

The Huguo Tibetan monastery. Drawing by Wang Nan, School of Architecture of Tsinghua University.

## EPIGRAPHY AND ORAL SOURCES A SOCIAL HISTORY OF AN IMPERIAL CAPITAL

Épigraphie et mémoire orale des  
temples de Pékin  
Histoire sociale d'une capitale  
d'empire  
北京寺庙碑刻与社会史

### *A brief description of the program*

The program is carried out by the Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, with the support of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes and Peking Normal University, in close collaboration with several other Chinese and French research institutions and universities. The research team is composed of a dozen of Chinese and French professors and researchers and many students both Chinese and French. Since its beginnings in 2003, the program has trained several doctoral and post-doctoral students in the study of epigraphy, religious history and fieldwork. The various phases of the work include the following:

**Maps:** We started with the famous map of the Qianlong era, “The complete map of the capital,” drawn between 1745 and 1750 on a scale of 1/650. The map shows every building and street, including temples with their names. We decided to limit ourselves to the “Tartar” perimeter, *i.e.* the Inner City, where we have located 829 temples whose names are written down and the buildings clearly drawn on the map. We added 700 more sites found through literati descriptions of the city, epigraphy, archives and fieldwork. The total of religious institutions studied in the program amounts to some 1,500, which were all built between the thirteenth and the twentieth century.



The temples of section 9 of the line 4 of the Qianlong map.



Checking the copy of the inscription *in situ*; Guanghua temple, 2013

**Steles:** We have compiled a list of some 600 inscriptions related to temples of the Inner City. Originally written on stone tablets standing in the courtyards of the temples, they are now preserved on rubbings made during the first half of the twentieth century. The largest collection of rubbings is held in the National Library of China in Peking and has been reproduced in a one-hundred-volume series. We copied the inscriptions from their reproductions in this collection or directly from the rubbings. We now have digital versions of all the inscriptions and scans of all the rubbings published.

**Archives:** Due to the limited number of members on our research team, we have been able to use only a small part of the Qing dynasty archives produced by the Imperial Household Department. We estimate to 6,000 the number of documents pertaining to this archival fund relating to the history of the Chinese capital's temples. They refer mostly to the support given by the court to more than one hundred temples. These documents tell us about the huge investment of the court for maintaining the buildings of dozens of temples and supporting their religious activities.

We have used systematically the archives of the successive temple registration campaigns which took place between 1929 and 1947 and are held by the Beijing Municipal Archives. One thousand files, made up of lists of temple residents, inventories of statues and other ritual objects (in some cases steles or inscribed incense burners), tax certificates, property deeds as well as guarantor endorsements, provide invaluable information on 450 temples located in the Inner City. These materials shed light on such issues as temple property, the management of religious institutions and the degree of activity of a temple during the period concerned.

**Literature:** Starting from the Ming dynasty, an abundant amount of literati writings was devoted to descriptions of the capital's famous historical sites, among which temples are well represented. However, the most detailed accounts of religious institutions only concern Peking's most important ones, including sometimes transcriptions of the steles erected on the site.

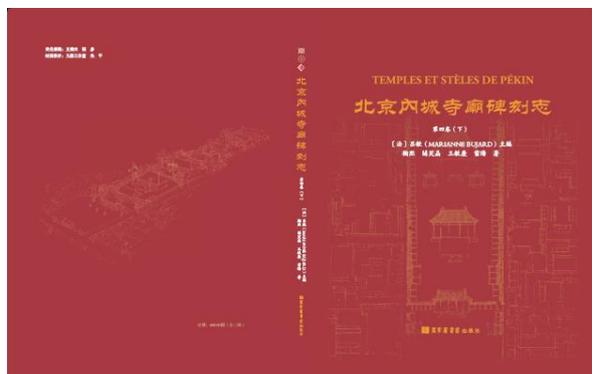
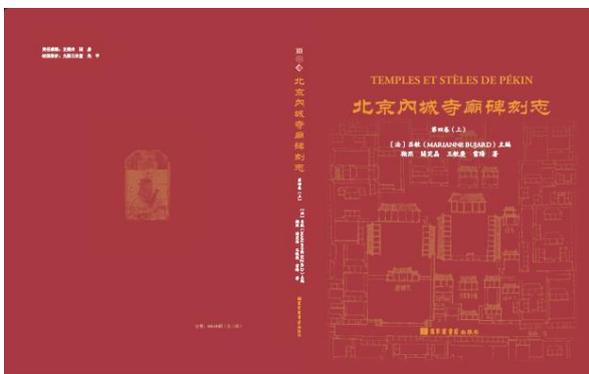
**Fieldwork:** In order to highlight the present conditions of Peking’s temples, those represented on the map of the Qianlong era as well as those discovered through our exploration of written sources, we have organized systematic *in situ* surveys to search for the locations of every one of them. We have thus been able to ascertain that physical traces of only two hundred remain today out of the 1,500 temples present in our sources. Such “traces” differ widely from one location to another: in some cases, complete compounds are still extant, whereas in other cases, we could only trace back the original temple’s existence to one of its single halls, generally converted to some other use than religious activity. Most of the time, the Chinese capital’s numerous religious institutions only survive in the memory of the older generations of residents.



Fortune God temple near the Drum Tower, 2012

**Website:** All the data collected in our sources and the copies of stone inscriptions have been stored in a database. More work will be necessary before this large amount of historical information can be offered to the public on an open website.

**Publication:** We present part of this research program’s results in a series of eleven volumes (four have been printed to this day), published by the National Library of China Publishing House. Each volume includes the documentation gathered for one horizontal section – or line – of the Inner city section of the Qianlong-era Peking map (*i.e.*, from the north Second Ring Road to the South of Tiananmen square). For each temple, the readers are provided with a brief historical account composed on the basis of the documentation previously described. Following this description, all the stone inscriptions relating to this same temple that we have been able to locate and copy are presented, under three different formats: reproduction of the rubbing, transcription of the inscription in its original presentation and punctuated version.



Marianne Bujard (吕敏), éd., Ju Xi, Guan Xiaojing 關笑晶, Wang Mingqing 王敏慶, Lei Yang 雷陽, *Beijing neicheng simiao beike zhi* 北京内城寺廟碑刻志 (Temples et stèles de Pékin), vol. 4, 2 t., 916 p., Péking, Guojia tushuguan 國家圖書館出版社 (National Library), 2017.

## 北京寺庙碑刻与社会史

“北京寺庙碑刻与社会史”项目启动于2003年，项目主持单位为法国远东学院、法国高等实践学院与北京师范大学，先后有二十余位中法学者和学生参与研究，其目的是要理解寺庙在城市中的作用及其与市民的关系。研究过程包括如下几部分：

首先是利用地图查找寺庙。我们主要依据清乾隆十五年（1750）绘制的《京城全图》，辅以若干种近、现代地图，清点并记录地图上已有标注的庙宇。《京城全图》于乾隆十年（1745）开始绘制，乾隆十五年五月十六日（1750）进呈御览。我们在这份地图的内城部分中一共找到了829座寺庙，它们大多绘制详细、位置精确且标有名称，其他任何版本的北京地图都无法与之相比。但我们也使用了现代地图，包括从民国到1949年间出版的四至五种地图，以便确定胡同变迁后某些古老寺庙的位置，寻找乾隆十五年之后新建的寺庙，并追溯北京胡同格局变化的历史。

第二是补遗，即利用碑刻、地方志、政府档案等文献，补充《京城全图》上没有记录的庙宇，按地理位置将其整理成册。项目组成员以《北京图书馆藏北京石刻拓片目录》和其他一些碑刻目录为依据，找到以往刻立于寺庙中的碑刻近600通。我们将其全文照录，并整理了原碑格式与横排标点两种版本，使之对嗣后进行的寺庙研究有所助益。我们也查阅了收藏在中国第一历史档案馆和中国社科院中的明清档案，尤其是清内务府档案中与北京寺庙有关的部分以及僧录司的两种手抄本清册。从1928年到1947年，当时的行政当局对北京所有寺庙进行了几次普查，北京市档案馆中保存了这些调查问卷。最后，明清以来北京的地方文献中记述了大量与寺庙有关的信息，这也成为我们重要的资料来源。从这些资料中，我们补充了乾隆《京城全图》中没有标绘的约700座庙宇，如此说来，1750年到1949年之间，在北京内城不足60平方公里的土地上，曾经存在过至少1500座寺庙。

第三是踏勘，我们拿着地图走进胡同，登记寺庙现存或久废、完好或破损、翻修或倾圮的情况，并尽量搜集胡同居民对寺庙保留的记忆。调查工作在2004-2008年进行，进一步的核实工作至今尚未结束。我们发现，这1500座寺庙中，保存完好，至今仍在作为寺庙使用的只有6座。建筑现存或部分尚存的有200余座，但这一数字还在不断减少中。

最后，我们将各种资料汇集于具体的寺庙中，并为每座寺庙撰写一份简要的历史——寺庙志，总汇为《北京内城寺庙碑刻志》丛书，计划共撰写11卷，目前已在国家图书馆出版社出版四卷。由于研究尚在进行之中，此丛书呈献给读者的仅是部分资料，是千里之行的第一步，希望为研究者带来一些方便，也希望使用者不断添入新的资料。