

BOOK REVIEW

Thomas Jülch, trans. *Zhipan's Account of the History of Buddhism in China: vol. 1, "Fozu tonghi," juan 34–38: From the Times of the Buddha to the Nanbeichao Era.*

Leiden: Brill, 2019. ix + 316 pages. ISBN-13: 9789004396203 (hardcover); ISBN-13: 9789004396494 (e-book/PDF). €116.00/US\$140.00 (hardcover).

The *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 (Chronicle of the Buddhas and Patriarchs), compiled by the Chinese monk Zhipan 志磐 (ca. 1220–75), is an encyclopedic work in fifty-four rolls (*juan* 卷) compiled between 1258 and 1269. It is a history of Buddhism in China organized and presented from the perspective of the Tiantai school 天台宗, which in doctrine and practice centered on the *Lotus sūtra* and the teachings of Tiantai Zhiyi 天台智顛 (538–97) and his successors. Although the text is fashioned around the articulation of a Tiantai lineage that cannot be taken uncritically, modern scholars of the early history of Buddhism in China have found it indispensable in constructing a narrative account of the origins and development of the religion in East Asia. Zhipan's text is crafted as a roughly diachronic narrative following Chinese dynastic history with numerous authorial notes, commentaries, and digressions. This monograph by Thomas Jülch is a translation of the first five *juan* of the "Monograph on Success and Obstructions in the Spread of the Dharma" (Fayun tong sai zhi 法運通塞志), *Fozu tongji*, rolls 34–38. The book is the first in a projected series of three volumes translating the "Monograph on Success and Obstructions in the Spread of the Dharma," fifteen *juan* in total. Jülch provides many helpful annotations; however, one of the conventions the translator has adopted is to place all of Zhipan's interlinear notes in footnotes, making it difficult to differentiate between Jülch's notes and Zhipan's. Although the translator does not really make this point clear in his generally helpful introduction to the text (1–12), one of Zhipan's key purposes in the selection translated here is to place all of Chinese thought and religion into a single grand narrative. He accomplishes this by including nearly all of the memorable episodes and anecdotes of Chinese philosophical and religious history in this diachronic account.

Jülch's translation provides a broad window through which the reader can begin to view Zhipan's Weltanschauung and understanding of history. This is because Zhipan's book places the life of Śākyamuni and the coming of the *Buddhadharma* to China from India and Central Asia (the "Western Regions") within the context of Chinese historiography. The first roll (17–45) begins with the pre-birth existence of Śākyamuni and locates the Buddha's birth under the heading of King Zhao of Zhou (21). One of the unfortunate conventions adopted by the translator is that he does not convert Chinese dates to their Western equivalents or at least provide them in parentheses or notes. Thus, the significance of Zhipan's locating Śākyamuni's birth in the twenty-sixth year of King Zhao of Zhou is difficult to ascertain if one is not familiar with Chinese history. This year corresponds to the year 949 BCE, which was the most popular date for the Buddha's birth in

the Tang (618–907) and Song (960–1279) periods. This is different than the date of 687 BCE that was advanced by Wei Shou 魏收 (506–72) in the “Monograph on Buddhism and Daoism” (Shi Lao zhi 釋老志) in the *Wei shu* 魏書 (History of the Wei Dynasty, 386–550), which also enjoyed a level of popularity in medieval East Asia prior to the Tang.

In addition, the informed reader who knows something of the doctrine, practices, and system of doctrinal classification (*panjiao* 判教) of the Tiantai school can see the subtle advancement of a Tiantai view of the history of Buddhism that counters the rhetorical narrative favored by the Chan tradition. For instance, the translation shows how Zhipan adopts the doctrinal position of five turnings of the wheel of the Dharma: (1) the *Huayan-sūtras* (should be *Avatamsaka-sūtra* or *Budhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*), (2) *Śrāvaka-yāna* (vehicle of the disciples, that is, Hīnayāna Buddhism), (3) *Vaipulya-sūtras* (basic or elementary Mahāyāna teachings), (4) *Prajñā-pāramitā-sūtras* (Perfection of Wisdom), and (5) *Lotus sūtra*. This approach to periodizing the Buddha’s teachings privileges the *Lotus sūtra* as the Buddha’s final teaching, a position championed by Tiantai Zhiyi and his school, while also recognizing its shared position with the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* as the “perfect [or fully complete] teaching” (*yuanjiao* 圓教) of the Buddha (26–28).

The translation of the second roll (46–119) covers the history of religion in the Western Han (ca. 202 BCE–9 CE) and Eastern Han (ca. 25–220 CE) periods. It provides clear evidence of Zhipan’s subsuming all of Chinese thought and religion into one great story. This roll includes an account of the life of Laozi, the founder of Daoism (72–74), whose birth he places in the third year of Zhou king Ding (r. 606–586 BCE), hence, ca. 604 BCE. He also treats the lives of Confucius (76–85), Mozi (85–86), Mencius (87–88), and Xunzi (89–90). This chapter also includes a narrative on the rise of religious Daoism with the rise of the Celestial Master Zhang Daoling and his successor Zhang Jue (111–16). Furthermore, the translation shows that the narrative on Laozi’s reportedly traveling west and converting the barbarians (*huahu* 化胡), which Jülch refers to simply as “Huahu text” (56) in its first appearance, and then renders better as “teaching the barbarians” (79, 265), still had relevance even in Zhipan’s day, even if only to ridicule it as a false and pernicious teaching. The narrative on Laozi “converting the barbarians,” which was advanced by Daoists to poke fun at the presumed similarities between the two religions and the superiority of the Daoist religion, is conventionally believed to have lost its relevance during the Tang period. Nevertheless, it was never forgotten because by the time Zhipan was writing it was already the thirteenth century.

The third roll (120–201) covers Buddhist developments during the span of the Jin (265–420), Liu-Song (420–79), Southern Qi (479–502) dynasties. Although numerous anecdotes and interesting events are chronicled, this reviewer would draw the reader’s attention to Zhipan’s emphasis on the transmission and translation of texts and the veneration of deities held to be important in the Tiantai tradition. Although numerous Buddhist scriptures were translated during this time period, Zhipan seems to emphasize the two primary translations of the *Lotus sūtra*: the Indo-Scythian monk Zhu Fahu’s translation completed in the seventh year of the Taikang era (286 CE), which he completed along with the *Nirvāṇa-sūtra*

and the *Baozang jing* (123), and Kumārajīva's (343–413) translation completed in the fifth year of the Longan era (401 CE) (148). In addition, he notes the exact date of the Kashmiri śramaṇa Dharmamitra's translation of the *Guan Puxian xingfa jing* (Sutra of Contemplating on Samantabhadra), in the first year of the Yuanjia era (424 CE) (168), and the Middle-Indian monk Dharamayaśas's translation of the *Wuliangyi jing* (Sutra of Immeasurable Meanings), the third year of the Jianyuan era (481 CE) (190)—both of which are apocryphal sutras that serve as prologues to the *Lotus sūtra*. Zhipan also recognizes Buddhahadra's being asked to translate the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* (*Huayan jing*) in sixty rolls in 418 (165), and he mentions its completion in passing without assigning a date in an interlinear note (171n286). Although Zhipan reports that Liu Qiu based his system of doctrinal classification on the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* (*Huayan jing*) (198), Jülch correctly reports in a note that Zhipan is wrong (198–199n439), since Liu Qiu really based his classification scheme on the apocryphal scripture *Tiwei poli jing* (Book of Trapuṣa and Bhallika). Does this show that Zhipan wants to downplay the rival Huayan tradition? In addition, whenever possible he emphasizes monks and nuns preaching, reciting, lecturing on, and upholding the *Lotus sūtra* (e.g., 139, 163, 164, 178, 181, 183, 188, 206, 208, 213, 225, 240, 248). It is also worthy of note that Dao'an's (312–85) veneration of Maitreya is not mentioned in the passages discussing this eminent monk (144–145). In addition, despite its importance in the mature Tiantai tradition, although neither the names Amitāyus nor Amitābha are found in the “Index of Personal Names” (308–12), the emergence of Pure Land Buddhism and the worship of Amitābha is chronicled somewhat in the text with the commissioning of images of Amitāyus (147), treatment of Lushan Huiyuan's (334–417) White Lotus Society (156, 159–62), the practice of *buddhānumṛti* (162), and Kālayaśas's translation of the *Guan Wuliangshou jing* (Sūtra of Contemplation on the Buddha of Immeasurable Life) (168).

The fourth roll (206–49) deals generally with the Liang (502–56) and Chen (557–89) dynasties. It treats the importance of Mt. Tiantai in both its Daoist and Buddhist senses. This chapter also traces the development of the mature Tiantai tradition's lineage as tracing from Huiwen (d.u., active sixth century), the traditional founder of the Tiantai tradition (230, 235), who was active in Northern Qi territory, through Huisi (515–77) (230, 235, 240, 244, 246), and also places emphasis on the growing fame of Zhiyi (Zhizhe, 220–21, 245, 247–48).

Zhipan also emphasizes the veneration of Guanyin and the appearance of the *Gaowang Guanshiyin jing* (36, 122, 149, 171, 180, 190, 195, 208, 279). Zhipan also refers to a twelve-faced Guanyin twice in the text (190, 208). Although attested in other literary materials, twelve-faced Guanyin is not a common form of this bodhisattva.

The fifth roll (250–90) chronicles Buddhist developments in the Northern Dynasties of the Northern Wei (386–534), Western Wei (535–57), Eastern Wei (534–50), Northern Qi (550–77), and Northern Zhou (557–81) periods. It covers the monk Faguo's (fl. 396–415) installation as Shamentong (monastic overseer/superintendent) in the second year of the Huangshi era (397) (250–51). It presents a sustained treatment of the activities of the Daoist master Kou Qianzhi

(365–448), who famously cooperated with the Confucian minister Cui Hao (d. 450) in persecuting the Buddhist church in the Northern Wei under Emperor Taiwu (r. 424–52) (251–57), as well as an account of the attempt by Emperor Wu of the Northern Zhou (r. 561–78) to abolish the Buddhist church (574) (286–88).

Although the book is certainly an impressive accomplishment, the translator has adopted conventions in his translation that make parts of the book difficult for people who are not specialists in Buddhism and Chinese history to understand. For example, many—if not most—of the names of deities and emperors are merely transliterated following Chinese convention, for example, Xiwangmu 西王母 (3), Qin Shihuang 秦始皇, Beiwei Taiwudi 北魏太武帝, and Zhou Wudi 周武帝 (11). In addition, Jülch does not provide either reign dates for rulers or birth and death dates for historical personages if they are known. A nonspecialist would appreciate these names rendered as the Queen Mother of the West, First Emperor of the Qin dynasty (r. 221–210 BCE), Emperor Taiwu of the Northern Wei (r. 423–52), and Emperor Wu of the Northern Zhou (r. 561–78), respectively. Strangely enough, the only person Jülch supplies dates for in the body of the text is Liu Xie 劉勰 (465–520), the author of the *Wenxin diaolong* 文心雕龍 (The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons) (229). Fortunately, for a text of this complexity, there are relatively few spelling errors or mistranslations of names and titles, such as the case of Cao Zhi 曹植, the King of Chensi 陳思王 (65, 68), which should be Cao Zhi, King Si of Chen (192–232). The “snow mountains” (雪山, 37) should be Himalayas. Sanguo (68) should be translated as Three Kingdoms. Western state of Na (西那國, 101) should be the state of Western Na. The polysemous Buddhist term *bodhimāṇḍa* (*daochang* 道場, “an enlightenment site,” “an area or seat of enlightenment,” or “ritual space,” is mistranslated as bodhi maṇḍala (18, 26) and maṇḍala (253). Indo-skythians (64) and Indoskythian (123) should be Indo-Scythian(s); and sandal wood (206) should be sandalwood, elsewhere written as Sandalwood (210). Many proper nouns and titles are not capitalized, for example, ayu wang (5), shemoteng (5), baima si (5), world honored one (35), jianhe era (112), yongshou era (112); trāyas-triṃśa heaven (125) should be Trāyastriṃśa heaven; avīci (213) should be Avīci; māra (231) should be Māra. In addition, the translator is also unaware that the early kingdoms of Korea (Koguryō, Paekche, and Silla) were referred to in Chinese materials collectively as Haidong 海東 (K. Haedong), literally “East of the Sea” (244).

Considering the importance of the purveyors and translators of Buddhist sūtras and other commentarial material in the narrative, the translator’s not being familiar with the basic language of catalogs of Buddhist scriptures is extremely unfortunate. Many Buddhist texts and translations are mentioned in the original text. In this context, the translator always renders the word *bu* 部 as “section” (56, 60, 123, 129, 146, 150, 157, 170, 219, 231, 236) and does not seem to know that in Buddhist catalogs, *bu* is the term used for “titles” of books. For instance, using this wrong translation, he mistakenly refers to Faxian having “translated the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* 大般泥洹經 in five parts” (157) (譯大般泥洹經五部 [Fozu tongji 36, T 2035, 49.342c11]). To be fair, this case is also probably a textual corruption—the sinograph *deng* 等 is missing in the received text after the title

of the sutra. Thus, the passage probably refers to Faxian's having translated five works, including most prominently the *Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra* (譯大般尼洹經(等)五部). This mirrors another problematic rendering in which the śramaṇa Zhiyan is said to have “translated the *Yingluo benye jing* in fourteen parts” (譯瓔珞本業經等十四部 [Fozu tongji 36, T 2035, 49.344b10–11]) (170). This should be translated as follows: “he translated fourteen titles, including the [Pusa] *Yingluo benye jing* (Sūtra on the Original Acts [That Serve as a Bodhisattva's] Ornaments).” Less likely, the above passage could refer to the five different translations of the *Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra* (attested in *Yiqie jing yinyi* 一切經音義 24, T 2128, 54.457b18–19), because a *Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra* “in five parts” is attested nowhere else in the Buddhist canon, just as there is no “fourteen-part” *Yingluo benye jing*. The translator also commonly employs the term “dharma canon” (39, 40, 59, 61) for *fazang* 法藏. Although the reader can understand from the context that he means “the scriptures of the Buddhist canon,” this term is usually translated as “dharma-store” or “dharma-treasure.” Another unfortunate choice is the author's translating the name of the Chinese goddess Magu 麻姑 as “Maid Ma” (110), because multiple meanings can be derived from the sinographs depending on the context. For this reason, most scholars of Chinese religion simply leave the name as Magu.

Hanshu Yiwen zhi (86) is not the name of an individual text, but refers to the “Monograph on Literature” or “Treatise on Literature” in the *Hanshu* 漢書 (History of the [Western] Han) by Ban Gu 班固 (32–92 CE). *Saddharma puṇḍarika sūtra* (*Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經), that is, the Sanskrit title of the *Lotus sūtra*, is misspelled twice as *Saddharma puṇḍarika sūtra* (10) in the introduction, although the text is usually referred to as *Lotus sūtra* (not italicized) in the translation of *juan* 3. The same sutra is referred to three different ways in the translation of *juan* 4: *Fahua jing* (206, 208), *Lotus sūtra* (213, 225, 240), and *Saddharmapuṇḍarika-sūtra* (239). *Śūraṅgama samādhi sūtra* (133) should be *Śūraṅgama samādhi sūtra* or *Śūraṅgama samādhi sūtra*. In addition, the titles of several treatises or exegeses (*lun* 論) are mistranslated as “scriptures” (153). The title of the *Dharmakupitaka-vinaya* (*Sifen lü* 四分律) is translated differently twice within just a few pages: *Four-Partite Vinaya* 四分律 (155) and *Four Part Vinaya* (not italicized, 158). “Daśabhūmi Chapter” (172) would probably have been rendered better simply as “Ten Stages” chapter, although it certainly a version of the *Daśabhūmikā*.

The translator's understanding of the Buddhist administrative organs and titles is also suspect. Shamentong 沙門統 and Shamendutong 沙門都統 (259), which are both left untranslated, should be “Monastic Overseer/Superintendent” and “Chief Monastic Overseer/Superintendent,” respectively—but, fortunately, they are rendered as “superintendent” later (262–63). More important, Zhaoxuansi 昭玄寺 is not the name of a monastery (259), it is a government agency: “Office for the Clarification of Buddhist Profundities” (see Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985], s.v. *chao-hsüan-ssu*). In a note, the translator refers to a paper by Galen E. Sargent, “Tan-yao and His Times” (259n41). The proper reference to this paper is Tsukamoto Zenryū, “The Śramaṇa Superintendent T'an-yao and His Time,” trans. Galen E. Sargent, *Monumenta Serica* 16 (1957): 363–96. This English paper is really an

edited translation of a chapter of Tsukamoto's masterpiece *Shina Bukkyōshi kenkyū: Hokugi-hen* 支那佛教史研究:北魏篇 (Studies in Chinese Buddhist History: Northern Wei) (Tokyo: Kōbundō, 1942), 133–64. Some of these issues, including the structure of the Buddhist administration of the Northern Wei, are discussed in this paper.

Despite its many problems, some of which could have been avoided with more careful editorial vetting of the text, Jülch is to be commended for his labor. Translating and annotating a large portion of text is a Herculean effort. This reviewer hopes that before future volumes of this planned series are published, the translator will consider adding Western dates to the translation in brackets for at least the years presented in the body of the text. Otherwise, the usefulness of this text is severely limited because it forces individuals who would read and use the text as a historical document to consult other books or online sources to know when the events chronicled in the text are said to have happened. In addition, the translator should also consider attempting to standardize his conventions regarding romanizing and/or translating titles of Buddhist sūtras and other texts. Furthermore, the translator might consider who his readers are and how he expects his readers to use the translation of these chapters of the *Fozu tongji*. If it is intended as a historical document, the indexes (308–16) need to be more robust, covering many more personal names, places, titles of literary works, and terms.

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