

The printing of a fairly large-sized work was impossible during the war. I joined the National Academy of Peiping²⁴ as a research fellow in its library. With the financial aid of the Ministry of Education and the China Foundation for the Promotion of Science, the present monograph was made possible. Thus, the present volume represents the fruit of my work and on, some fourteen years in preparation.

This monograph, aside from the plates, is divided into four parts. The first part is composed of five chapters. It treats of the hydrographical changes and culture of Lou-Lan,²⁶ the early routes of communication, the spread of Buddhism during the Han dynasty,²⁷ the spread of Chinese culture to the Hsi-yü, and the diffusion of Buddhism from both the east and the west.

In Chapter I, Part I, basing on my first observations during my archaeological evidences around Lob Nor and records of Chinese annals and by scientists of both hemispheres, I draw my conclusion on the cause of the Lob Nor and its tributary, the Tarim.²⁸ As it has been a problem for the last two thousand years, such changes can be traced from the topographic evidences.

Chapter II treats of the history of the Kingdom of Lou-lan. The Han Dynasty had a special chapter on Shan-shan³⁰ in the section on the Hsi-yü, the annals of subsequent dynasties all dwelt upon this subject. It is sketchy, because there had been no comprehensive understanding of the region. From my archaeological finds, however, I can trace a continuous connection between Hsi-yü and China from the Han dynasty to the present, at least as systematic as hitherto.

Lou-Lan has long been known to hold the key of communication to the west. In Chapter III, Part I, it is pointed out that the Han-shu after Hsuan-yuan³² (49-33 B.C.) namely the "north" and the "south" routes, Chieh-shih³³ respectively. But the earliest contact and the first trail have not been touched upon, because of a lack of records and archaeological evidences to solve these problems. It is from my discovery of the writing of an ancient watch-tower at a place which since has been commonly known as the dating and tracing of the routes can be done with some assurance as the *Lung* of Hsuanti of the former Han Dynasty, i.e; 49 B.C.³⁵

Chapter IV, Part I, recounts the administration and establishment of the various routes and the diffusion of Chinese culture to Hsi-yü, and the diffusion of Buddhism and its accompanying civilization. As the link between the east and the west, it was unavoidable that the Lob Nor region was the Chinese, as well the western culture when the wave from the east came there. But recent researchers into Sinkiang were unanimous in stating that the yu had originally reached a very high plane and could not have reached from the east. Chinese scholars who have not carried any field investigation

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31. 漢書 32. 宣(帝) (Hsuan-ti, 73—49 B.C.) 元(帝) (Yuan-ti, 48—33 B.C.)
35. 前漢宣帝黃龍元年, 49 B.C.