

I first came to know Jinhua through his extraordinary scholarly publications. In those works, he combines an intimidating mastery of a huge number of primary sources with keen analytical acumen and a powerful historical imagination. This enables him to rediscover and vividly represent figures, chapters, and developments whose traces otherwise lie, for more mortal minds like my own, scattered in faint traces through multiple documents. Without his magic touch, they would languish there, barely visible. Through Jinhua's writings, I feel that I have been able to see, as vividly as in any studies and more so than in most, facets of what medieval Chinese Buddhism must really have been like. His work on topics like the career of *Dharmakṣema 曇無讖, Buddhahadra's 佛馱跋陀羅 contribution to early meditation traditions, the life and activities of Sengchou 僧稠 (almost as side-bars to his equally remarkable works on Daoxuan 道宣 and Tanqian 曇遷), or the Buddhist institutions in Liang Wudi's 梁武帝 palace complex—all have become fixed features in my mental landscape, which is much the richer for it.

My personal encounters with Jinhua, I felt, went some way to explaining how this prodigious scholarly output could be possible (one of the less scholarly questions provoked in my mind by his publications was this: How does he do it all?). The first time we met, it was a beautiful, hot day in Taipei, and I was immediately struck by his immense, bright energy. His spirit was as open as his sandals, and his huge laugh was infectious. All my encounters since have borne the same impression that he is a force of nature—one is drawn into a storm of creative scholarly power that stirs up all around it, and sweeps you in its wake. Most emblematic of this "Jinhua effect", I guess, was a moment when I found myself hurtling down a motorway somewhere in the PRC in a rather plush Mercedes. Jinhua had jacked up a ride for me to one of the many conferences he organises. I found myself meditating on the swaying, laden tails of the supersize car transporter trucks around me, rocketing along at the same hair-raising speed as our Merc, their cargo of brand-new SUVs whipping to and fro with gay abandon. Somehow, in the "Jinhua-o-sphere", this experience struck me as par for the course. The galaxy of Buddhology is richer for having this supernova in it.

And so, Jinhua, my heartfelt congratulations to you on your election to the Royal Society of Canada. You amply deserve this honour. I look forward to a beer with you sometime to celebrate!

Michael Radich