

论文

中国亚述教会的莲花与万字符:佛教传统抑或雅利安遗产?

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摘要:

作为基督教一个分支的亚述教会于7世纪(唐朝)传入中国,始称波斯经教,后称景教。亚述教会的波斯传教士似乎是借用佛教中莲花这样的标志,向中国民众介绍这种新的宗教。莲花的出现也使人们对于两者之间的联系产生了猜想。自9世纪开始,亚述教会开始在中国衰落,直到13世纪的元朝都没能成为一种有影响的宗教。元代亚述教会信徒身上佩戴的铜质十字架上出现的万字符标志也成为两种宗教间密切相关的一种证据。而在中国发现的亚述教会的标志---莲花和万字符,可能是波斯人从中亚带来的雅利安文化传统的一部分,而不一定是取自中国本土佛教并与之结合的产物。由此看来,两种宗教间的联系可能要比原本设想的少得多。

关键词: 莲花 万字符 亚述教会 雅利安

Lotus and Swastika in Chinese Nestorianism :Buddhist Legacy or Aryan Heritage ?

Chan Kim-Kwong

Abstract:

The Assyrian Branch of Christianity began to appear in China in the 7th century . With the introduction of this form of Christianity ,the Assyrian missionaries appeared to utilize seemingly Buddhist symbols ,such as Lotus ,to spread this new belief to the Chinese audience .Scholars generally maintained that the Lotus Symbol which appeared in Assyrian Christianity in China suggested a close link between Buddhist expressions and Assyrian Christian expressions in China ,as these two faiths seemed to interact closely with each other . The Assyrian Christianity had declined in China since the 9th century and did not reappear until the beginning of the Yuan Dynasty in 13th ,as many of the Mongols were Christians of the Assyrian Church .These Christians in the Yuan Dynasty usually carried a Bronze Cross (commonly yet wrongly referred to as Nestorian Cross) and many of these crosses contained the Swastika symbol . Based on the Buddhist - Christian relationship during Tang Dynasty , many scholars believe that the Swastika design in the Nestorian Cross further evidenced the continual close relation between Assyrian Christians and Buddhists just as they had done several hundred years ago with the Lotus symbol . The appearance of Lotus and Swastika in Assyrian Christians in China became the strongest evidence to support such hypothesis . However this paper would like to suggest that the Lotus and Swastika found in the Assyrian Christian artifacts in China might be a legacy of the Aryan tradition carried over by Persians from Central Asia than syncretic integration from Buddhism in China .Such hypothesis may suggest that there is far less exchange between Assyrian Christianity and Buddhism in China than scholars wished to acknowledge .

Keywords: Lotus Swastika Nestorianism Aryan

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