

to Mind and Mental Events. Appendix III is a List of Tibetan Proper Names.

In conclusion it can be said that this is a special field of study the author undertook to do research. The Great Perfection Texts written by Jigme Lingpa includes his personal thinking and his own experiences relating to practice of meditation. Even though Jigme lingpa belonged to Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism he followed his own way in writing these texts rather than his fraternity's way of thinking. The author of this monograph undertook a tedious task in studying these texts. All the credits should go to him for explaining the contents of these texts in lucid words.

--Kottegoda S. Warnasuriya

A Collection of Inscriptions of Steles in Buddhist Temples in Sichuan

Edited by Long Xianzhao, published by Bashu Shushe, Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China, 959 pp. ISBN 7-80659-584-8/8B.88

A huge book entitled *Pashu Fojiao Beiwen Jicheng* (《巴蜀佛教碑文集》 A Collection of Inscriptions of Steles in Buddhist Temples in Sichuan Province) was published in Chengdu, Sichuan, China, in December 2003. Led by Professor Long Xianzhao (龍顯昭), editor-in-chief, four professors of Xihua University located in northern Sichuan were responsible for the punctuation and editing work of the project. Four students working on MA programs in the same school also participated in the collection. A Ph.D. candidate and an MA student of Sichuan University assisted in editing.

Buddhism was introduced into China around the first century CE via Silk Route. Sichuan Province has been a meeting place of the so-called Northern Silk Route and the Southern Silk Route. Thus, it has been an important region for the propagation of Buddhism in China. With the evidence available now, doubt still exists as to whether Buddhism was

introduced into Sichuan from Northwest China or from Southern China. This is a huge collection of inscriptions from temples, pagodas, pavilions, stone pillars on which Buddhist scriptures were carved, Buddha halls and tombs of eminent monks, as well as temple bells. All these are useful to scholars who investigate the historical development of Buddhism in Sichuan Province.

The book contributes to our understanding of Buddhism in Sichuan region in four aspects. First, it provides reliable sources on how Buddhism was introduced and developed in Sichuan Province in the past two millennia. As we check both inscriptions and early historical records, we come to know that Buddhists came to propagate their doctrines and practices in the end of the Han Dynasty (round 220 CE). Some eminent monks and practitioners began to exert their influence in Sichuan and other provinces.

Second, the book illustrates the growth of Buddhism in Sichuan. During the Sui Dynasty (581 – 618) and Tang Dynasties (618 – 907), many huge temples were built in Chengdu. Master Xuanzang (玄奘 also spelt as Hsuan Tsang, or Hiuen Tsiang) and his brother came to live in Chengdu in order to escape wars in Central China during the end of the Sui Dynasty and early Tang period. Master Xuanzang received full ordination in Chengdu in 622. The name of the temple where Master Xuanzang stayed was changed a number of times. With the publication of this collection of stele inscriptions and gazetteers, we obtain a comprehensive understanding of the development of temples in Sichuan region.

Third, Chan masters played an important role in the propagation of Chan in Sichuan region. For instance, Venerable Zhishen (智詵 609 – 702), one of the key disciples of the Fifth Patriarch Hongren (弘忍 602 – 675), came to Sichuan to propagate Chan practices in the later seventh century. Another monk Mazu Daoyi (馬祖道一 709 – 788), a native of Shifang County (什邡) in Sichuan, was a key figure in Chan Buddhism in China. Chan Master Guifeng (圭峰 780 – 841), Venerable Zongmi (宗密 780 – 841) and Yuanwu Keqin (圓悟克勤 1063 – 1135) exerted tremendous influence in Chinese Buddhism. Readers can find information in this book about their life and work in the temples where they stayed.

In the Tang and Song periods, Buddhism suffered setbacks in Central China whereas Buddhists in Sichuan were able to built or

protect their temples. The local stele inscriptions can help us verify how political events and imperial decrees affected society as a whole. The stele records supply us valuable information on the secularization of Buddhism in Sichuan.

The rich records also offer us information about the stone grottoes in Sichuan. The earliest grottoes were made in the third year of Yanchang (514 CE). Huangze Temple (皇澤寺) is known for having received its name as well as donations from Empress Wu Zetian (武則天 r. 684 – 704). The inscriptions on the steles indicate that Guangyuan (廣元) was an important base for Buddhism in northern Sichuan Province. Other records also add to our knowledge of the Giant Buddha in Leshan 樂山. Wei Gao (韋臯 745 – 805), Governor of Sichuan region, noted that it was in the early years of Emperor Xuanzong (玄宗 r. 712 – 755) that monks started carving the huge mountain into a 72 meter tall Maitreya Buddha. The notes written by Wei Gao were carved on a stone near the Giant Buddha in the year 803. When the stone inscriptions were worn out, they were re-carved in 1481 and 1945. With these records, we know that monks spent almost ninety years carving this world-famous Giant Buddha instead of the seventy-two years described in *Fozu Tongji* (《佛祖統紀》 Taisho 49. No.2035.p.374c).

The editors collected 1182 inscriptions from Buddhist temples and also records in *Quan Tang Wen* (《全唐文》 Collected Works in the Tang Dynasty 618 – 907), *Quan Song Wen* (《全宋文》 Collected Works in the Song Dynasty 960 – 1279), and *Songdai Shuwen Jicun* (《宋代蜀文輯存》 The Extant Works on Sichuan Province Written by Song Scholars), in addition to similar works in the various dynasties, stone inscriptions, local gazetteers and local records. The earliest stone inscriptions were written during the period of the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317 – 420 CE). A few inscriptions carved in the Republican Period (1912 – 1949) were also collected in this huge book. The editors compiled their collections of the inscriptions and records chronologically. Where the stones are extant, the editors made field investigations into their status quo and recorded what they observed.

The editors have written a short note on each inscription, including the information about its origin, author, the date and history of key temples. The four indexes list the names of

temples, inscriptions without names of the temple, names of authors, and inscriptions without authors' names. Thus, readers can easily check the information available in the book.

This huge collection of stele inscriptions in Buddhist temples in Sichuan Province will be a good reference book for researchers who wish to investigate how Buddhism developed in Sichuan as well as in China.

--Darui Long

The Historical Buddha: The Times, Life and Teachings of the Founder of Buddhism

By H.V. Schuman
Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi,
2004
ISBN 81-208-1817-2

This reprint of the 1982 English translation of the German original published in Germany in 1989 is one of the latest additions to Motilal Banarsidass' Buddhist Tradition Series, ably edited by the late lamented Professor Alex Wayman. The passing away of this great Buddhist scholar leaves a vacuum which may not be easily filled. Alex Wayman introduces Schuman's masterly study of the times and life of the Buddha in following terms:

This book is a splendid contribution on the scholarship about Gautama Buddha, using various Buddhist and non-Buddhist sources. The scholarship includes date on the Buddha's era, his relatives etc; the local king of his city Kapilavasthu; the Buddha's enlightenment; monuments as in Sarnath; what the city Benares was known for; the conversion of King Bimbisara of Magadha; and when Sariputta and Moggallana became disciples. Then a synopsis of the Buddha's doctrine, his order, and the laity, followed by psychological aspects of Gautama (or Gotama), then his later years, his last journey; his