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Panel 2.4: Education for a Globalized World

The Diverse Culture of Dunhuang and Its Teaching for Education Today

Dunhuang (366 – 14th Century) is well known for the Magao caves and their beauty, and considered one of the most magnificent manifestations of Chinese civilization and culture. The Dunhuang study and research in the past focused primarily on religion, history, art, geology, astrology, and so on (Zhao, 2005; Lu, 2010; Wang, 2010; Ku, 2011). This paper will examine Dunhuang with unique lenses and focus on the role of diversity and multicultural synergy. In reality, as a major stop in the Silk Road and a hub of East-West trade, Dunhuang is a creation through West meeting East, built and inspired by diverse cultures and civilizations, including Tubo kingdom, Egypt, Greece, India, Persian, South Asia, and by Buddhism, Hinduism, and Daoism as well as local beliefs and motives (Fan & Wu, 2004; Li, 2007). The purpose of this study is to examine the successful interaction and convergence of multiculturalism (Banks, 2010) in Dunhuang’s and its implications for education in China today, in Asia, and the world beyond. What is the importance of diversity in Dunhuang’s creation and sustainability? How can we learn from the insights and practice of Dunhuang? How can we apply such approaches throughout our educational systems, and why are such approaches necessary?