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After the publication of Volume 1 (2014) and Volume 2 (2015), this is the third volume in the series on Buddhist sutra inscriptions engraved on rock cliffs in Shandong Province. Whereas the first volume on Shandong discussed the sites in Dongping and in Pingyin, that is, the area on the northwestern edge of the highlands around lake Dongping (see my review in *China Review International* 20, no. 3&4), and the second volume described and studied the inscriptions on Mount Yi, Mount Tie, Mount Ge, and Mount Gang—four mountains around the present-day city of Zoucheng, the home of Mencius (372–289 B.C.E.), located at the base of the foothills to the southwest of the Shandong highlands, south of Qufu and east of Jining city (see my review in *China Review International* 21, no. 2)—the inscriptions that are discussed in this volume are situated in the area from Yellow Stone Cliff (Huangshiya) in the north, that is, just southeast of Shandong’s capital city Ji’nan, to Mount Long in the southwestern highlands of Shandong, that is, some 150 kilometers to the south of Yellow Stone Cliff. Inclusive of Yellow Stone Cliff and Mount Long, this geographical area contains nine sites: Yellow Stone Cliff, Mount Long, Mount Jian, Mount Yang, Culai, Fenghuang, Shuiniu, Ziyang, and Mount Tao. The inscriptions in these sites all date from the sixth century C.E., that is, the Northern Qi (550–577) and Northern Zhou (557–581) dynasties.

The inscriptions on Mount Jian and Mount Yang, two mountains situated in the middle of the area, are no longer extant. For Mount Yang, only one inscription is recorded: a passage of 98 characters from the “Sutra on the Great Perfection of Wisdom Spoken by Mañjuśrī”, *Saptasātiḥāparajñāpāramitāsūtra* (on which more is discussed further). Of the texts on Mount Jian, rubbings have been made before their destruction in the 1960s. In these rubbings, the
name of Lady Zhao (died 575 or 576) figures. Lady Zhao was the wife of Tang Yong (before 532–581), an eminent political figure of the Northern Qi dynasty known as a supporter of the Buddhist cause (p. 8). While the name of Lady Zhao and of General Hulü Wudu (died 572) are the only two names mentioned in the Shandong inscriptions, we also know from other historical sources the names of the donors (communities of people organized in Buddhist associations, as well as individuals) who are mentioned in the eight surviving votive inscriptions (six of which are still in situ, and two of which are only preserved in rubbings) of Yellow Stone Cliff, giving us insight into the connection of these caves to the capital city Luoyang, where, under imperial auspices, work on the monumental sculptured grottos at Longmen had recently started (p. 164). Among the individual donors of Yellow Stone Cliff, we reckon Qifu Rui, the Governor of Qi Prefecture, and Yao Jingzun, the Governor of Wei Commandery. Their donations are dated 26 April 539. As suggested by Zheng Yan, “This may have been the official revival of Buddhist activities at the site after the dynastic rule had changed in 534 from the Northern Wei to the Eastern Wei” (p. 167). The principal donors connected to Mount Culai were Wang Zichun who served as Magistrate of Liangfu County, and a certain Rectifier Hu Bin (p. 247). A similar local connection between the Buddhist community and officialdom can also be deduced from the inscriptions in Shuiniu, where two local families dominate the inscriptions: the Yang and Shu families. The Yang family was overall more powerful, but at least one individual from the Shu family acted as Great Chief Overseer, a function that comprised management responsibilities in a Buddhist association (p. 422).

These inscriptions offer the opportunity to compare history as recorded at grass roots level with the official history as sanctioned by the government (p. 344). The Buddhist sites in Shandong did not only have a connection with the local political elite but were also mutually interconnected. A reconstruction of the site of Mount Jian based on epigraphic sources reveals that the carving project of this precise site not only was a cooperation between the monk calligrapher Seng’ an Daoyi (fl. 562–579) and the Wei family, one of the powerful local clans (p. 40), but the figure of Seng’an Daoyi further connects the site of Mount Jian with the engravings at Mount Hongding (discussed in Shandong 1) and Mount Tie (discussed in Shandong 2) as Seng’an Daoyi was the mastermind behind the latter two engravings as well (p. 38). All in all, the meticulous epigraphic research that is presented in this volume refines our knowledge of the region and of the position, function, and functioning of Buddhism and thus complements the knowledge we have from official histories. The latter is also evident from several tenth-century inscriptions on Mount Fenghuang that testify of a rebellion against the ruling emperor, Zhu Zhen (r. 913–923), the last emperor of the Later Liang dynasty (907–923). Mount Fenghuang must thus have served as a mountain stronghold.
The two most prominent features of the sites discussed in this volume are the frequent appearance of the enigmatic Buddha name “Buddha King of Great Emptiness” (Da kong wang fo) which appears fifteen times (among others on Mount Jian, Mount Fenghuang, and Culai), and of a sutra passage of 98 characters from the “Sutra on the Great Perfection of Wisdom Spoken by Mañjuśrī” of the Prajñāpāramitā literature (among others on Mount Jian, Mount Yang, Mount Ziyang, Mount Long, Culai, and Shuiniu). As suggested by Lothar Ledderose, the Buddha name “Buddha King of Great Emptiness” is one of a series of Buddha names that “conjure up the cosmic space and time of the Buddhist universe” (p. 344). That is to say that Buddha King of Great Emptiness represents a remote past, and that Buddha Maitreya and Buddha Flower Radiance (Padmaprabha) refer to the future (p. 355). In the same way that Maitreya will, in the future, become a fully awakened Buddha in our own world, Buddha Perceiver of the World’s Sounds will take Amitābha’s place in the Western Pure Land having received the prophesy of his future Buddhahood from a Buddha named “Buddha King of Emptiness Perceiver of the World’s Sounds.” These Buddhas and the Buddha King of Great Emptiness are grouped on Mount Culai and seem to project the transmission of Buddhahood into the future (p. 258). Also on Mount Tao, the names of Buddha Amitābha and of Buddha Perceiver of the World’s Sounds, the successor of Buddha Amitābha in the Western Pure Land, are mentioned (p. 477). The succession of Buddha Perceiver of the World’s Sounds is mentioned in the “Sutra of the Compassionate Lotus Flower,” Karuṇāpuṇḍarikāsūtra (T.157 and T.158), in the “Sutra of the Bodhisattva Perceiver of the World’s Sounds Receiving a Prophesy,” Māyopamasamādhisūtra (T.371), and in one non-canonical scripture: the “Sutra on the Ten Great Vows Taken by the Perceiver of the World’s Sounds.” The latter text that has only survived in quotations in other works of the Buddhist Canon, and in two stone-cut versions must have already been in circulation when the cliff inscriptions of Mount Tao (and of Mount Culai) were carved (p. 477).

From the texts engraved on the sites, it appears that the monks of the region practiced the bodhisattva path and read the Prajñāpāramitā literature and the Lotus Sutra. In this respect, the engraving on Yellow Stone Cliff, the earliest sutra carving in the whole of Shandong, “seems explicitly pedagogical, even proselytizing, and it provides the reader or pilgrim with a ready way to remember an outline of the Buddhist teaching, and an equally clear instruction of what to do when in distress. In concise form, it gives a twofold promise, one of liberation from the circle of life and death in the long run, and one of assistance in worldly sufferings right now and here” (p. 172).

The site at Yellow Stone Cliff also gives us insight into the development of the phenomenon of “cave temples,” that is, from a concept in which the images as such were more important than the architectural features of the caves—reflected in a focus on excellent carving and fine workmanship for the
sculptures—to an enhanced focus on architectural layout to which, later, also a ritual function and political considerations were added (pp. 18–26, p. 164).

In my review on the first volume on Sichuan of this series, dealing with the Grove of the Reclining Buddha (Wofoyuan) in Ziyang City, Anyue County in the eastern part of Sichuan Province (Lothar Ledderose and Sun Hua, eds. 2014 – see China Review International 20, no. 3&4), I stated that “To grasp the full importance of the valley, however, this volume likely needs to be complemented with a reading of the other volumes in the series that are dedicated to Sichuan” (p. 343). Here, too, for this third volume on Shandong, it is true that the full importance of the inscriptions of this area only is evident through a combined reading with the previous two volumes. Our understanding of the Shandong sites is also greatly fostered through the sections entitled “Research History” that accompany the discussions of each individual site in this volume and will undoubtedly further be enhanced by the fourth volume on Shandong and be complemented with the knowledge we gain from the volumes on Sichuan. We can thus only eagerly wait for the fourth volume on Shandong that will be entirely devoted to Sutra Stone Valley (Jingshiyu) on Mount Tai. With that fourth volume, the section on Shandong of this splendid series will be completed.

Bart Dessein

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In this book, Lily Wong examines the historical and literary portrayal of the figure of the sex worker, which not only evokes disdain and desire but also embodies Asian American sexuality and Asian modernity. Through a detailed scrutiny of such portrayal in mass media from literature to film in the United States, China, and Sinophone communities from the early twentieth century to the present, Wong argues that “Chineseness” is an affective product instead of an ethnic or cultural signifier. As Wong ascertains, Chineseness “maintains itself as a morphing affective structure” that embodies “social sentiments that resemble categories of difference and social relations through the circulation of mass media” (p. 6). Wong asserts that the “affectively charged” figure of the