chang'an, in order to maintain the stability of capital. The *Chang'an Zhi* 《长安志》 recorded: “万年县户口减于长安, 又公卿以下居止多在朱雀街东, 第宅所占勋贵, 由是商贾所凑, 多归西市。The household registration of Wannian county(万年县) is reduced to

¹ Su Bai, 1978(06), p. 418.

² *Chang'an Zhi* 长安志, 2013, p. 146.

³ *Luoyang Qielan Ji* 洛阳伽蓝记, 1978, pp. 160-161.

⁴ Bi Bo, 2010(24), p. 52.

Chang'an county(长安县), and the residence below the secretary is mostly in the east of Chang'an, in this situation, merchants are always in the west of Chang'an."¹ It shows that most of the people living in the east of Chang'an are high-ranking officials. At the same time, around East Market also has residences for foreign officials to enter capital. Sogdians who arrived in Chang'an would have to pass through the central area of capital if they wanted to reach the East Market. Sogdian marchants often came in the form of caravans, and if they were allowed to move freely around the town, large personnel movements would inevitably bring social unrest. Meanwhile, relocating foreigners away from government officials and administrative area is also a strategy to protect domestic politics and avoid excessive interaction between officials and foreign ethnic groups.

Without doubt the Sogdians did not only live in the west of Chang'an, but Sogdians and even other foreign groups can still be seen in the east of Chang'an. An Lushan, a Sogdian, lived in the east of capital, but he was naturally different from other Sogdians as a favored courtier of the emperor. Before the ninth year of Tianbao(750) era, An Lushan's mansion in Chang'an was Daozheng Fang(道政坊) near East Market, and later, "Emperor Xuanzong chose a generous place in Qinren Fang(亲仁坊) and built a mansion with money from the imperial treasury."² Another high-ranking Sogdian living east of Chang'an was Kang Ayiqudagan(康阿义屈达干)³. Kang Ayiqudagan was the prime minister of the Later Turkic Khanate, and lived in Shengye Fang(胜业坊) after returning his troops to Tang in the first year of Tianbao era(742). All the Fang(坊) mentioned in this paragraph were in the east of Chang'an. Bi Bo believes that "many of the people living in the east of Chang'an in the late Tang Dynasty were Hu people with certain officials from the Western Regions"⁴. In this way, it is easy to understand that Emperor Xuanzong placed these two people closer to the imperial palace due to their status. For the Sogdians who arrived in Chang'an in the early Tang Dynasty, they were still placed around the West Market of Chang'an, which can be seen from the distribution of Xian temples in Chang'an.

The existence of Xian in Chang'an can also be seen from the fact that the Sogdians of Chang'an were influenced by politics. There are Xian temples in communities where the Sogdians of Chang'an live intensively, which is a place for the spiritual and cultural condensation of the Sogdians.⁵ The five Xian temples recognized as existing in Tang Chang'an are located in Buzheng Fang(布政坊), Chonghu Fang(崇化坊), Liquan Fang(醴泉坊), Puning Fang(普宁坊) in the west of capital and Jinggong Fang(靖恭坊) in the east.

According to the *Liangjing Xinji* 《两京新记》 and the *Tang Liangjing Chengfang Kao* 《唐两京城坊考》, there are four Xian temples, located at the southwest corner of Buzheng Fang(布政坊)⁶, the northwest corner of Liquan Fang(醴泉坊)⁷, the northwest corner of Puning Fang(普宁坊)⁸, and the west of Jinggong Fang(靖恭坊)⁹. Based on the time when the first draft of the *Liangjing Xinji* 《两京新记》 was written, it is speculated that these temples existed

¹ *Chang'an Zhi* 长安志, 2013, p. 134.

² *An Lushan shiji* 安禄山事迹, 2006, p. 77.

³ *Quan Tangwen* 全唐文, 1983, p. 3474.

⁴ Bi Bo, 2010(24), p. 75.

⁵ Rong Xinjiang, 2014, pp. 76-85.

⁶ *Liangjing Xinji* 两京新记, 2020, p. 93

⁷ *Liangjing Xinji* 两京新记, 2020, p. 108.

⁸ *Liangjing Xinji* 两京新记, 2020, p. 119.

⁹ *Tang Liangjing Chengfang Kao* 唐两京城坊考, 1985, p.86.

from the fourth year of Wude(武德) era(621) to the second year of Kaiyuan(开元) era(714).

The Xian temple in Chonghua Fang(崇化坊) was established in the tenth year after the completion of that in Buzheng Fang(布政坊). The material about this Xian temple is generally quoted from the *Xixi Congyu*《西溪丛语》 by Yao Kuan(姚宽) of the Song Dynasty. Xiang Da verified that there is Sabao(萨宝) with surname Mi(米) in this Chonghua Fang, and then shows that there is indeed a Xian temple in this community.² Four of the five Xian temples mentioned above are located around the West Market of Chang'an. It can be seen that in the early Tang period, the area around the West Market was the main living area of the Sogdians in Chang'an.

The Anshi Rebellion(安史之乱) in the middle of the Tang Dynasty dealt a fatal blow to the foreign groups living in the Tang Dynasty, compressing the living environment of the Sogdians. The outbreak of the Anshi Rebellion exacerbated the atmosphere of exclusion in society as a whole, and many Sogdians had to dilute their Sogdian origins by changing their surname. In this case, the religion of the Sogdians was naturally restricted. After the Anshi Rebellion, Chang'an and Luoyang have no clear records of Xian temples, and at the same time, there are records of the establishment of a new Xian temple in the Hebei Fanzhen(河北藩镇) with exotic characters due to the migration of the Sogdians³. And in the fifth year of Huichang era (845), Emperor Wuzong promulgated the “*Destruction of Buddha Temple*”《毁佛寺制》⁴ to ban Buddhism, other religions were also required to convert to secularism, including Xian, which eventually integrated Xian into folk beliefs and gradually became secular.

For the Sogdians living in Chang'an, every aspect of their lives was influenced by politics. In the early years of the Tang Dynasty, a large number of Hu people from the Western Regions, including the Sogdians, lived in the west of Chang'an, Whether it's because the West Market is more attractive to Sogdians or for other reasons, it was the result of the ruler's intentional arrangements of the capital.

7.2 Political Life of Sogdians in Chang'an

The fact that the Sogdian An brothers in Liang Zhou (凉州) helped the Tang Dynasty illustrates that in the early Tang Dynasty, the power of the Sogdians, as a foreign group, was recognized by the rulers. In the Tang Dynasty, many Sogdians served in the court and government offices, such as the guard of honor and the imperial bodyguard. In addition, there were Sogdians in the imperial army system(北衙禁军).⁵ The rulers of the Tang Dynasty appointed foreigners to serve in the imperial army system out of their own security considerations.⁶ These foreigners are less likely to seek personal gains with powerful people, so they will not pose a threat to the monarch.

For the methods about how to be an official, Chen Haitao summed up four ways for the

¹ *Xixi Congyu* 西溪丛语, 1997, p.42.

² Xiang Da, 2002, p. 92.

³ Rong Xinjiang, 2003, pp. 115-116.

⁴ *Tang Huiyao* 唐会要, 1955, p. 985.

⁵ Meng Man, 2005. Bi Bo, 2011.

⁶ Kang Le, 1995, p.101.

Sogdians in the early Tang Dynasty, namely, attachment, envoy, pledge and skill.¹ He also believes that these four types are unnormal compared with Han people and reflect the characteristics of the Sogdians coming to Tang China.² The occupation and status of the Sogdians who came to China determined that their life situation in Chang'an was very different from that in the aforementioned regions.

Chang'an, as the center of Tang rule, is the most comprehensive place with these four ways to enter the court for Sogdians, especially the Sogdians who entered the court through envoys and pledges, and it exists based on the special significance of Chang'an, the capital city. Although the Sogdians of Liuhu Prefectures were also subordinate to the Tang Dynasty, the vast majority were ordinary tribal people, which determined that the Sogdians of Liuhu Prefectures would not be given more preferential treatment by the Tang Dynasty and were strictly managed to prevent collective rebellion. Liuhu Prefectures were adjusted to normal prefecture in the first year Tiaolu era, which was a measure taken by the Tang government to prevent trouble. The subsequent Sogdian rebellion was largely due to the fact that the Sogdians in Liuhu Prefectures could not continue to endure the government's conquests. This was very different from the situation in which the Sogdian tribal leaders of the Eastern Turkic Khanate was naturalized to the Tang Dynasty and treated favorably in Chang'an.

During the early and middle period of the Tang Dynasty, the Sogdians who were honored with the rank after entering the Tang Dynasty often had special statues. As mentioned in the above chapter, An Pu (安菩), the chief of Liuhu Prefectures, should have been the head of a Hu tribe in the Eastern Turkic Khanate before he fell to the Tang Dynasty. Later, he was awarded general Dingyuan by the Tang Dynasty. In the same situation, there were also An Feihan(安怛汗) who led more than 5000 troops to the dynasty in the early years of Zhenguan era and ordered Weizhou (维州) to be set up,³ and Kang Ayiqudagan(康阿义屈达干)⁴ who had held an important position in the Turkic Khanate. The reason why the above-mentioned Sogdians were granted official positions was that the rulers of the Tang Dynasty saw their strong appeal.⁵ Comforting their followers while entrusting them with heavy responsibilities was also a way for the Tang court to stabilize foreign ethnic groups. However, the preferential treatment accorded to such higher-ranking Sogdians was often lower than that of other powerful ethnic groups, such as Turks.⁶

The reason why Sogdians received less preferential treatment than other border ethnics in Tang Dynasty is the fuzziness of their own identity. The way of life of the Sogdians in Central Asia is also urban, which makes it easy for them to gather and settle in China for trade, and their collective settlement in Medieval China can be traced back to at least the 4th century. By the Tang Dynasty, some Sogdian families may have existed in China for two or three generations, and may be working hard or have been integrated into the society of the Tang Dynasty. Some Sogdians are new arrivals, so their process of Sinicization is relatively slow. It is precisely this uneven level that makes "their social identity in the Tang Dynasty blurred", that is, in the eyes of the Han people, they are not completely outsiders, so the appointment of the rulers to them is limited to a certain extent⁷. In addition, Central Asia did not pose a direct

¹ Chen Haitao, 2001(02), pp. 244-259.

² Chen Haitao, 2001(02), pp. 256-257.

³ *Quan Tangwen* 全唐文, 1983, p. 4435.

⁴ *Quan Tangwen* 全唐文, 1983, p. 3474.

⁵ Chen Yinke, 2001, pp. 296-301. Ma Chi, 1990, p. 22.

⁶ Bi Bo, 2011, p. 129.

⁷ Bi Bo, 2011, pp. 138-139.

threat to the Tang Dynasty. Therefore, when the rulers of the Tang Dynasty wanted to give certain preferential treatment, for example, when the Tang Dynasty appointed foreigners as generals in the imperial army to appease the vassal families, the leaders of the Sogdians could not rise to a high level. Therefore, “compared with other foreigners who entered the Tang Dynasty, almost none of the Hu people from Western Regions in early Tang period received the honor of giving the Royal surname Li.”¹

Another manifestation of the dilution of the Sogdians’ group identity after a long period of living in Chang’an was to join the ranks of the Tang Dynasty in resisting the Anshi rebels. Cui Mingde believes that even within the Anshi clique, the proportion of non-Han among the generals was very small.² At the same time, in the group that suppressed the Anshi Rebellion, there were both higher-ranking Sogdian generals and ordinary Sogdians involved.³ For example, Li Baoyu, a descendant of the Sogdians, after the outbreak of the Anshi Rebellion, expressed the shame of his fellow An Lushan,⁴ indicating that Li Baoyu tried his best to clear his relationship with the Anshi rebels in the hope of gaining the approval of the ruler in terms of identity. The outbreak of the Anshi Rebellion dealt a fatal blow to the Sogdians living in the Central Plains, especially those who entered the Tang Dynasty and received certain preferential treatment, at which time their identity as their own people gave way to national identity. Here Li Baoyu does not shy away from the information about his Liangzhou origin, based on the merits established by his family in the early Tang Dynasty, which has also been mentioned in the previous chapters. Even Li Baoyu, who had the support of a solid family behind him, still needed to show the ruler their identification with the Tang Dynasty in some way to distance themselves from the Anshi rebels when they encountered social exclusion.

An Lushan’s deputy envoy Kang Ayiqudagan(康阿义屈达干) also led his descendants to defect to the Tang Dynasty after the outbreak of the “Anshi Rebellion”.⁵ Kang Ayiqudagan switched to the Tang Dynasty as the prime minister of the Western Turkic Khanate, and although he was favored by An Lushan to attract Fan Yang area, he still led his family to leave An Lushan and return to the Tang when the Anshi Rebellion broke out. It’s a very interesting process. Kang was born in the Turkic Khanate and had a similar life experience with An Lushan, but Kang did not choose to support An Lushan to launch a rebellion, but chose to turn to the Tang Dynasty, and his short life experience in the Tang Dynasty could not be attributed to a deep sense of identification with the Tang Dynasty. This thesis believes it is more reasonable to attribute it to maintaining self and family honor. This is related to the high social status that Kang had before he joined the Tang Dynasty, which made Kang understand the importance of taking the right side to ensure the prosperity of the family.

Compared with the Sogdians of Liuhu Prefectures mentioned in the previous chapter who switched to the Anshi rebels, the attitude of the Sogdians living in Chang’an towards the Anshi rebels was markedly different. This positive support for the Tang Dynasty had an important relationship with its presence in the center of Han culture and its confronting of dynastic politics. For the ordinary Sogdians living in Chang’an, they mixed with the Han in the market, and with the increase of time in Tang, they had long equated themselves with the Tang in terms of cultural identity, so they chose to support the Tang Dynasty they identified. Sogdians with family backgrounds or high origins were rewarded by rulers for military merit

¹ Bi Bo, 2011, p. 162.

² Cui Mingde, 1994, p. 331.

³ Chen Haitao, Liu Huiqing, 2005(02), p. 216.

⁴ Xin Tangshu, 1975, p. 4619.

⁵ *Quan Tangwen* 全唐文, 1983, p. 3474.

or other reasons when they entered the Tang Dynasty, thereby promoting the continued development and prosperity of the descendants of the family. When these higher-status Sogdians faced social events that threatened to cut off their family's glory, they were also more adept at judging the situation and showing loyalty to the Tang Dynasty to maintain the glory they already had.

7.3 Folk Popularization of Xian in Chang'an

Xian was developed on the basis of the customs of the Sogdians, and there was a habit of not preaching and translating the classics, so that Xian was not widely spread among the Han people in the Tang Dynasty, and the believers were still mainly Sogdians. There were Xian temples in the areas where the Sogdians live in the west of Chang'an, and it has become a cuff for the spiritual connection of the Sogdians. However, Xian was often performed in folk festivals in the form of songs and dances in Tang society. In the Tang Dynasty, there were also famous monks from Sogdian origins, famous to the emperor for his miracles with Xian elements. This section analyzes the spread of Xian among the nobility and people of Chang'an in a folk way through two case studies.

7.3.1 Re-exploration for Sogdian Monk "Sengjia"

The Sengjia Master(僧伽大师) is a Sogdian worth studying. His special depend on the fact that he was originally a Sogdian while was highly praised by upper rulers, middle officials, and the general public.as a Buddhist monk in the Tang Dynasty.

According to historical records, Sengjia with surname "He" from He state(何国), came to Chang'an from Sogdiana during Longshuo(龙朔) era (661-663).¹ During the forty years of in Tang, Sengjia went through four major stages: learning at Zhongnan Mountain(终南山) (661-667), traveling around Jiangbiao(江表) (677-697), showing miraculous in Huaizhou(淮州) and Sizhou(泗州) (696-708), and honored by Emperor Zhongzong (708-710).²

After entering the Central Plains from Liangzhou, Sangha settled in the Zhongnan Mountain(终南山) and actively participated in activities in the Buddhist community, thus gaining a reputation among monks³. Later, he began to travel and promote Buddhism. In the second year of Jinglong(景龙) era (708), Emperor Zhongzong(唐中宗) of the Tang Dynasty invited Sengjia to discuss Buddhism in the court.⁴ Later, Sengjia was honored as the national master.⁵ For a moment, he was highly respected by the rulers of the Tang Dynasty. Even in the Emperor Daizong(唐代宗) and the Emperor Suzong(唐肃宗) periods, the society still respected Sengjia, indicating the influence of the master in the Tang Dynasty.

The reason why Sengjia was respected during his lifetime and became more prosperous after his death was due to the ability to pray for rain and heal people the master. Digging deeper, it is impossible to ignore its Sogdian identity.

¹ *Wen Yuan Ying Hua 文苑英华*, 1966, p. 4529.

² Sun Yingjie, 2017(01), pp. 87-89.

³ Sun Yingjie, 2017(01), p. 87.

⁴ *Gaoseng Zhuan 高僧传*, 1987, p. 449.

⁵ *Fozu Tongji 佛祖统纪*, p. 379.

Sengjia went deep into the society when came to Tang and healed diseases, which were the reason why worshipped by the locals. Compared to other monks from Western Regions who focused their efforts on translating the scriptures, Sengjia did not focus on this place. For this, this thesis believes that this is likely related to the Xian tradition of not translating the scriptures. Xian gradually combined with folk customs in Sogdiana and became part of the local people's life rituals, and Sogdian monks, Sengjia, were naturally influenced by Zoroastrianism, which can be seen by examples mentioned in this section.

The miracles of the Sengjia Master spread with his efforts to save the people from water in Huaizhou(淮州) and Sizhou(泗州). Historically, the most common historical account of the life and deeds of the Sengjia is the rain prayer skill. In the second year of Jinglong era(708), the master was invited by Emperor Zhongzong of Tang to pray for rain, so that the rain in the capital, which had been rainless for several months, fell heavily.¹

The Sogdians' ability to pray for rain is related to the climatic environment of Central Asia, where they live. Yang Fuxue believes that praying rain from Sengjia is the method mentioned in Pelliot Sogdien 3, a Sogdian manuscript excavated from Dunhuang.² As Sogdiana is located in a semi-arid and semi-humid zone, it often encounters a dry climate throughout the year, so the Sogdians pray for rain more. The Sogdians mentioned in Dunhuang chapter performed the rain prayer ritual "Yu Ji(雩祭)" in the Xian temple, which is also a portrayal of the Sogdians who are good at praying for rain.

Therefore, it is easy to speculate that the invitation of the emperor based on the ability for Sengjia is related to his Sogdian origin and good at praying for rain.

In addition to praying for rain, Sengjia(僧伽) is also proficient in medical techniques. *Gaoseng Zhuan 高僧传* records the event that Sengjia used a bath water to heal Wu Youji(武攸暨), emperor's son-in-law, in Chang'an.³ *Taiping Guangji 太平广记* also contains the Sengjia who used water to heal the people.⁴ Both examples reflect the miraculous deeds of the Sengjia using water to heal diseases. Although the *Gaoseng Zhuan 高僧传* does exaggerate the acts of kindness of some senior monks to save the world, it should not be wrong that the Sengjia Master is good at medical skills to a certain extent. The Sogdians' expertise in medicine is also mentioned in the discussion about An Jinzang(安金藏) section later. Central Asia was very early to learn Indian medicine, especially the surgical procedures introduced into the Tang Dynasty were welcomed by the Tang people, which was the result of cultural exchanges between the Sogdian region of Central Asia and India.

Another reason for the acceptance of the Sengjia by Tang society is that he is recognized as an incarnation of Avalokiteśvara(观音), which is related to the flourishing of folk Avalokitesvara worship during the Tang Dynasty.⁵ The worship of Avalokiteśvara flourished because the Avalokitesvara can be transformed into many facets to save the people from suffering, and its connotation is also very close to folk. The fact that the Sengjia Master is considered to be the incarnation of Avalokiteśvara also reflects the fact that the Sengjia gained the approval by taking the folk route to promote Buddhism. Although he is a Buddhist monk, his peculiar behavior of praying for rain and healing diseases with water, combined with his Sogdian

¹ *Taiping Guangji 太平广记*, 2013, p. 638.

² Yang Fuxue, Zhang Tianfang, 2018(03), pp. 67-68.

³ *Gaoseng Zhuan 高僧传*, 1987, p.450.

⁴ *Taiping Guangji 太平广记*, 2013, p. 638.

⁵ Jie Yongqiang, 2016(05), pp 36-41. .Sun Yingjie, 2017(01), p. 87.

origin, has to take into account his deep influence on Xian.

As mentioned earlier, Xian developed in Central Asia on the basis of folk beliefs. At present, according to the murals in houses and palaces found in Central Asian archaeology, it also shows that Xian is closely integrated with the daily life of local people in Central Asia, which represents that Xian is deeply secularized, and the daily life of Sogdians is deeply affected. Although the Sengjia Master converted to Buddhism, from the perspective of his origin, he should have also been educated by Xian, so that his way of promoting Buddhism has obvious traces of Xian, which is also an expression of the integration of Xian and folk customs.

7.3.2 Popularization of Po Han Huxi in Tang

The Po Han Huxi (泼寒胡戏) is one of the most typical exotic cultures in Tang Dynasty. It is the performance with several instruments like pipa, flute and drums, jumping and dancing performed by Hu people to pray the raining.¹

There are two views on when this Hu opera was introduced to ancient China. One of it is based on the record in historical sources *Zhou Shu* 《周书》, indicates that at least by the Northern Zhou (557-581), the Po Han Huxi(泼寒胡戏) had been introduced from Central Asia into Medieval China.² Another is based on *Song Shu* 《宋书》, which believes that it was introduced to the court during the Southern Dynasty Song regime before the Northern Zhou Dynasty.³ More evidence is needed to support whether the introduction of Po Han Huxi(泼寒胡戏) into Medieval China can be pushed forward by more than 100 years according to the records of the *Song Shu* 《宋书》. Of course, regardless of the above views, at least it shows that this Hu opera was introduced to China before the Tang Dynasty, but there is no record of this opera in the historical books after *Zhou Shu* 《周书》 and the written record about it reappears in the historical documents of the Tang Dynasty.

Regarding the region where the Hu opera was produced, in the current debate of researches, there are many views such as the Ilan, the Quci(龟兹), the Kang state(康国), the Persian(波斯), and the Roman(罗马). As far as the statements involved in Tang literature, there are mainly two kinds of views, namely from Kang state and Quci. Limited by the historical records, it is impossible to form a unified view. The thesis tends to the view of Kang state, that is, the Po Han Huxi(泼寒胡戏) in Tang more reflects the Xian customs of the Sogdians in Central Asia.

Jiu Tangshu 《旧唐书》, *Xin Tangshu* 《新唐书》, *Zi Zhi Tong Jian* 《资治通鉴》 and *Tong Dian* 《通典》 all record that the Po Han Huxi is a performance of the Kang state, and the performance time is about November every year.⁴ The Kang state was one of the stronger of

¹ *Zi zhi Tong Jian* 资治通鉴, 2011, p. 6596.

² Wang Fengxia, 2005(02). Chang Le, 2009(06).

³ BoHongxiu, Li Changji, 2004(03).

⁴ *Jiu Tangshu* 旧唐书, 1975, p. 5310.

the Sogdian state during the Sui and Tang dynasties, and the Samarkand was the political center of the Sogdiana during the Medieval period.¹ Although the Sogdiana did not form a unified country, these Sogdian had high similarities in religious customs.

The performance of “splashing water and begging cold” in the Po Han Huxi is actually similar in the Persian and Sogdian religion systems, that is, to commemorate the great feat of the rain god defeating the drought god.² For the purpose of the Huxi, the records in Tang Dynasty historical records that this took place in November seem to be inconsistent with the characteristics of the season, and the performance recorded in the historical sources with naked body and accompanying the splashing of water does not seem to occur in the cold November.

The Sogdians prayed rainfall through dance performances should be related to the natural environment of Sogdiana. Sogdian is located in the interior of Central Asia, and every year in June and July, when the tropical monsoon of Southwest Asia rages inland from the Muslimsian Peninsula, the Sogdians pray through water throwing performances to survive this period of water scarcity. It is reasonable to guess that the show should have preceded the dry June, that is, May.³ The summer May is more in line with the purpose of the performances. Based on the above speculation, we have reason to believe that the record in the *Jiu Tangshu* 《旧唐书》 that the Sogdians held a performance in November should follow the Zoroastrian calendar of Sogdiana, which caused misunderstandings in the records due to the difference between the Sogdian calendar and the Han calendar. It has obvious cultural characteristics of arid areas.⁴

Relying on Xian, the Po Han Huxi was introduced into the Central Plains, and it has more characteristics of the Sogdians of Central Asia.⁵ The Xian that was popular in medieval China is no longer the original form of Zoroastrianism, but was formed after being integrated into folk culture when it was popular in the Sogdiana,⁶ as discussed above. Based on this characteristic, Po Han Huxi is more manifested as a festival performance, and combined with the folk customs of the Tang Dynasty, it is deeply loved by the rulers and people of the Tang Dynasty, that is, it is spread in Tang society in a folk manner⁷.

According to historical records, in the first year of Shenlong era (705), the third year of Jinglong era (709), and the second year of Jingyun era (711), there were Po Han Huxi activities held in Chang’an and Luoyang, and its main function was festival celebration. After that, the location of the performance changed, from the front of the imperial palace to the town street, the emperor had to climb the gate tower to watch, and the performers were

¹ Chen Haitao, 2003(03), p. 57.

² Liu Zongdi, 2012(01).

³ Gong Fangzhen, Yan Kejia, 1998, p.122.

⁴ Wang Fengxia, 2005(03), p.13.

⁵ Chen Haitao, 2002(03), p. 114.

⁶ Gong Fangzhen, Yan Kejia, 1998. Lin Wushu, 2005. Zhang Xiaogui, 2010.

⁷ Lin Wushu, 2005, pp.355-359. Cai Hongsheng, 2007, pp.10-11.

extended to the people of society.¹ This shows that the Huxi has been circulating in the society of this period for a long time and penetrates into the lives of the people, as part of the performance at the end of the year. At the same time, the upper rulers also showed great interest in this Huxi.

It is undeniable that the performance still has a certain element of rain prayer from Central Asia. Liu Zongdi analyzed that the archery competition in the festival commemorating the rain god in Central Asia is similar to the performance with the military formation in the Po Han Huxi performance, which may be related to the original event commemorating the victory of the rain god over the drought god in Central Asia.² This became the reason why Emperor Xuanzong of Tang banned this Huxi.

As early as the time of Emperor Zhongzong and Emperor Ruizong, officials wrote to request the prohibition of Po Han Huxi, but they were ignored by the rulers. It was not until the second year of Emperor Xuanzong's accession to the throne (713), that after Zhang Shuo's admonition, Emperor Xuanzong ordered a ban on Po Han Huxi. However, according to historical records, Zhang Shuo, who advised to ban Huxi, composed five pieces of Sumozhe to praise the Huxi performed in the palace at that time to express grace for emperor.

After the banning for Po Han Huxi, the song Sumozhe (苏莫遮) used in its performance remains. In his article, Bai Hongxiu believes that the Huxi was introduced to Quzi after it was banned in the Central Plains.³ The author believes that on the one hand, this view completely equates Sumozhe with Po Han Huxi, and on the other hand, it simply reduces cultural communication to one-line communication. These two cannot be equated and both have their own origins, but when the two were introduced into the Central Plains, Sumozhe became a program when the Huxi performed or was preserved in the form of tunes after banning of Huxi, and its original performance content and meaning no longer existed.

Based on Yi Qie Jing Yin Yi 《一切经音义》⁴ and the dance scenes unearthed on the Guzi relic box, Ge Xiaoyin believes that Sumozhe (苏莫遮) is very similar to Indian sacrificial festivals and is fundamentally different from the Po Han Huxi.⁵ In contrast, the Sumozhe performance is more characteristic of Indian sacrifice, while the Po Han Huxi in the Central Plains is more strictly similar to that of Central Asia. The relationship between Sumozhe and Indian festivals needs to be further explored. So as a place of cultural mixture, Sumozhe of Quzi may be the result of the fusion of multiple cultures. The author agrees with Ge Xiaoyin's view.

The only thing in common between Sumozhe(苏莫遮) and Po Han Huxi is “pouring water”.

¹ Wang Fengxia, 2005(03).

² Liu Zongdi, 2012, pp. 160-162.

³ Bai Hongxiu, Li Changji, 2004(03), p. 62.

⁴ Yi Qie Jing Yin Yi 一切经音义, 1986, p. 1607.

⁵ Ge Xiaoyin, 2018(01).

According to the description of the historical sources, this Huxi is more like a relatively fixed large-scale event held every year in the cold winter, including singing performances with Sumozhe as the song, and dance performances with sword weapons. After the ban, the dance and music were preserved, can it also be explained that after a long period of evolution, the original performances with naked body splashing water expanded to activities include dance and music. The music recorded in the historical materials and some specific forms of expression may just be added by Tang people, in this way formed a large-scale event performed in the downtown during the period of Empress Wu, Zhongzong, and Ruizong.

To sum up, Po Han Huxi was developed in the Tang society by relying on the Sogdians and Xian, with splashing water and begging for cold as the core. After they entered the Central Plains, especially in the Chang'an and Luoyang, as the special Sogdian living area formed, they could maintain original customs relatively independently, which was also the social basis for the survival of Po Han Huxi. Coupled with the tolerant policy of the early Tang Dynasty, Emperor Zhongzong and Emperor Ruizong at that time loved this extraterritorial Hu opera, and combined the Huxi with music and dance to form a large-scale program performed in the cold winter every year.

Therefore, it is precisely because Xian itself developed in Central Asia by integrating local customs, relying on Xian, Po Han Huxi(泼寒胡戏) spread to Tang Dynasty society with performances in the process of spreading. Although this drama originated in Xian ritual activities, when it came to the Tang Dynasty, it was more popular in the form of folk and accompanied by certain song and dance performances. This thesis believes that this is also a true portrayal of the combination of Xian and popular folk activities in society in the Tang Dynasty, and gradually became popularization.

7.4 Differentiation of Sogdian Identity under the Influence of Tang culture

Chang'an, as the ruling center of the Tang Dynasty, was most strongly present in terms of the political intentions of the dynasty and rulers. It is true that the Sogdians living in the cultural center of the Central Plains should be the most deeply sinicization, they need to integrate more quickly and in an appropriate way into society. The Sogdians with higher status need to be recognized by the rulers and bureaucrats, and ordinary people need to be accepted by their neighbors in order to live more comfortably in their new environment. Compared to the Sogdians who settled elsewhere, the more politically influenced the Sogdians needed to choose their adaptation quickly and in a way that was easier to differentiate between different levels.

For the Sogdians of the Tang Dynasty, both descendants and newcomers who have entered, are trying to establish a new identity¹. The identity here is not a single expression and concept,

¹ Zhang Guangda, 2015.

sometimes it is often the sum of several aspects, which Yang Jin summarizes into five aspects¹: Huaxia(华夏) identity, dynastic identity, ethnic identity, family identity and personal identity, and these identities change with the political situation of the dynasty². As an alien ethnic group, especially living in the core areas of dynastic rule, the Sogdians' identity was also related to their loyalty to their rulers and acceptance of Confucian culture.

The purpose of this section is to analyze the possible separation of identity among Sogdians who are deeply influenced by politics. In addition to Chang'an, the society of the Hebei Fanzhen(河北藩镇) after Anshi Rebellion and Luoyang were also deeply influenced by politics. Therefore, on the basis of the previous sections that have discussed the survival of the Sogdians in Chang'an, this section also adds research on the Sogdian families living in Luoyang and Hebei Fanzhen. To highlight the identity of the Sogdians who were deeply influenced by the dynasty politics of the and the Han culture.

7.4.1 Family Marriage of Sogdian An, Shi and Kang in Luoyang

The four epitaphs of the Sogdians of the Tang Dynasty unearthed in Luoyang, namely Shi Tuo(史陶) (《呼论县开国公新林府果毅(陶)墓志铭》)、Shi furen(史夫人) (《大唐康氏故史夫人墓志铭并序》)、Kang Laoshi(康老师) (《大唐登仕郎康君(老师)墓志铭并序》) and An Huai(安怀) (《大周故陪戎副尉安府君(怀)夫人史氏合葬墓志铭并序》),³ reflecting the marital life of the three Sogdians families of Shi, An and Kang. The life trace of the Kang Laoshi, An Huai, and Shi Tuo mentioned in these epitaphs, as well as their marriage and life conditions, have been analyzed and discussed.⁴ The following takes the marriage of these three Sogdian family in Luoyang as an example to illustrate the relationship between intermarriage and Confucian cultural identity reflected by them.

Shi Tuo entered the Sui Dynasty and died in Chang'an in the seventh year of Zhenguan(贞观) era in the Tang Dynasty (633). From his epitaph, it can be seen that Shi Tuo had a rich family fortune, which was in line with the fact that the Sogdians entered China as merchants and engaged in commercial trade. At the same time, the epitaph also reflects his willingness to "strive to approach the Han Confucian scholars"⁵.

The owner of epitaph 《大唐康氏故史夫人墓志铭并序》 is Shi Furen, the niece of Shi Tuo. The content of her epitaph is relatively simple. The content of the epitaph is mostly exemplary female information advocated by Confucianism, with the emphasis on prominent family status and high women's ethics. It is difficult to see the characteristics of the descendants of Sogdians,⁶ which indicates that the author of the epitaph for Shi Furen completely wrote this Sogdian female in accordance with the women advocated by Confucianism.

¹ Yang Jin, 2022, pp. 190-195.

² Yang Jin, 2022, pp. 190.

³ Mao Yangguang, 2009(05).

⁴ Li Hongbin, 1997(01). Mao Yangguang, 2009(03). Zhao Zhenhua, 2009(01).

⁵ Luo Feng, Xie Yonglin, Vol. 35, 2022, p. 149.

⁶ Luo Feng, Xie Yonglin, Vol. 35, 2022, p. 152.

The epitaph 《大周故陪戎副尉安府君（怀）夫人史氏合葬墓志铭并序》 is the joint burial epitaph of An Huai and his wife. An Huai's wife here is the niece of Shi Tuo mentioned above. Anhuai was born into a family of officials. According to the epitaph, it can be seen that his family has been an official in the dynasty since there were records. Although the official of Anhuai was the lower rank of martial, it can still be seen that the Anhuai family was a Sogdian family that entered China and the court early. As the third generation of the family, An Huai should have a certain degree of sinicization. However, An Huai and his wife still lived in the nearby Luoyang Sogdian area with the Zoroastrian Temple in the early Tang Dynasty.¹

As Mao Yangguang believed, the marriage between Shi, An and Kang in Luoyang stemmed from the need for Sogdians to form a solid social network.² However, for Sogdian families such as An Huai and Shi Yan, who had been in China before the Tang Dynasty, intermarriage should only be for the purpose of maintaining stable social relations, not for the purpose of “inheriting Sogdian culture”³. Looking at these epitaphs, the text does not reflect whether the tomb owner retained his Xian beliefs in terms of religion. At the same time, judging from their names, in addition to Shi Tuo(史陁), the names of An Huai, Shi Furen and Shi Ying(史英) mentioned in the epitaph do not contain too many Hu characteristics. However, the marriage between Shi and Kang family written in epitaphs reflects the fact that there was an obvious intermarriage within the Sogdian clan between these families.

For the marriage situation of the Sogdians, before the Anshi Rebellion, the Sogdians mainly intermarried in their groups, while after the Anshi Rebellion, the proportion of Hu-Han marriages gradually increased.⁴ This is the result of the evolution of the political situation. But what needs to be considered is whether the process of sinicization of Sogdians from homogeneous marriage to Hu-Han marriage is completely consistent with the process of transformation of their identity. That is, whether Han culture can only penetrate into the Sogdian family after the Sogdians intermarried with the Han.

In fact, for the Sogdians who have just arrived in China, they maintain intermarriage among the Sogdians out of fear of the new society on the one hand, and on the other hand, they hope to stabilize themselves so as to better survive in the new society. Especially for Sogdians living in Han cultural centers or areas with deep political interference, the depth of their identification with Han and dynastic culture cannot be judged solely from their marital status and area of residence.

As discussed earlier, while determining whether the Sogdians have Han cultural identity, we cannot start solely with the status of intermarriage. Judging from Sogdiana's crossroads, the

¹ Luo Feng, Xie Yonglin, Vol. 35, 2022, p. 157.

² Mao Yangguang, 2009(05), pp. 75-80. Mao Yangguang, 2015(04), pp. 124-131.

³ Bi Bo, 2011, pp. 266-267.

⁴ Chen Haitao, Liu Huiqing, 2006, pp. 377-385.

Sogdians have always faced an influx of multiple ethnic groups and intermarriages are complex and diverse. After Alexander the Great's crusade, he moved a large number of Greeks and Macedonians to Central Asia to settle and intermarry with the locals; after the Western Turks conquered Central Asia, the Turkic nobles also united with the local nobles through marriage.¹ We can speculate that the form of marriage that the Sogdians came into contact with in their native land was not a single interracial marriage, and they inevitably developed marital ties with foreign groups. If the marriage of Sogdian nobles to foreigners in Sogdiana was out of trust and stable rule, then the intermarriage of the Sogdian masses was a normal phenomenon and reflection of social integration. Moreover, the Sogdians needed to build and expand the network of social relations and transportation and trade through the conclusion of marriage. This is undoubtedly inseparable from Sogdiana's position at the crossroads of the Silk Roads and its strong commercial tradition.

The social network formed by the Sogdians was built by blood, geography and common cause, and it served as a channel for the Sogdians to transmit information, not only in Sogdiana, but also as the Sogdian merchants entered Medieval China and took root in society. In a certain sense, the more mature and stable this social network is, the more Sogdians will be attracted to join, and for the Sogdians entering new, it is the capital to survive and develop in an unfamiliar environment.² Thus, the settlements were also a manifestation of the close connection of the Sogdian social network.³

However, the maintenance of Sogdian settlements does not mean that the Sogdians living in the area have a negative attitude towards dynastic culture and Confucian culture. For the foreign peoples who come to China, the deepest expression of Sinicization lies in their willingness to accept and learn from Confucian culture, because "if one ethnic group can culturally participate in another ethnic group, then the pace of integration between them will accelerate"⁴. For example, the Sogdians with the surnames Shi, An, and Kang mentioned in this section lived in community where the Sogdians in Luoyang gathered and practiced intermarriage between ethnic groups, but the epitaphs also truly reflects their recognition and acceptance of Confucian culture. This reflects that the Sogdians still have the behavior habits of that in Sogdiana on the surface of marriage, living areas, etc., but it does not prevent them from learning and integrating into the core culture after entering the society of the Tang Dynasty.

The An Huai family and the Shi family have been in China for a long time, and by then they were at least the third generation living in China and still held official positions. However, compared to their ancestors, their official rank gradually decreased and had no actual responsibility. The intermarriage between the two families cannot be interpreted in terms of the view that the intermarriage between the Sogdians represents a lack of sinicization. In this

¹ Ma Dazheng, Feng Xishi, 2005, pp. 10-12.

² Bi Bo, 2011, p. 260.

³ Luo Feng, Xie Yonglin, Vol. 35, 2022, p. 162.

⁴ Han Xiang, 2006, pp. 149-150.

regard, it is worth thinking that it is not simply equated the marriages in Sogdian groups and the degree of sinicization. For example, An Huai and Shi Furen, they are not in the early stage of entering China, and from the family tradition, they have accepted a certain degree of sinicization, but still choose the Intra-racial marriage, which only shows that they still retain their identity in terms of blood, that is, family origin memory, but in terms of cultural identity, it is more inclined to Han culture. So for them, identity and cultural identity are separate.

7.4.2 Confucian Feelings of He Hongjing family

He Jintao(何进滔) and He Hongjing(何弘敬) were famous Sogdians in the Heshuo Fanzhen(河朔藩镇) of the late Tang Dynasty. The Heshuo Fanzhen, where He Jintao and He Hongjing are located, are the areas where the Sogdians lived more concentrated after the Anshi Rebellion. As it was originally the place where An Lushan operated, and some Sogdians in the Turkic Khanate went south here, especially after the Anshi Rebellion, some Sogdians also moved to Hebei, making the Hu characters of Hebei heavier than that in the Central Plains. Judging from the marital status, He Jintao married Sogdians with surname Kang, and He Hongjing's wife is in surname An, both of which were intermarriages among Sogdian groups.¹

The Sogdian He family had settled in China during the Southern Dynasty, and his ancestor He Tuo(何妥) was a Sogdian who had deep ties to the rulers in both the Northern Zhou and Sui dynasties. He Tuo has a high degree of Confucian cultivation, and is the author of Zhou Yi Jiangshu《周易讲疏》and X iaojing Yishu《孝经义疏》, which show his admire for Confucian culture. He Tuo was well versed in Confucian classics, and even quoted them in many places in his impeachment of other officials.² He Chou(何稠), He Tuo brother's son, was also recorded in *Sui Shu*《隋书》because of his knowledge. He Chou was responsible for creating rituals Emperor according to Confucian ethics.³ It can be seen that He Hongjing's ancestors had already shown a sense of closeness to Confucian culture, and even to the Sui Dynasty. Vaissière described it as “the most famous example of Sogdian merchant families integrating into the upper Han ethnic group”⁴.

By the time of He Hongjing(何弘敬), the record in the epitaph that his ancestor was the royal family of Zhou Dynasty (1046 BC-256 BC) was very different from He Tuo's description of his father as “He Xijiaohu”⁵ (何细脚胡), a term for a merchant.

The *Jiu Tangshu*《旧唐书》records the tentative relationship between He Hongjing and the Tang court,⁶ which seems to contradiction with the fact that their ancestors were traced back to the Han ancestors in the epitaph, but this thesis believes that this reflects He Hongjing's

¹ Rong Xinjiang, Vol.2, 2003, P.112.

² *Sui Shu* 隋书, 1973, pp. 1711-1712.

³ *Sui Shu* 隋书, 1973, pp. 1597-1598.

⁴ É. de la Vaissière, Wang Rui trans., 2012, p. 90.

⁵ *Sui Shu* 隋书, 1973, p. 1709.

⁶ *Jiu Tangshu* 旧唐书, 1975, p.4688.

separation of dynastic identity and Confucian cultural identity.

He Hongjing and his father He Jintao had served as officials in Weibo Fanzhen(魏博藩镇), Hebei area for two generations, and had entrenched power in their own right. As Moribe Yutaka said, the marriage between Sogdian He, An and Kang family, is very likely to form a stable network, and the three families settled in Hebei together,¹ and this stable social foundation helped He Hongjing and He Jintao gained a foothold in Weizhou. Judging from the process of the He family's migration to Hebei, He Jintao served as a military official in Xiazhou(夏州),² and later moved his family to Weizhou(魏州), Hebei. These life experiences, coupled with the existence of a large number of Sogdians who had moved in Hebei due to the Anshi Rebellion, made the He Jintao and He Hongjing separated from the Tang Dynasty politically. Writing historical materials from the perspective of the Tang Dynasty portrays the these two as enemies of the Tang Dynasty. However, this does not mean that they reject the Confucian culture.

The Sogdian He family was appreciated and used by the rulers for their Confucian achievements very early, indicating that the He family's acceptance of Confucianism has its historical origins. According to He Hongjing's epitaph, it can be seen that he recognized and attached importance to Confucian poetry and filial piety, which is reflected in many Sogdian epitaphs in Hebei Fanzhen.³

The Sogdian officials of Hebei Fanzhen(河北藩镇) were mainly military officials, and their ancestors had lived in Central Plain for a long time. This seems to be contrary to the regular pattern of the gradual transition to civilian employment from military positions when living a while. Since the area around Hebei Fanzhen was deeply affected by the political situation, An Lushan was deliberately operated before the Anshi Rebellion, and after the Anshi Rebellion, Sogdians fled the disaster and moved in, which was destined to make the Sogdians living here have a unique way of adaptation. As for the trend of Sinicization in Hebei Fanzhen, as Cui Mingde said: "In the Heshuo(河朔) area of the Tang Dynasty, there was both a trend towards Hu nature and a trend of maintaining and improving Han culture."⁴ Although past researches had placed too much emphasis on the Hu nature side of Hebei Fanzhen, according to the content of the Sogdian epitaphs, it can be found that the Sogdian family in Hebei Fanzhen has been infected with Han culture among them after a long period of living in the Central Plains⁵.

In fact, focusing on the identity and cultural identity of the Sogdians is essentially an analysis of whether they pursue Hu nature or Han nature, or how to find a balance between Hu nature and Han nature. As Ban Maoshen's view, the Tang Dynasty "from Confucian elites to

¹ [日]森部豊, 2005, p. 231.

² Jiu Tangshu 旧唐书, 1975, p.4687.

³ Gao Wenwen, 2012, pp. 97-110.

⁴ Cui Mingde, 2001(03), pp. 20-29.

⁵ Chou Luming, 2012(02), pp. 27-44. Meng Fasong, 2008(03), pp. 117-123.

Buddhists to barbarian generals, sought to break down the ambiguity and define their own national and cultural identities. The Tang dynasty, which sought to assimilate ethnic groups to ensure the unity of the empire, while striving to ensure national character, was commendable for its political means.”¹ The openness and tolerance of the Tang Dynasty allowed the foreign ethnic groups entering China to maintain their national identity on the premise of identifying with Confucian culture and recognizing the Tang Dynasty, just as intermarriage in same group, forming a gathering area around Xian temple in Chang’an and Luoyang, which was the result of the mutual adaptation of the Tang Dynasty and foreign ethnic groups.

The question of the identity of foreigners ultimately comes down to the identification of dynastic rule and Han culture. That is to say, like Chen Yinke said that no matter how foreign groups define their ethnic origin, as long as they maintain this admiring attitude towards Han culture and use it as a criterion for gradually getting closer to each other, so as to shorten the difference with the locals, it is considered to identify with the dynasty at that time. Generally speaking, the Hu people who entered China “only one or two generations apart, the descendants of these began to use poetry as a profession, devoted themselves to Ke Ju(科举), and even regarded themselves as people of etiquette, and their cultural orientation and psychological identity have been completely equivalent to those of the Han people in the Central Plains, and the changes in the meantime can not be described as insignificant”². In the Tang Dynasty, the concept of race was not the main criterion for distinguishing group differences, and the choice of intermarriage by foreign groups was not disloyal to the imperial court, nor was it unenthusiastic about Han culture. At the same time, for the Sogdians living in regions deeply affected by political pull, although they sometimes showed a state of alienation from the dynasty, these were not due to the self-marginalization of “foreigners”. Although they were in a state of turmoil, they eventually chose to return to dynasties. This is the differentiation between dynastic identity and Han cultural identity shown by foreign groups under the interference of dynastic politics.

Summary

¹ Marc S. Abramson, Geng Xiefeng trans., 2017, pp. 34-35.

² Li Hongbin, 1996(06), p. 43.

There is no doubt that the Sinicization of the Sogdians and Sogdian culture in Chang'an is the deepest, as they are located in the political center and have been branded with political coercion from their living settlements. Compared to the Sogdians settlements in Turpan, Dunhuang Liangzhou, etc., the settlements in Chang'an were the result of deliberate arrangement by the rulers, intending to stabilize the security of the capital.

The ruler's intention to arrange the Sogdians in the west of Chang'an was a measure to ensure the stability of the capital. The blurring of the living boundary between the Sogdians and the Han people has accelerated the Sinicization of the Sogdians in Chang'an. In this regard, the settlements of the Sogdians in Turpan, Dunhuang, and even Liangzhou can escape the compulsory planning of the dynasty due to the distance from Chang'an. Therefore, the Sogdians in these regions maintain a clear boundary with the local people in their residential areas, so their integration into the local society is relatively slow. The distribution of Sogdian settlements in Chang'an was deeply influenced by politics, which also profoundly influenced the development of the Xian temples built in their settlements. The Anshi Rebellion brought a heavy blow to the Sogdians and Xian, especially to the Sogdians who lived in the center of Han culture. If it is said that the Sogdians before the Anshi Rebellion were able to maintain their identity of origin while mixing with the Han people, then after the Anshi Rebellion, the Sogdians need to dilute their Sogdian origin by cutting their identity from the general of Anshi Sogdians. At the same time, Xian also tended to decline in Chang'an.

In general, the more politically influenced the Sogdians, the more they need to choose their adaptation quickly, and the easier they can divide into different layers. As an alien group, the Sogdians integrated in various ways, with superficial and profound differences. On the surface, the Sogdians were better able to live in Chang'an and the entire society by changing their surnames and intermarrying with the Han people. In-depth, it is still necessary to consider the degree of recognition of Han and dynastic culture by the Sogdians. Therefore, the Sogdians who lived in the center of Han culture or were deeply influenced by politics may still be intermarried with the same ethnic group on the surface or remain separated from the Tang Dynasty out of political needs but fundamentally have a deep sense of identification with the Han culture with Confucian culture as the core. This is because politics deeply influence the Sogdians since they are at the center of Han culture, which complicates and diverges the identity of the Sogdians living in such areas.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

The Sinicization of Sogdians is a process of development. Under the general trend of eventual integration into Han society, the living conditions of Sogdians vary from region to region and at different times. When the Sogdians entered the Tang Dynasty, the biggest problem they faced was the problem of cultural identity, including the attitude of the Sogdians towards their origins, local society, ruling dynasty, and even the entire Han culture.

It is generally believed that communication occurs when two groups or cultures meet, and in this interaction process it takes place. For both parties who have made contact, the two-way accommodation makes them absorb and integrate. However, the disadvantaged groups or cultures will somehow integrate into the strong society to protect themselves or be recognized. This process is a process of diluting one's national cultural identity and deepening the social identity of the new life.

The same was true of the Sogdians in China, who, as an extraterritorial people, were primarily influenced by dynastic politics. As far as the Tang Dynasty is concerned, the Anshi Rebellion was a watershed in dividing the attitude of the Tang towards the Sogdians. The openness of the early Tang Dynasty was desirable to the Sogdians, which led the Sogdians to continue to come to Medieval China to do commercial activities along the Silk Road and settle in the Tang Dynasty. Long-term contact with the Tang people makes identifying with the Tang Dynasty easy, especially for the Sogdians living in the center of Han culture and the Central Plains. Their identification with the Tang Dynasty is more profound. The identity of their origin in Central Asia is weakened simultaneously, which is conducive to the Sogdians living in China.

After the Anshi Rebellion, the Sogdians downplayed their origins due to the severe social exclusion of the Hu people. They hid among the Han people, although their behavior was also partly out of identification with Tang society but more or less forced. This is because, for an alien group, retaining the characteristics, behaviors, and habits of its original origin at some level does not conflict with its identification with the new society. During the period of social tolerance, the two can coexist, but when there is a social rejection of the Sogdians, even if many Sogdians have long identified with the Tang Dynasty and Confucian culture, if the Sogdians still retain their surnames or intermarry with the same ethnic group, it may become an obstacle to the Tang people's acceptance of the Sogdians.

The Sogdian states of Central Asia are located at the crossroads of Eurasia, which has shaped the national character of the Sogdians who are good at trade, and long-distance commercial trade has helped them establish a trade and transportation network connecting Eurasia, and the construction of trade transportation networks has also built a social relationship network between Sogdians. Due to the consolidation of social networks, the Sogdians intermarried, lived close to each other, and maintained them through Xian beliefs. However, this does not mean the Sogdians did not identify with the dynastic society. Especially for the Sogdians in

the Tang Dynasty, they should have emphasized their origins when they faced an inclusive and multicultural society. They often recognized their Tang identity, which, for the rulers, was the view that culture was more remarkable than race. However, Medieval societies were constantly drawn into politics, and when times were turbulent, race would take precedence over culture and become the standard of identity. It is precisely based on this background that the Sogdians, after the Anshi Rebellion, have diluted their origins by changing their surnames, all in order to better survive in Tang society.

When discussing Sogdian identity, attention should also be paid to the influence of regional identity on Sogdian identity. The settlements established by the Sogdians along the Silk Roads changed according to the social environment, and their cultural identity varied according to the historical environment of the place of life, the distance from the political center of the dynasty, and the pull between several forces. The dispersal of living settlements, integration into the local people, and the dilution of religious beliefs are a general reflection of the Sogdian lifestyle. It is also a natural tendency for Sogdians to be included in the registered residents and generally engage in various occupations and obligations like the Han people.

The Sogdians in key military-strategic positions can accumulate armed forces from the beginning. With the development of time and the importance of the rulers to critical strategic areas, the Sogdian armed forces would only become stronger and stronger, so it supported the Sogdians to play an essential role in their political development. This is inseparable from the speculative character of the Sogdians, and it is indeed a reflection of their ability to judge the situation and size it up. At the same time, when the regional culture of the Sogdian living place is more prominent, and the local government is strong, these Sogdians are very likely to reflect their identification with the current place of life.

People outside the region tend to spontaneously adjust their engagement strategies and make positive changes conducive to survival. In general, foreign people and cultures find a balance between new national identities and self-cultural identities. For example, the Sogdian belief, Xian, often reflects the characteristics of being mixed with Buddhism or integrated into folk beliefs in China. The emergence of such phenomena has much to do with the formation of Xian in Central Asia. The Sogdians and their families, who can now spy on their lives through epitaph materials, know how to balance the memory of their ethnic origin and Tang culture or adjust their adaptation strategies in time in the face of turmoil to gain the approval of the Tang rulers.

The Sogdians in different regions showed differences in cultural identity, which were based on a place's historical and geographical background over a long period and, more importantly, the distance from the political center of the Tang Dynasty.

Looking at the Sogdians from the west to the east along the Silk Road in the Middle Ages, the Sogdians traveled from Sogdiana to the Xizhou, the Hexi Corridor, Chang'an, and Luoyang, like a line connecting essential nodes on the Silk Road. Observing the pace of the Sogdians

into China and the settlements they established, from west to east, reflects the Sogdians' movements to the center of dynastic rule, either because of commercial activities or being envoys. The two ends of the Silk Road connected Changan with the cities of Central Asia; Sogdians did not travel directly from one place to another when they arrived in China but slowly advanced, so Sogdian settlements often formed over a long period. The long-term formation will birth unique characteristics based on the specific local social environment.

In Medieval societies, the development of a place was inevitably influenced by political developments. The distance from the center of dynastic rule also determined the extent of dynastic political influence in the region. Regions with solid political radiation from the dynasty are naturally profoundly influenced by society's mainstream culture, while regions with weak political radiation may be separated from the dynasty. If, at this time, the local power of a place rises strongly, it will overwhelm the political influence of the Central Plains Dynasty and become the main reason for affecting the social outlook of a place.

Speaking of the Sogdians, according to the distance between the settlements they established on the Silk Road from west to east and the ruling core of the Tang Dynasty, they formed a circle-like structure, and the closer to the center, the stronger their influence by Tang culture, the faster they integrated with Tang society. On the contrary, it is far from the center and slowly integrated into the society with Tang culture as the mainstream. As the Sogdian regional research object selected in this article, it reflects the regionality of the Sogdian cultural identity under the difference in political influence of the Tang Dynasty.

The identity of the Sogdians is not fixed or consistent with their degree of sinicization. Their interaction with local society is also a cultural exchange and collision process. Sogdians living in different regions often face the problem of survival, and the process of choice is how they combine their traditional culture with local culture. There are many settlements of the Sogdians in China, and the differences in social environments where these settlements are located have shaped different lifestyles of the Sogdians. Accompanying it is the political identity of the Sogdian people's changes and development. We need to see that as an external group, the Sogdians were constantly influenced by the dynasty's politics and their survival in the Tang Dynasty. When the Sogdians were in Central Asia, they were often surrounded by robust regimes. This situation led them to adopt adaptive measures when facing difficulties, actively transforming their cultural traditions to better adapt to the needs of the new regime and society. The tradition of being good at business also endows the Sogdians with sharp political insight, enabling them to quickly choose the side beneficial to them in the face of turbulent political situations to preserve their power and maintain business networks. It should be noted that the interracial marriage maintained by the Sogdians in China is also an essential means of maintaining their social network. All these ways of adaptation reflect the national character that the Sogdians have long formed.

Bibliography

Chinese Primary Materials

- Anlushan Shiji* 安禄山事迹, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2006.
- Ce Fu Yuan Gui* 册府元龟, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1960.
- Chang'an Zhi* 长安志, Xi'an: Sanqing Press, 2013.
- Chaoye Jianzai* 朝野僉载, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1979.
- Da Ciensi Sanzang Fashi Zhuan* 大慈恩寺三藏法师传, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2000.
- Datang Xiyuji* 大唐西域记译注, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2019.
- Datang Xinyu* 大唐新语, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1984.
- Han Shu* 汉书, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1964.
- Houhan Shu* 后汉书, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1965.
- Jin Shu* 晋书, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1974.
- Jin Xing Ji Qianzhu* 经行记笺注, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2006.
- Jiu Tangshu* 旧唐书, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1975.
- Liangjing Xinji* 两京新记辑校, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2020.
- Liangzhou Fuzhi Beikao* 凉州府志备考, Xi'an: Sanqing Press, 1988.
- Li Deyu Wenji Jiaoqian* 李德裕文集校笺, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2018.
- Nan Shi* 南史, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1975.
- Quan Tangshi* 全唐诗, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1960.
- Quan Tangwen* 全唐文, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1982.
- Quan Tangwen Bubian* 全唐文补编 1-9, Xi'an: Sanqing Press, 1994-2007.
- Sanguo Zhi* 三国志, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1959.
- Shiji* 史记, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1963.
- Sui Shu* 隋书, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1973.
- Suitang Jiahua* 隋唐嘉话, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1979.
- Tai Ping Guang Ji* 太平广记, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2013.
- Tai Ping Han Yu Ji* 太平寰宇记, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2007.
- Tai Ping Yulan* 太平御览, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2000.
- Tang Guoshi Bu* 唐国史补, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2021.
- Tang Huiyao* 唐会要, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1985.
- Tang Liangjing Chengfang Kao* 唐两京城坊考, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1985.
- Tongdian* 通典, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1988.
- Wang Wutianzhuguo Zhuan Qianshi* 往五天竺国传笺释, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2006.
- Wei Shu* 魏书, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1974.
- Wen Yuan Ying Hua* 文苑英华, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1966.
- Xin Tangshu* 新唐书, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1975.
- Yan Lugong Ji* 颜鲁公集, Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books Press, 1992.
- You Yang Zazu* 酉阳杂俎, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1981.
- Yuanhe Junxian Tuzhi* 元和郡县图志, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1983.
- Yuanhe Xingzuan* 元和姓纂 (附四校记), Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2008.
- Zhengan Zhengyao Jijiao* 贞观政要集校, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2003.
- Zhou Shu* 周书, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1971.

Zi Zhi Tong Jian 资治通鉴, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2011.

Publications

1. Archaeological Materials

Tulufan Chutu Wenshu 吐鲁番出土文书, Vol. 1-10, 1981-1991.

Xinjiang Wenwu Kaogu Yanjiusuo新疆文物考古研究所, *Thirty Years of Xinjiang Cultural Relics and Archaeology*, Urumqi: Xinjiang People's Press, 1983.

Mao Hanguang, *Tangdai Muzhiming Huibian Fukao 唐代墓志铭汇编附考*, Vol.1-18, Taipei: New Wen Feng Press, 1984-1994.

Tang Gengou, Lu Hongji, *Dunhuang Shehui Jinji Wenxian Zhenji Shilu敦煌社会经济文献真迹释录*, Vol.1, Beijing: Shumu Wenxian Press, 1986; Vol. 2-5, National Library Literature Micro Reproduction Center, 1990.

Yingcang Dunhuang Wenxian 英藏敦煌文献, Vol.1-14, Chengdu: Sichuan People's Press, 1990-1995.

Tianshui Shi Museum天水市博物馆, "The Tomb of sui and Tang Screen sarcophagus bed found in Tianshui City", *Archaeology*, no. 1,1992.

Zhou Shaoliang, *Tangdai Muzhi Hibian 唐代墓志汇编*, Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books Press, 1992.

Faguo Guojia Tushuguan Cang Dunhuang Xiyu Wenxian 法国国家图书馆藏敦煌西域文献, Vol.1-34, Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books Press, 1995- -2005.

Luo Feng, *Sui and Tang Cemetery in the Southern Suburbs of Guyuan*, Cultural Relics Press, 1996.

Zhou Shaoliang, Zhao Chao, *Tangdai Muzhi Hibian Xuji 唐代墓志汇编续集* Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books Press, 2001.

Luoyang Wenwu Guanliju洛阳文物管理局, *Luoyang Chutu Muzhi Huibian 洛阳出土墓志汇编*, Beijing: Zhaohua Press, 2001.

Shanxisheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo山西省考古研究所, "Brief briefing on Yuhong Tomb of Taiyuan Sui Dynasty", *Cultural Relics*, no. 1, 2001.

Shaanxisheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo陕西省考古研究所, "Brief on Excavation of Anjia Tomb in the Northern suburb of Xi'an", *Archaeology and Cultural Relics*, no. 6, 2002.

Yu Fuwei, *Luoyang Chutu Muzhi Zuzangdi Ziliaohuibian 洛阳出土墓志卒葬地资料汇编*, Beijing: Beijing Library Press, 2002.

Hou Can, Wu Meilin, *Tulufan Chutu Zhanzhi Jizhu 吐鲁番出土砖志集注*, Chengdu: Bashu Shushe, 2003.

Zhao Junping, *Mangluo Beizhi Sanbaizhong 邙洛碑志三百种*, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2004.

Luo Xin, Ye Wei, *The New Epitaph of the Wei, Jin and Southern and Northern Dynasties*, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2005.

Xi'an Wenwu Kaogu Yanjiusuo, "Xi'an Beizhou Liangzhou Sabao Shijunmu Fajuejianbao"西安北周凉州萨宝史君墓发掘简报, *Cultural Relics*, no. 3, 2005.

Wang Qiyi, Zhou Xiaowei, *The epitaphs of the Sui Dynasty*, Beijing: Xianzhuang Shuju, 2007.

- Zhao Liguang, *Xi'an Beilin Bowuguan Xincang Muzhi Huibian* 西安碑林博物馆新藏墓志汇编, Beijing: Xianzhuang Shuju, 2007.
- Wang Renbo, *Suitang Wudai Muzhi Huibian* 隋唐五代墓志汇编, Tianjin: Tianjin Ancient Books Press, 2009.
- Gugong Bowuyuan 故宫博物院, *Gugong Bowuyuan Cang Lidai Muzhi Huibian* 故宫博物院藏历代墓志汇编, Beijing: Zijincheng Press, 2010.
- Zhao Wencheng, Zhao Junping, *Xinchu Tang Muzhi Baizhong* 新出唐墓志百种, Hangzhou: Xiling Yinshe Press, 2010.
- Li Yongqiang, Yu Fuyi, epitaph of ethnic minority unearthed in Luoyang, Zhengzhou: Henan Fine Arts Press, 2011.
- Xi'an Shi Chang'an Bowuguan 西安市长安博物馆, *New epitaph of Chang'an*, Beijing: Cultural Relics Press, 2011.
- Zhang Naizhu, *Longmen Qu Xi Shike Wencui* 龙门区系石刻文萃, Beijing: National Library Press, 2011.
- Zhao Junping, Zhao Wencheng, *Qinjinyu Xinchu Muzhi Saoyi* 秦晋豫新出墓志搜佚, Beijing: National Library Press, 2011.
- Hu Ji, Rong Xinjiang, *Epitaph of Datang West City Museum*, Beijing: Peking University Press, 2012.
- Guo Maoyu, Zhao Shuisen, *Luoyang Chutu Yuanyangzhi Jilu* 洛阳出土鸳鸯志辑录, Beijing: National Library Press, 2012.
- Qi Yuntong, *Epitaph of the Seven Dynasties in Luoyang*, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2012.
- Mao Yangguang, Yu Fuwei, *Luoyang Liuan Tangdi Muzhi Huibian* 洛阳流散唐代墓志汇编, Beijing: National Library Press, 2013.
- Zhao Liguang, *Xi'an Beilin Bowuguan Xincang Muzhi Xubian* 西安碑林博物馆新仓墓志汇编, Xi'an: Shaanxi Normal University Press, 2014.
- Zhao Junping, Zhao Wencheng, *Qinjinyu Xinchu Muzhi Saoyi Xubian* 秦晋豫新出墓志搜佚续编, Beijing: National Library Press, 2015.
- Anyang Wenwu Kaogu Yanjiusuo 安阳文物考古所研究所, *Anyang Muzhi Huibian* 安阳墓志汇编, Beijing: Science Press, 2016.
- Hu Ji, *A Hundred Rare Epitaphs*, Xi'an: Shaanxi Normal University Press, 2016.
- Shaanxi History Museum 陕西历史博物馆, *Shaanxi Lishi Bowuguan Cang Muzhi Cuibian* 陕西历史博物馆藏墓志萃编, Xi'an: Shaanxi Normal University Press, 2017.
- Liu Wen, Shaanxi Xinjian Suichao Muzhi 陕西新见隋朝墓志, Xi'an: Sanqin Press, 2018.
- Mao Yangguang, *Luoyang Liuan Tangdi Muzhi Huibian Xuji* 洛阳流散唐代墓志汇编续集, Beijing: National Library of China, 2018.
- Mao Yuanming, Li Haifeng, *Xinan Daxue Xincang Shike Taben Huishi* 西南大学新藏石刻拓本汇释, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2019.
- Shaanxisheng Kaogu Yanjiuyuan 陕西省考古研究院, *Shaanxisheng Kaogu Yanjiuyuan Xinrucang Muzhi* 陕西省考古研究院新入藏墓志, Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books Press, 2019.
- Zhang Mingxin, *Tulufan Tutu Muzhi Huikao* 吐鲁番出土墓志汇考, Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2020.

Shi Jiazhen, *The epitaph of Ethnic People along the Silk Road*, Shanghai: Shanghai Jiao Tong University Press, 2021

Liu Wen, Du Zhen, Shaanxi Xinjian Tangchao Muzhi 陕西新见唐朝墓志, Xi'an: Sanqin Press, 2022.

2. Secondary Source Publications

Antonini C. S., "The Paintings in the Palace of Afrasiab (Samarkand)", in *Rivista delgi Studi Orientali*, Roma, Vol.43,1989.

Arakawa Masaharu, 《ソグド人の移住聚落と東方交易活動》, 《岩波講座世界歴史》, 東京: 岩波書店, 1999.

Azarpay G., "Nana, the Sumero-Akkadian Goddess of Transoxiana", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 96(04), 1976, pp. 536-542.

Azarpay G., *Sogdian Painting: The Pictorial Epic in Oriental Art*, University of California Press., 1981.

Barrett C.E., "Was Dust Their Food and Clay Their Bread? Grave Goods, the Mesopotamian Afterlife, and the Liminal Role of Inana /Ishtar", *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religion*, Vol.7(01) , 2007, pp. 7-65.

Bi Bo, "Han Translation and Notes of Sogdians Ancient Letters 粟特文古信札汉译与注释", *Wenshi*, 2004(02).

Bi Bo, *Sogdians in Middle China 中古中国的粟特胡人*, Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 2011.

Bi Bo. & Sims-Williams N. & Yan Y., "Another Sogdian - Han bilingual epitaph", *Bulletin of SOAS*, 80(02), 2017.

Delacour Catherine , Pénélope Riboud, Shi Chunlin trans., "Un monument funéraire en pierre (Chine, VIe s.) au musée Guimet", *North China and Eurasia in the 4th to 6th centuries 4-6 世纪的北中国与欧亚大陆*, 2006, Science Press, pp.108-125.

Cai Hongsheng, *Nine surnames Hu and Turkic Culture in Tang Dynasty 唐代九姓胡与突厥文化*, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 1998.

Cai Hongsheng, *Historical Facts of Sino-Foreign Exchange 中外交流史实考述*, Zhengzhou: Daxiang Press, 2007.

Chen Guocan, "Place and Time of Writing Letters from Dunhuang"敦煌所出粟特文信札的书写地点和时间问题, *Weijinnnbeichao Suitang Ziliao Huibian 魏晋南北朝隋唐史资料*, Vol.7,1985.

Chen Guocan, "The Settlements of Hu People in Hexi, Wei, Jin, Sui and Tang Dynasties"魏晋至隋唐河西胡人的聚居与火袄教, *Studies of Northwest Nationalities*, 1988(01).

Chen Yinke, *Suitang Zhidu Yuanuan Luelungao 隋唐制度渊源略论稿*, Beijing: SDX Joint Publishing Company, 2001.

Chen Haitao, "An Examination of the Relations between Kang Ju and Kang Guo- - On the Origin of the Zhaowu Countries"康居与康国关系考--兼谈昭武诸国的起源, *Dunhuang Studies*, 2003(03).

Chen Haitao, Liu Huiqin, *The Nationality from the crossroads of Civilization: A Study of Han millet People in the Tang Dynasty 来自文明十字路口的民族 : 唐代入华粟特人研究*, Beijing: The Commercial Press, 2006.

- Chen Yinke, *Suitang Zhengzhishi Shulungao 唐代政治史述论稿*, Beijing: SDX Joint Publishing Company, 2001.
- Cheng Yue, “The Role of Sogdians in the Turkic peoples and the Central Plains” 粟特人在突厥与中原交往中的作用, *Journal of Xinjiang University*, 1994(01).
- Cheng Yue, “The Sinicization of Sogdians from the Historical Materials of Stone Carving” 从石刻史料看入华粟特人的汉化, *History Monthly*, 1994(01).
- Cui Shiping, “The trial interpretation of carved felt- -on the Sacrifice of the Turkic peoples” 刻毡为形”试释—兼论突厥的祆神祭祀”, *Dunhuang Journal*, 2010(03).
- Dien A. E., “The tomb of the Sogdian master Shi: Insights into the life of a Sabao”, *The Silk Road Journal*, 2009(07).
- Fei Xiaotong, *中华民族多元一体格局*, Beijing: Minzu University of China Press, 1989.
- Gao Wenwen, *Research on The Descendants of Sogdians in Hebei Fanzhen of Tang Dynasty--centered on epitaph materials 唐河北藩镇粟特后裔汉化研究—以墓志材料为中心*, doctoral thesis of Minzu University of China, 2012.
- Grenet F., “Religious diversity among Sogdian merchants in sixth-century China: Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Manichaeism, and Hinduism”, *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 27:2, 2007.
- Grenet F., Sims-Williams N. & La Vaissiere E. D., The Sogdian ancient letter V. *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*, 12.1998.
- Gong Fangzhen, Yan Kejia, *Zoroastrian History 祆教史*, Shanghai: Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences Press, 1998
- Guo Ping, *The Eastern Biography of SogFine Arts on the Silk Road 粟特美术在丝绸之路上的东传*, Chengdu: Sichuan University Press, 2015.
- Henning W. B., “Sogdian Tales”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 1945(6).
- Henning W. B. “The date of the Sogdian Ancient Letters”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 12:3, 1948.
- Henning W. B., “A Sogdian god”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, Vol. 28:2, 1965.
- Ikeda On, 《8 世纪中叶における敦煌のソグド人聚落》, 《ユーラシア文化研究》No.1, 1965, pp. 49-92.
- Iwami Miyohiro, 《ソグド人墓志研究》, 東京: 汲古書院, 2016.
- Jiang Boqin, *Dunhuang Turpan Documents and the Silk Road 敦煌吐鲁番文书与丝绸之路*, Beijing: Cultural Relics Press, 1994.
- Jiang Boqin, *Dunhuang Art, Religion and Ritual and Music Civilization 敦煌艺术宗教与礼乐文明*, Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1996.
- Jiang Boqin, *A Study of the History of Zoroastrian Art 中国祆教艺术史研究*, Beijing: SDX Joint Publishing Company, 2004.
- Judith A. L. “Central Asians in Sixth-Century China: A Zoroastrian Funerary Rite.”, *Iranica Antiqua*, 1995(30), p. 182.
- Juliano A. & Judith J.A. (eds.) *Monks and Merchants*. New York, Harry N. Abrams, Inc. 2001.
- Lerner J. A., “Aspects of assimilation: The funerary practices and furnishings of Central Asians in China:”, *Sino-Platonic thesiss*, 168, 2005, pp.1-73.
- Lerner J. A., “Zoroastrian funerary beliefs and practices known from the Sino-Sogdian tombs in China”. *The Silk Road Journal*, 9, 2011, pp.18-25.
- Li Hongbin, “Another examination of An Pu Epitaph- -A Case Analysis of a Hu Family in the

- Mainland” 安菩墓志铭再考——一个胡人家族入居内地的案例分析”, *Tangshi Luncong*, 2010.
- Li Hongbin, *The Northern Frontier Land and Ethnic Groups of the Tang Dynasty 唐朝的北方边地与民族*, Yinchuan: Ningxia People Press, 2011.
- Li Hongbin, “The issue of ‘local alization’ of Hebei Sogdians in the Tang Dynasty under the epitaphs” 墓志铭映印下的唐朝河北粟特人“地著化”问题——以米文辩墓志为核心”, *Jinan Shixue*, 2015.
- Li Hongbin, “North and South Crossing in the Early Tang Dynasty” 唐朝前期的南北兼跨及其限域”, *A Study of China's Frontier History*, 2016(02).
- Li Hongbin, “Thoughts on the Region of the Tang Dynasty 有关唐朝疆域问题的若干思考”, *Journal of Minzu University of China*, 2017(01).
- Lin Meicun: *Ancient Road- -New Archaeological Discovery: Cultural Exchange between China and the West 古道西风—考古新发现所见中西文化交流*, Beijing: SDX Joint Publishing Company, 2000.
- Lin Wenshu, *Syndrome of Three Yi Beliefs 中古三夷教辨证*, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2005.
- Liu Anzhi, *Dunhuang Turpan Documents and a Study on the History of the Western Regions in the Tang Dynasty 敦煌吐鲁番文书与唐代西域史研究*, Beijing: The Commercial Press, 2011.
- Liu Bo, “Ancient Letters in Dunhuang and the Jin Dynasty 敦煌所出粟特语古信札与两晋之际的敦煌姑臧粟特人”, *Dunhuang Studies*, 1995(03).
- Long Chengsong, “Study on the Sogdian Kang Family in the Tang Dynasty” 唐代粟特族裔会稽康氏家族考论, *Journal of Xinjiang University*, 2017(03).
- Ma Xiaohu, “Sogdiana in 712” 七一二年间的粟特, *Journal of Xinjiang University*, 1986(01).
- Ma Xiaohu, *Manichaeism and a Study of the Ancient History of the Western Regions 摩尼教与古代西域史研究*, Beijing: China Renmin University Press, 2008.
- Mao Yangguang, “Examination and Interpretation of the epitaph of Tang Dynasty in Luoyang” 洛阳新出土唐代粟特人墓志考释, *Archaeology and Cultural Relics*, 2009(05).
- Mao Yangguang, “An Examination of four epitaphs of Luoyang Sogdians in the Tang Dynasty” 新见四方唐代洛阳粟特人墓志考, *Cultural Relics of the Central Plains*, 2009(06).
- Mao Yangguang, “Examination and interpretation of the newly unearthed Sui Dynasty in Luoyang” 洛阳新出土隋<安备墓志>考释, *Archaeology and Cultural Relics*, 2011(05).
- Mao Yangguang, “Questions of Family tombs in Longmen, Luoyang” 洛阳龙门康法藏家族坟茔题记质疑, *Journal of National Museum of China*, 2012(02).
- Mao Yangguang: “Study of Luoyang Sogdians in Tang Dynasty” 唐代洛阳粟特人研究, *Journal of Zhengzhou University*, 2015(04).
- Meng Xianshi, *Research on Dunhuang Folk Society 敦煌民间结社研究*, Beijing: Peking University Press, 2009.
- Mode M., “Sogdian Gods in Exile. Some Iconographic Evidence from Khotan in the Light of Recently Excavated Material from Sogdiana ” , *Silk Road Art and Archaeology*, Vol. 2, 1991-1992, pp.179-214.
- Mori Masao, 《東突厥国家内部におけるソグド人》, 《古代トルコ民族史研究》I, 東京: 山川出版社, 1967年, pp. 61-93.
- Mori Masao, 《東突厥国家内部におけるソグド人》, 《古代トルコ民族史研究》I, 東

- 京：山川出版社，1967，pp. 61-93.
- Moriyasu Takao, 《ソグドからウイグルへ：シルクロード東部の民族と文化の交流》，汲古書院，2011.
- Moriyasu Takao, 《興亡の世界史シルクロードと唐帝国》，講談社，2016.
- Moriyasu Takao, 《シルクロード世界史》，講談社，2020.
- Moribe Yutaka, 《唐前半期河北地域における非漢族の分布と安史軍淵源の一形態》，《唐代史研究》，2002, pp. 22-45.
- Moribe Yutaka, 《唐末五代の代北におけるソグド系突厥と沙陀》，《東洋史研究》，第62卷第4号，日本東洋史研究会，2004, pp. 60-93.
- Moribe Yutaka, 《ソグド系突厥の東遷と河朔三鎮の動静—特に魏博を中心として—》，《東西学術研究所紀要（関西大学）》，2008, pp. 137-188.
- Moribe Yutaka, 《ソグド人の東方活動と東ユーラシア世界の歴史的展開》，関西大学出版部，2010.
- Moribe Yutaka, 《ソグド人の東方進出とその活動—商業活動と外交活動を中心に》，《アジア遊学》，勉誠社，2010, pp. 178-189.
- Ribou Pénélope, Bi Bo & Zheng Wenbin trans., Xianshen Chongbai: Zhongguo Jingnei de Zhongya Juluo Xingyang Hezhong Zongjiao? 祆神崇拜：中国境内的中亚聚落信仰何种宗教?, *Sogdians in China*, 2005, pp. 416-429.
- Rui Chuanming, *Ancient Turkic Inscription 古突厥碑铭研究*, Beijing: The Commercial Press, 2017.
- Rong Xinjiang, “The ruler of Cao of the Guiyi Jun in Dunhuang” 敦煌归义军曹氏统治者为粟特后裔说, *Historical Research*, 2001(01).
- Rong Xinjiang, *Medieval China and Foreign Civilization 中古中国与外来文明*, Beijing: SDX Joint Publishing Company, 2001.
- Rong Xinjiang, *Medieval China and Sogdian Civilization 中古中国与粟特文明*, Beijing: SDX Joint Publishing Company, 2014.
- Rong Xinjiang, *Silk Road and East-West Cultural Exchange 丝绸之路与东西文化交流*, Beijing: Peking University Press, 2015.
- Rose J., “The Sogdians: Prime Movers between Boundaries”, *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 30(3), 2010, pp. 410-419.
- Shen Ruiwen, “Rereading An pu’s Tom” 重读安菩墓, *Journal of the Palace Museum*, 2009(04).
- Shi Yuntao, *Early History of Han and Western Communication 早期中西交通与交流史稿*, Beijing: Academy Press, 2003.
- Shi Yuntao, *The Changes of the Silk Road from the Third to the sixth Century 三至六世纪丝绸之路的变迁*, Beijing: Culture and Art Press, 2007.
- Shi Yuntao, *The Silk Road in the Mirror Image of Tang Poetry 唐诗镜像中的丝绸之路*, Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2020.
- Shi Yuntao, *Research on Foreign Civilization in the Han Dynasty 汉代外来文明研究*, Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2017.
- Shi Yuntao, “The Transportation between Chang’an and the Border fortress and Outside the Region in Tang Poetry” 唐诗中长安与边塞和域外的交通, *Studies on Han Culture*, 2016(03).
- Sims-Williams N. “The Sogdian fragments of Leningrad”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental*

- and African Studies*, Vol.44:2, 1981.
- Wang Jing, Shen Ruiwen, “Biography of Emperor Mu and North Wall of Ambassador Hall” 《穆天子传》与大使厅北壁壁画, *Art Studies*, 2017(05).
- Wang Jing, Shen Ruiwen, “The Murals on the East Wall of the Ambassador Hall” 《摩诃婆罗多》与大使厅东壁壁画, *Journal of the Palace Museum*, 2018(03).
- Wang Jing, Shen Ruiwen, “Research on the South Wall of Ambassador Hall” 刺鹅荐庙:大使厅南壁壁画研究, *Research on Archaeology*, 2019.
- Wang Jing, Shen Ruiwen, “Winter Discussion: Research on the West Wall mural of the Ambassador Hall” 坐冬议事: 大使厅西壁壁画研究, *Art Studies*, 2021(01).
- Wang Naiang, Cai Weimin, “Study on the Historical Status and Influence of Liangzhou” 论丝绸之路重镇凉州的历史地位及其影响, *Research on the History of China's Frontier Areas*, 1997(04).
- Wang Xiaofu, *A History of the Political Relations between Tang, Tubo and Big Food 唐、吐蕃、大食政治关系史*, Beijing: Peking University Press, 1992.
- Wang Xiaofu, “The worship of fire and the Rise and Fall of Turkic” 拜火教与突厥兴衰, *Historical Research*, 2007(01).
- Wang Zhilai, *General History of Central Asia 中亚通史*, Beijing: People Press, 2018.
- Watanabe Takashi, 《魏博と成徳: 河朔三鎮の權力構造についての再検討》, 《東洋史研究》, 1995, pp. 236-279.
- Wertmann P., *Sogdians in China: Archaeological and art historical analyses of tombs and texts from the 3rd to the 10th century AD*. Verlag Philipp von Zabern in Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2015.
- Wertmann P., Wagner M.& Tarasov P., “Sogdian careers and families in sixth- to seventh-century northern China: a case study of the Shi family based on archaeological finds and epitaph inscriptions”, *The History of the Family*, 22:1, 2017, pp. 103-135.
- Wriggins S. H. *The Silk Road Journey with Xuan Zang*, rev. ed. Boulder, CO: Westview, 2004, p. 176.
- Wu Yugui, “Study of Sogdian An family in Liangzhou” 凉州粟特胡人安氏家族研究, *Study of Tang*, Vol. 3, Peking University Press, 1997.
- Xiang Da, *Chang'an and the Western Civilization in the Tang Dynasty 唐代长安与西域文明*, Shijiazhuang: Hebei Education Press, 2001.
- Xu Xuya, *A Study on the History of Hu Relationship between Tang Dynasty and Nine Hu in Central Asia 唐朝与中亚九姓胡关系史研究*, Gansu: Lanzhou University Press, 2012.
- Yamashita Shōji, 《新出土史料より見た北朝末・唐初間ソグドの人の存在形態——固原出土史氏墓誌を中心に》, 《唐代史研究》7, 2004, pp. 60-77.
- Yamashita Shōji, 《唐の監牧制と中国在住ソグド人の牧馬》, 《東洋史研究》66 :4, 2008, pp.1-30.
- Yang Fuxue etc., *The National History of Dunhuang 敦煌民族史*, Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2021.
- Yao Chongxin etc., *Dunhuang Sanyi Education and Middle Ancient Society 敦煌三夷教与中古社会*, Lanzhou: Gansu People's Education Press, 2013.
- Yuku Tanaka, 《六胡州におけるソグド系突厥》, 《東洋史苑》72, 2009, pp. 33-66.
- Yuku Tanaka, 《唐代西州における群牧と馬の賣買》, 《敦煌寫本研究年報》No.4, 2010, pp. 163-179.
- Yu Xin, *A Study of people's Livelihood and Religious Social History in Dunhuang during the*

- Tang and Song Dynasties 神道人心：唐宋之際敦煌民生宗教社會史研究*, Beijing: Zhonghua Press, 2006.
- Yu Xin, *Middle Ancient Different: Academic, Faith and Society of the Times 中古异相：写本时代的学术、信仰与社会*, Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books Press, 2011.
- Yu Xin, *The Natural History world of Dunhuang 敦煌的博物学世界*, Lanzhou: Gansu Education Press, 2013.
- Zhang Guangda, *Text, Images and Cultural Spread 文本、图像与文化流传*, Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2008.
- Zhang Guangda, *Documents, Classics and the History of the Western Regions 文书、典籍与西域历史*, Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2008.
- Zhang Guangda, *Historian, History and Modern Academic Studies 史家、史学与现代学术*, Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2008.
- Zhang Xiaogui, *Paroastrian Examination 中古华化袄教考述*, Beijing: Cultural Relics Press, 2010.
- Zhao Zhenhua, Zhu Liang, “The Tomb of Tang Anpu and His wife in Longmen, Luoyang 洛阳龙门唐安善夫妇墓”, *Cultural Relics of the Central Plains*, no. 3, 1982.
- Zheng Binglin, “Sogdians and Guiyi Jun in Tang and Five Dynasties” 唐五代敦煌粟特人与归义军政权, *Dunhuang Studies*, 1996(04).
- Zheng Binglin, “The Marriage of Hu-Han from Cao to the Guiyi Jun” 张氏曹氏归义军政权的胡汉联姻, *Study of Han History*, 2004(01).
- Zheng Binglin, Ma Zhenying, “Epitaph of Mi Daoqin” 新见《唐米钦道墓志》考释, *Dunhuang Studies Journal*, 2018(02).
- Zheng Binglin, *Dunhuang and the Silk Road Civilization 敦煌与丝绸之路文明*, Nanjing: Jiangsu People Press, 2018.

