

Cluster 3.2 Field Visit Report in 2019

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Cluster 3.2 “Historical Reality through the Reflections between Image and Text: Northern Dynasties Buddhism and Beyond” took place in the Beijing 北京 area from July 1 to 7, 2019. The research team consisted of thirty-four scholars and students from various institutions, including Tsinghua University, Peking University, Renmin University of China, Wuhan University, Sichuan University, Zhejiang University, Sun Yat-sen University, Jilin University, Hunan University, Guizhou Normal University, Northeast Normal University, Shaanxi Normal University, University of Pennsylvania, Northwestern University, University of Arizona, McMaster University, University of Winnipeg, Institute of Social Science of CASS, and Beijing Buddhist Cultural Institute.

Cluster 3.2 in the summer of 2019 consisted of three parts: workshop entitled “The Social Life History of the Chinese Buddhist Community During the Ming and Qing Dynasties” 明清漢傳佛教僧眾社會生活史工作坊 and two additional relevant lectures on July 1 and 2; field trip to the monasteries and museums which preserve the Buddhist inscriptions in Beijing during July 3-5; symposium entitled “Stone Carved Scriptures, Belief, and Religious Life: The Ideology and Medium of the Chinese Buddhist Social Life” 石刻、信仰與生活：漢傳佛教社會生活觀念與載體 on July 6 and 7, which was in conjunction with Cluster 2.2.

On July 1, all of the participants arrived at Tsinghua University, and attended an evening lecture entitled “Early Sinology and the Distribution and Influence of the Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism during the Ming-Qing Dynasties” 早期漢學與明清儒道佛教的分佈與影響, which was given by Professor Tiangang Li 李天綱 from the Department of Religious Studies of Fudan University (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1 The Lecture given by Professor Tiangang Li on July 1, 2019 (by Lan Li)

On July 2, all of the participants joined a workshop entitled “The Social Life History of the Chinese Buddhist Community During the Ming and Qing Dynasties”, which was held at Tsinghua University, in order to listen to the reports of scholars who are working on the study of the social life of the Buddhist community during the Ming and Qing dynasties (Fig. 2). Also, most participants were engaged in the discussion and proposed their opinions on the different academic views of other scholars. After the workshop in the daytime, there was another lecture entitled “The Rule of the Hypothesizing of the Mengshan Rite for Feeding the Ghosts in Late Ming” 明清之際《蒙山施食考》 given by the Professor Jiang Wu 吳疆 from the University of Arizona.



Fig. 2 The Workshop of “Social Life History of the Chinese Buddhist Community During the Ming and Qing Dynasties” on July 2, 2019 (by Lan Li)

A preparatory meeting for the arrangement of the field trip on the following three days was organized after the lecture wherein all the participants received the forms and tools which will be applied in the field trip and were then divided into five groups. Each group included 6 or 7 members, which had been assigned different jobs, such as photography, taking records and measuring.

Our principle purposes on the field trip were two-fold: 1) train young scholars in the skills needed to conduct a field trip, so as to enable said young scholars to be able to acquire the primary resource data from the field work; 2) collect primary resource data from the monasteries and museums in the Beijing area which preserve Buddhist inscriptions, as well as from the stone carving sutras in Fangshan region. Therefore, the field trip required that all of the scholars and graduate students be involved in all phases of this fieldwork, either through direct participation in recording and processing of finds, the assistance of photography crews, or sharing insights on how to interpret historical sources on site.

Major sites visited include Fayuan Monastery 法源寺, Beijing Stone Carving Art Museum 北京石刻藝術博物館, Yunju Monastery in Fangshan 房山雲居寺, Shijing Mountain (Stone Carving Sutra Mountain) 石經山, Shangfang Mountain 上方山, and the surrounding sites related to the production of the stone carving sutras in Fangshan, such as Baiyu Pond 白玉塘 and Mobei Monastery 磨碑寺.

On the morning of July 3, our team visited Fayuan Monastery 法源寺 (also the Buddhist Academy of China). Thanks to the support of the vice president of the Academy Ven. Zongxing 宗性, every participant had the chance to see several pieces of the old rubbings of the stone carving sutras from the caves of Shijing Mountain 石經山, which have been sealed since the 1950s (Fig. 4 & 5). Also, each group collected data of some steles, inscriptions, and Buddhist statuary in the monastery (Fig. 6).



Fig. 3 Map of the visited destinations in Fangshan of Cluster 3.2 in 2019 (By Lan Li)



Fig.4 A Piece of Rubbing of the Stone Carving Sutra in the Caves of the Shijing Mountain (by Lusi Zhang)



Fig 5. Displaying the Rubbing of the Stone Carve Sutras in the Shijing Mountain (by Lan Li)



Fig. 6 Group 2 is Measuring the Height of a Stone Pillar in Fayuan Monastery (by Lan Li)

In the afternoon, the cluster visited the Beijing Stone Carving Art Museum 北京石刻藝術博物館. After a brief introduction given by a researcher in the museum, all of the groups investigated and recorded primary resources from important collections (statues, epitaphs and steles) collected inside the Museum or exhibited in the outdoor corridors, which were discovered or unearthed in the region of Beijing.

After the trip to the Fayuan Monastery and the museum, all of the participants headed to Fangshan and attended an evening lecture entitled “The Productions of the Taisho Tripitaka and the Tripitaka Sinica and the Transformation of the Modern and Contemporary Societies in East Asia” 為國而爭：《大正藏》《中華大藏經》生產與近現代東亞社會轉型 given by the associate researcher Dewei Zhang 張德偉 at Sun Yat-Sen University



Fig. 7 Group Photo of the Cluster 3.2 in the Beijing Stone Carving Art Museum (by Qiyuan Wang)

On July 4, the cluster visited several Buddhist sites in the Shangfang Mountain 上方山, mainly to investigate the Doushuai Monastery 兜率寺 and the Yunshui Cave 雲水洞, in which are preserved inscriptions carved by Buddhist monks from the Liao (907-1125 CE) and Yuan (1271-1368 CE) dynasties (Fig. 8, 9 & 10).



Fig. 8 Group 3 is Collecting the Data of the Steles in the Doushuai Monastery (by Suhyoung Sung)



Fig. 9 Group 5 in the Yunshui Cave (by Lusi Zhang)



Fig. 10 Group photo at the Entrance of the Yunshui Cave (by Lusi Zhang)

There was a lecture on the evening of July 4 entitled “The Inheritance of the Creation of Buddhist Images of Eastern Wei and the Establishment of the Mode of Yecheng of Northern Wei” 東魏造像傳承於北齊鄴城模式的確立, given by the associate researcher Liqun He 何利群 from the Archaeological Institute of CASS.

In the morning of July 5, and joined by the Cluster 2.2, all the participants of these two clusters climbed up the Shijing Mountain 石經山 in heavy rain (Fig. 11). We visited the nine caves, which store approximately 15,000 pieces of the stone slabs of Buddhist canons (Fig. 12). Only the Leiyin Cave 雷音洞 (Cave 5) has been opened and allows visitors to enter the cave see the stone slabs inlaid on the walls, in which nineteen Buddhist sūtras have been identified, including the *Lotus Sutra* and the *Avatamsaka Sutra* carved by the founder of the stone carving project at Shijing Mountain, Jingwan 靜琬 (? –639 CE), during the Sui dynasty (581-618 CE). Unfortunately, for the preservation of the cave and its contents, visitors are prohibited from taking photos inside. Also, inscriptions in the caves as well as on the steles erected in front of several caves are crucial materials for study the history of the caves in the Shijing Mountain, such as the three inscriptions written by Jingwan and the stele of the Accomplishment of the Four Sūtras 四大部經成就碑記 (*sīdabujing chengjiu bei*) (Fig. 13).



Fig. 11 Participants are climbing up the Shijing Mountain in heavy rain (by Lan Li)



Fig. 12 & 13 The stone slabs carved with Buddhist sutras sealed in Cave 7 at Shijign Mountain;
Participants are collecting the data of the steles outside the caves (by Lan Li)

After visiting the Leiyin Cave and its surrounding area all of the participants climbed up to the top of the mountain in order to conduct investigation on two stone stupas on the top and the site of the buildings of the ancient Yunju Monastery (or Shang Yunju Si 上雲居寺), which included the remains of the stone foundation of the two Buddhist halls or lecture hall on two terraces (Fig. 14 & 15). The team also focused on the Stūpa of the Princess Jinxian 金仙公主塔 (*jinxian gongzhu ta*), who was the primary sponsor of Jingwan's enterprise (Fig. 16).



Fig.13 Group 1 standing on the foundation of a building of the old Yunju Monastery (by Lan Li)



Fig.14 Group 3 is surveying the foundation of a building of the old Yunju Monastery (by Chengpeng Li)



Fig. 15 An overview of the stupa of Princess Jinxian and its surrounding environment (by Lan Li)



Fig. 15 An overview of the caves at Shijing Mountain and their surrounding environment (by Lan Li)

During the trip to Yunju Monastery in the afternoon of July 5, two clusters understood the entire layout of the current Yunju Monastery and visited the exhibition halls in the monastery in order to obtain a further understanding of the history of the stone carving sutras in Fangshan (Fig. 16). We also visited the ancient quarry in the Baiyu Pond 白玉塘 and the Mobei Monastery 磨碑寺, in which the stone was mined and processed to the slabs used to carve Buddhist sutras at Shijing Mountain and other building components in Beijing, from Sui until Qing (1644-1912 CE) dynasties (Fig. 17).



Fig. 16 The exhibition of the stone slabs with carving sutras in the Yunju Monastery (by Lan Li)



Fig. 17 The Baiyu Pond and the cliff cut by the projects of quarrying (by Lan Li)

From the three-day field trip, every participant in the Cluster 3.2 not only acquired considerable materials on stone carving inscriptions and images but also gained a more

comprehensive understanding of the history of the stone carving art and technologies in the region of Beijing, from Sui-Tang to Ming-Qing dynasties.

On July 6 and 7, we held a symposium entitled “Stone Carved Scriptures, Belief, and Religious Life: The Ideology and Medium of the Chinese Buddhist Social Life,” which was held in the Anran Hotel in Fangshan (Fig. 18 & 20). All participants in the Cluster 3.2 attended the symposium, and eight of them presented their research on the study of the relationship between stone carving materials and Buddhism (Fig. 19).

Cluster 3.2 in Summer 2019 provided a valuable opportunity for scholars and graduate students from different disciplines and cultural backgrounds to share their experience and communicate with each other. Participants not only had the chance to attend lectures given by leading scholars in their fields, but also to learn how to conduct the field work necessary for the acquisition of primary resources for their studies. The field trip was certainly successful in terms of gaining firsthand experience of various Buddhist sites, reconstructing the ancient history of the region of Beijing, and recording better versions of existing historical sources.



Fig. 18 The Professor Shengkai is giving his opening address for the symposium (by Chengpeng Li)



Fig. 19 Dr. Yifeng Xie is presenting his study in the symposium (by Chengpeng Li)



Fig. 20 Group Photo of all the participants in the symposium (Chengpeng Li)