CHINESE BUDDHIST CANONS IN THE AGE OF PRINTING

Edited by
Darui Long and Jinhua Chen

ROUTLEDGE

Chinese Buddhist Canons in the Age of Printing

The study of the Chinese Buddhist Canon—the basic literature of Buddhism—does not have an eminent place in study either in China or in the Western World. For the contributors to this volume, their chapters are the result of decades of dedication to academic research, and they reveal many facets of the Buddhist Canon that were previously unstudied. This book originated in the first and second International Conferences on Chinese Buddhist Canon, and focuses on the communication of the Chinese Buddhist Canon through the medium of print. It enhances our knowledge of how the canon was collated, proofread and printed.

This book was originally published as a special issue of *Studies in Chinese Religions*.

Darui Long is Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of the West, Los Angeles, USA.

Jinhua Chen is Professor in the Department of Asian Studies at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

Chinese Buddhist Canons in the Age of Printing

Edited by
Darui Long and Jinhua Chen

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2020
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN13: 978-1-138-61194-8

Typeset in Minion Pro
by codeMantra

Publisher's Note
The publisher accepts responsibility for any inconsistencies that may have arisen during the conversion of this book from journal articles to book chapters, namely the inclusion of journal terminology.

Disclaimer
Every effort has been made to contact copyright holders for their permission to reprint material in this book. The publishers would be grateful to hear from any copyright holder who is not here acknowledged and will undertake to rectify any errors or omissions in future editions of this book.

Contents

Citation Information

The following chapters were originally published in *Studies in Chinese Religions*, volume 2, issue 2 (June 2016). When citing this material, please use the original page numbering for each article, as follows:

Chapter 1
Chinese Buddhist canon: approaches to its compilation
Guangchang Fang
Studies in Chinese Religions, volume 2, issue 2 (June 2016) pp. 89–106

Chapter 2
An analysis of the content and characteristics of the Chinese Buddhist canon
Fuhua Li
Studies in Chinese Religions, volume 2, issue 2 (June 2016) pp. 107–128

Chapter 3
The master–disciple relationship between Huisi and Jingwan
Aiming Zhang
Studies in Chinese Religions, volume 2, issue 2 (June 2016) pp. 129–136

Chapter 4
Manuscripts, printed canons, and extra-canonical sources: a case study based on a biography from the Xu Gaoseng Zhuan *(Further Biographies of Eminent Monks) by Daoxuan* 道宣 *(596–667)*
Jinhua Chen
Studies in Chinese Religions, volume 2, issue 2 (June 2016) pp. 137–156

Chapter 5
The secret scriptures in both the Qisha Canon *and* Puning Canon
Jining Li
Studies in Chinese Religions, volume 2, issue 2 (June 2016) pp. 157–172

Chapter 6
The Yongle Northern Canon *and its donors*
Darui Long
Studies in Chinese Religions, volume 2, issue 2 (June 2016) pp. 173–185

Chapter 7

Features and significance of compiling the Newly Collated and Annotated Catalog of the Buddhist Canon
Mei He
Studies in Chinese Religions, volume 2, issue 2 (June 2016) pp. 186–201

Chapter 8

The Foguang Buddhist Canon*: the unique and creative classification of Buddhist works*
Yikung
Studies in Chinese Religions, volume 2, issue 2 (June 2016) pp. 202–219

For any permission-related enquiries please visit:
http://www.tandfonline.com/page/help/permissions

Contributors

Jinhua Chen is Professor in the Department of Asian Studies at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

Guangchang Fang has been affiliated with the Department of Philosophy at Shanghai Normal University, Shanghai, China.

Mei He has been affiliated with the Institute of the Study of World Religions at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, China.

Fuhua Li has been affiliated with the Institute of World Religions at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, China.

Jining Li has been affiliated with the National Library of China, Beijing, China.

Darui Long is Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of the West, Los Angeles, USA.

Yikung has been affiliated with the Foguang Shan Monastery, Gaoxiong City, Taiwan.

Aiming Zhang has been affiliated with the Yunju Monastery, Beijing, China.

Acknowledgments

As editor of this volume, I would like to thank all participants who submitted their papers to both the First International Conference held at the University of Arizona, Tucson, USA, March 26–27, 2011, and the Second International Conference on the Chinese Buddhist Canon held at the University of the West, Los Angeles, March 18–20, 2013. Both conferences received funds from American Council of Learned Societies and Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange.

Eight papers were selected and published in Volume 2, Issue 2, *Studies in Chinese Religions*, June 2016. Again, thanks to Mr. Nicolas Barkley, editor of the Routledge, these eight papers are now republished in book form.

Dr. Jiang Wu, Professor of East Asian Studies and now Director of the Center for Buddhist Studies at the University of Arizona, initiated the conference as early as 2009. The theme of this conference was "Spreading Buddha's Word in East Asia: the Formation and Transformation of the Chinese Buddhist Canon." He did all the works, including looking for fund, inviting scholars, preparing the translations of papers submitted by Chinese scholars who are unable to write academic papers in the English language, arranging all the details of the conference and publication of papers. A magnificent book of 405 pages edited by Jiang Wu and Lucille Chia was published by Columbia University Press in 2016. Nine articles plus two appendixes were published. This is the first book on the development of the Chinese Buddhist canon in the English language. Certainly, it is the result of hard work of participants who have committed themselves to the topic for decades. Two editors, Professor Jiang Wu and Professor Lucille Chia, should be credited for their hard work after the first conference. We are grateful to their pioneering work.

The Second International Conference on the Chinese Buddhist Canon was co-sponsored and co-organized by both Professor Jiang Wu, University of Arizona, and Dr. and Venerable Jueji, Director of Institute of Chinese Buddhist Studies, University of the West, Los Angeles. As Professor Wu already set up a paradigm, it was comparatively easier for Dr. Jueji to host the second conference. The theme of this conference was "The Chinese Buddhist Canon in the Age of Printing: An East Asian Perspective."

Due to a long process of peer-review, we have to publish papers in a consecutive way. A number of papers which were presented at the first and the second conferences but were not included in the previous publication are now collected and published in this volume. Dr. Darui Long, University of West, USA, and Dr. Jinhua Chen, University of British Columbia, Canada, undertook the responsibility of this editing job. They proofread all the papers again in June and July 2016.

It is never an easy task to publish a good journal or a book. After the publication of this issue of June 2016, we realized that we should provide more information to our English

readers. The study of the Chinese Buddhist canon is not a prominent field either in China or in the West. The Buddhist canon is the basic literature of Buddhism. Unfortunately, not many people have come to see its importance. Even people in academia simply take things for granted. For authors, the papers are the results of their decades of dedication to academic research. They reveal to us many things we are unaware of. When we read their work, we enhance our knowledge of the topic.

Here I feel the need to highlight the hard work of some graduate students of the University of Arizona who took pains in translating the papers of Professor Fang Guangchang, Li Fuhua and He Mei into English so that their decades' study on the Chinese Buddhist canon could be shared by readers of the English world. I translated three papers into English for the second conference.

Fang Guangchang, "Chinese Buddhist canon: approaches to its compilation," translated by Xin Zi, proofread by Jiang Wu.

Li Fuhua, "An Analysis of the Content and Characteristics of the Chinese Buddhist Canon," translated by Linjiao Zeng, Proofread by Professor Jiang Wu.

Zhang Aimin, "The Master-Disciple Relationship between Huisi and Jingwan," translated by Darui Long.

Li Jining, "The Secret Scripture in Both the *Qisha Canon* and *Puning Canon*," translated by Darui Long.

He Mei, "Features and Significance of Compiling the Newly Collated and Annotated Catalog of the Buddhist Canon," translated by Shyling Glaze and proofread by Jiang Wu.

Yikung, "The Foguang Buddhist Canon: The Unique and Creative Classification of Buddhist Works," translated by Darui Long.

Xin Zi, Linjiao Zeng and Shyling Glaze were graduate students in the Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Arizona.

For these graduate students from the University of Arizona, we are thankful for their painstaking efforts to translate these extremely difficult academic works into English so that readers of the English world may share the knowledge of the Chinese Buddhist canon. We are also grateful to these Chinese scholars who, having spent their whole life in the study of the Buddhist canon, have contributed their best academic research work to the two conferences on the Chinese Buddhist canon. Without either of their work, we would not have shared the knowledge of the Chinese Buddhist canon with our readers.

Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Jinhua Chen, Professor of University of British Columbia, and Dr. Jianxin Li, editor of *Journal of World Religions*, Institute of World Religions, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, for their hard work. Dr. Jueji spent more than half a year preparing the conference from 2012 to 2013. Let me express my sincere thanks to them all.

Darui Long

Introduction

Darui Long

When scholars check the history of how Buddhism spread in China, they immediately find out that the dissemination of Buddhist teachings has been closely tied to the scriptures and the translations of the many texts which contribute to it. As the centuries passed for the Chinese Buddhists, hundreds of texts were translated from Sanskrit into Chinese, and in addition, a sizable corpus of literature composed of the writings of learned and inspired monks and nuns within China was developed.[1] It was at this point that the collected translations came to be considered as an entity and were called "yiqie jing" (一切經 all scriptures), also called "Dazang jing" (大藏經 Buddhist canon). The development of Chinese Buddhist canon can be divided into four periods: hand-writing, woodblock printing, modern printing and digital. The hand-writing period, also called the copying period, spans from the early introduction of Buddhism to the block-printing period after the tenth century. This period witnessed the preparatory stage of the introduction to Buddhism of Venerable Dao'an (312–385 CE) in the Eastern Jin dynasty (317–420 CE). "In this period the canon was not yet full-fledged, but Buddhist monks had already begun to gather scriptures and classify them accordingly. The second period, from the later years of the Eastern Jin dynasty to early years of the Sui (581–618 CE), witnessed the shaping of the Buddhist canon. It was in this period that various forms of the Buddhist canon came into existence."[2] Next was the period of formation of a systematic structure for the Buddhist canon. The milestone event was the creation of a standard catalogue of the canon in 730 by the monk-scholar Zhisheng 智昇 (699–740), often referred to as the *Kaiyuan Catalogue* (*Kaiyuanlu* 開元錄), which served as the blueprint for organizing the content of the canon in all later editions in the premodern era.[3] The following stage, as Fang Guangchang pointed out, in which the Chinese Buddhist canon entered the period of standardization, started from the persecution of Buddhism in 845 to the construction of the *Kaibao Canon* in 971.

The exact year in which woodblock printing was invented is still under debate in academia. The first edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon printed in China was the Song court edition, which is commonly called the *Kaibao Edition* 開寶藏. The last woodblock canon was called *Piling zang* 毗陵藏 which was carved in Tianning Temple 天寧寺 in Changzhou 常州, Jiangsu Province, in the end of Qing dynasty and early Republican period of the twentieth century.[4]

1. The Difficulties in Studying Chinese Buddhist Canon

The topic of the Chinese Buddhist canon may sound scary. First of all, when one goes to a Buddhist library, he or she will easily catch the sight of the huge collection of volumes of Buddhist canon on the bookshelves. If it is the library of a Buddhist temple, where a complete set of Buddhist canon is kept, one will find a whole room filled with fascicles of the Buddhist scriptures in cases heaped in piles on bookshelves. Sixty years ago, Arthur Wright described this gigantic corpus of canon in these words, "in volume the Chinese

canon alone is approximately seventy-four times the length of the Bible, and problems of organization, textual analysis and interpretation are formidable."[5]

It is not strange that the study of Chinese Buddhist canon has long been in Jiang Wu's terms "a neglected tradition in Chinese Buddhism."[6] There are a number of factors for the long existence of this neglected field. The Chinese began to carve the entire canon onto wooden printing blocks in the fourth year of Kaibao 開寶 (971). When the canon was engraved, large numbers of xylograph prints could be produced from the wooden blocks. This first complete Buddhist canon was a royal edition, which is commonly called the Shu-ban 蜀版. The monumental task of carving 130,000 wooden blocks lasted for twelve years and was accomplished in 983. The final version, which was supplemented with the newly translated esoteric texts and sectarian works by Chinese authors, totals 1,565 titles and 6,962 fascicles in 682 cases.[7] This size of the canon itself certainly looks impressive.

Following this *Kaibao Edition*, four other privately sponsored editions of Chinese Buddhist canon were made in both Northern and Southern Song dynasties (960–1279). In the ensuing one thousand years, the Chinese constructed fifteen editions of the Buddhist canon ending in 1913. More than thirteen of them were carved on woodblocks. The last one was modern stereotyped prints.[8] Among these fifteen editions, half of them were sponsored by the imperial courts; half of them were privately constructed by common folks, including monks, nuns, officials and local people who were involved in a series of activities. As the imperial editions were under the patronage of the royal family, the editor did not have to worry about the expenses for the construction of the canon. For the editions constructed by common folks, they had to raise funds, collect and collate the works included, and organize and carry out the actual work of carving the woodblocks and printing the canon. When the carving work was done, the managers of the printing house had to preserve the blocks, keeping them safe from fire, worms and humidity. In addition, the managers had to take care of the circulation of the Buddhist canon and generate cash flow so that they could use money to maintain the woodblocks in good condition. When some woodblocks were damaged, they had to gather funds to re-carve them.

The late nineteenth century to the first half of the twentieth century witnessed the revival of modern Chinese Buddhism. The study of Chinese Buddhist canon also evolved with this trend when Buddhist studies boomed in China. The Jinling Scriptural Carving Institute (*Jinling kejing chu* 金陵刻經處) set up by Mr. Yang Wenhui 楊文會 (1837–1911) played a key role in disseminating Buddhist texts nationwide. Yang was able to obtain many lost Chinese Buddhist scriptures from Japan with the help of Japanese scholar Nanjiō Bun'yū 南條文雄 (1849–1927).[9] In the meantime, as the Westernization movement took place in China, Western and Japanese studies of Buddhism and other interdisciplinary studies were also introduced. Scholars began to reflect on the history of Chinese Buddhism with the sources available. In 1930, General Zhu Qinglan 朱慶瀾 (1874–1941) and others rediscovered the *Qisha Edition of the Chinese Buddhist Canon* 磧砂藏 in the Kaiyuan Monastery 開元寺 and the Wolong Monastery 臥龍寺 in Xi'an. They were excited at the reemergence of ancient Buddhist canon. They quickly organized a team to reprint the canon and disseminated it far and wide. In 1934, Jiang Weixin 蔣唯心 (?–1944) discovered the *Zhaocheng Jin zang* 趙城金藏 (the Jin Canon) and *Hongwu nanzang* 洪武南藏 (Hongwu Southern Canon). The newly discovered ancient Buddhist scriptures and editions of Buddhist canon were great impetus to Buddhist studies. A group of experts, including Ye Gongzhuo 葉公綽 (1881–1968), Ouyang Jingwu 歐陽竟無 (1871–1943), Lü Cheng 呂澂 (1896–1989), Zhou Shujia 周叔迦 (1899–1970), Jiang Weixin 蔣唯心 and others, made great contributions to the studies of the Chinese Buddhist canon.[10]

Entering the 1980s, Professor Ren Jiyu 任繼愈 (1916–2009), Director of the Institute of World Religions, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, initiated a project to compile

Zhonghua dazangjing 中華大藏經. He gathered a group of scholars to investigate the status quo of Buddhist scriptures and Buddhist canon in libraries, museums, archaeological institutes and temples in the country. This was the first step that Chinese scholars took to gather information about what sources they still had after the heavy damage to Buddhist literature in the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976). Researchers who participated in the project were able to visit various places to check the extant Buddhist literature. The publications of their papers and books greatly enhanced our knowledge about the extant Buddhist scriptures and the canon.

At the same time, another project to investigate the extant rare books started in March 1978. Libraries, museums, archaeological institutes and temples were requested to check and record their collections. This included Buddhist scriptures and canons. The results of the survey were published from 1985 to 1996 under the title *Zhongguo guji shanben shumu* 中國古籍善本書目 (Catalogues of Rare Classical Chinese Books) by Shanghai Ancient Books Publisher (guji chubanshe). The reader can find titles of Buddhist scriptures and canons in "zibu 子部." It contains eighteen editions of the Chinese Buddhist canon and 1390 titles of Buddhist scriptures printed in various places.[11] This set of books of catalogues is, however, inconvenient for use as readers have to check the codes of the book and the library.

In 1992, another project, *Zhongguo guji zong mulu* 中國古籍總目錄 (The General Catalogue of Chinese Classical Books), was initiated by the National Library of China and joined by eleven libraries in China, but the actual work started in 2003. This catalogue aims to gather information on all Chinese classic books. It is an ambitious catalogue that contains 200,000 titles.

In 2010, Zhonghua shuju and Shanghai guji chubanshe published *Zhongguo guji zong mulu* 中國古籍總目錄, totaling seven volumes in zibu 子部. It is in volume 6 that one can find the information about all the collections of the Chinese Buddhist canon kept in various libraries in China and the world. For instance, the *Yongle Southern Canon* 永樂南藏, which was engraved probably between the years of 1409–1419, can be found in fourteen libraries and temples in the country.[12] The woodblocks of the *Yongle Northern Canon* 永樂北藏 were carved from the eighteenth year of Yongle 永樂 (1420) to the fifth year of Zhengtong 正統 (1420–1440). Supplementary volumes were added in the years of Emperor Wanli 萬曆 (r.1573–1620). Many libraries and temples, including the University of California at Berkeley, have kept this *Yongle Northern Canon*.[13] As librarians were unable to communicate with their colleagues in the West, certain important information is missing in this entry. For instance, the compilers of the catalogue failed to record the collections of this canon kept in the East Asian Library at Princeton University, the Regenstein Library at the University of Chicago in the United States and Jagiellonian University Library in Poland. What is more important is that the collection at Regenstein Library at the University of Chicago is complete and in good shape. It is true that no matter how hard librarians work to gather information to make their catalogues complete, it is almost unavoidable that information, as such, would be missing.

In 2008, *Di yipi guojia zhengui guji minglu tulu* 第一批國家珍貴古籍名錄圖錄 (The First Album of National Rare Books), totaling eight volumes, were published. More than 2392 Chinese classics were incorporated, and 149 titles of Buddhist scriptures or Buddhist canon were recorded in volume 4 with colored photos. They include *Sixi Canon* 思溪藏, *Zhaocheng Jin Canon* 趙城金藏, *Liao Canon* 遼藏, *Qisha Canon* 磧砂藏, etc. The readers may obtain information necessary for further research, such as the format, the extant volume numbers, dates, the libraries, museums and temples.[14] On May 24, 2016, the Ministry of Culture of China announced the publication of the *Di wupi guojia zhengui guji minglu tulu* 第五批國家珍貴古籍名錄圖錄 (The Fifth Album of National Rare Books),

totaling six volumes. This huge multiple-volume catalogue of rare books, together with the above mentioned *Zhongguo guji zong mulu* 中國古籍總目錄, may further widen our horizon of rare books, particularly the Buddhist scriptures.

From the 1990s, China began to open auction markets, and many private collections appeared. Overseas collections also flowed into China. The emergence of many rare books that had been unknown to the academia greatly enriched the understanding of the Buddhist literature, particularly the Buddhist canon.[15] For the known editions of the Buddhist canon, these new materials are highly regarded as supplements that historical records missed. The discoveries of new Buddhist canon also corrected the errors scholars made in the past due to lack of evidence. These and other things greatly promoted the study of Buddhist canon and related fields. Scholars have found more topics that need to be addressed.[16] Both the size of the Chinese Buddhist canon and scores of editions may look like a huge library itself. One may feel puzzled: what should readers do with such an enormous sized canon and so many kaleidoscopic editions of the canon?

It is natural that the study of the Chinese Buddhist canon has long been a missing link in academia, particularly even in the studies of Chinese Buddhism. Scholars in China are handicapped by many hurdles—it has been extremely difficult for them to get access to the original hard copies of the Buddhist canon, particularly those editions that are classified as national treasures. The librarians are reluctant to show their treasures to ordinary readers because these scriptures, printed more than several hundred years ago, are fragile—when a reader is turning the pages, paper or threads of silk covers may fall off.

One of the main difficulties is that Chinese history is full of repeated scourges of wars and social unrest. Whenever there was a war, the destruction of cultural heritage became almost unavoidable. The woodblocks of the Buddhist canon, the printed copies of the Buddhist scriptures and the temple treasures were the targets of plundering and looting. When one checks records of Chinese history, one can easily discover how the woodblocks were burnt and Buddhist scriptures were destroyed when the temples were set on fire. For instance, the woodblocks of the first Chinese Buddhist canon *Kaibao Edition* were destroyed when the Jurgens attacked Kaifeng 開封, capital of the Northern Song in 1127. Beginning in the tenth century, the Chinese further engraved more than fifteen sets of the Chinese Buddhist canon, but only one set of woodblocks is extant—the *Dragon Canon* which was engraved in the Qing dynasty in 1738. When this new *Dragon Canon* began to print and circulate, a court minister named Haiwang 海望 made a memorial to Emperor Qianlong 乾隆 (r.1736–1795) suggesting that the old woodblocks of the previous Ming dynasty were no longer usable since a new set of woodblocks of Buddhist canon had been carved. He suggested the emperor that the *Yongle Northern Canon* be shipped to Liuli chang 琉璃廠 to be burnt as charcoal for making glaze tiles of the imperial palace. The minister even believed that this was a way to save money for the imperial court.[17] This was done in a time of peace, not war or during a natural disaster. Therefore, one can see that the woodblocks of the Buddhist canon were destroyed not only in war times, but also in peace times. Many books and printed materials were produced in the past thousand years, but perhaps only one percent is estimated to remain extant.

Another difficulty for researchers lies in the regulations to protect rare books (shanben 善本), classified as those printed before 1795. Both libraries and temples alike would treat these extant copies of Buddhist canon as rare books—the national treasures. The librarians and monks in charge of Buddhist canon are reluctant to show them even to academic scholars. One should feel frustrated when he has to go through all the redundant procedures of the library, but librarians have their reasons: each time the old Buddhist scriptures or cases that contain scriptures are taken out, some scraps of paper or silk threads

fall from the fragile scriptures. No matter how the librarians or readers take great care each time, such as taking-out and taking-in would cause damage to the Buddhist canon because they are quite fragile due to age—they were printed at least three to eight hundred years ago. Thus, the libraries and temples have made special regulations guiding the preservation of the ancient Buddhist canon. This explains why readers may find it difficult to examine the original copies of the Buddhist scriptures. If one truly wishes to examine the original copy, he needs connections (*guangxi* 關係) to open the door.

2. Overview of the Papers

In this volume, the first chapter deals with the approaches to the compilation and construction of the Chinese Buddhist canon from ancient times to the present. In ancient times, the purpose of making a Buddhist canon was to collect translated texts and classify them. As Fang Guangchang 方廣錩 points out, the *Kaiyuan shijiaolu* 開元釋教錄 (Catalogue of the Kaiyuan period in 713–741) compiled by Venerable Zhisheng 智昇 was an outstanding catalogue characterized by its creativeness. It remained a paradigm of Buddhist cataloguing through the ages. Zhisheng's achievements in constructing the Chinese canonical system and the Buddhist catalogue highlight Buddhist literature. Many editions of the Chinese Buddhist canon were constructed on the basis of the more religious *Kaiyuan shijiaolu: ru zang lu* 開元釋教錄：入藏錄 (Kaiyuan Catalogues). The compilation of the Japanese *Taishō Edition* marked a shift from being religious to academic. Fang analyzes the principles guiding the compilation of *Zhonghua dazangjing* 中華大藏經 which was edited by scholars of Buddhism under the leadership of Professor Ren Jiyu 任繼愈 (1916–2009). He also offers his own views on the construction of the Buddhist canon in modern times.

For readers who are interested in the content and characteristics of the Chinese Buddhist canon, the second chapter will hold great appeal. Li Fuhua 李富華, who participated in the compilation of *Zhonghua dazangjing* 中華大藏經, illustrates the course of the Chinese Buddhist canon over the past two millennia. As the canon has undergone several changes, from manuscript editions, woodblock print editions and facsimiled editions, to modern electronic editions, the basic characteristics of these editions have evolved in tandem with technological development. The author endeavors to analyze the content, organization and historical development of the Chinese Buddhist canon from the earliest manuscript catalogues such as the *Ru zang jian lu* 入藏見錄 to the most recent project to create an electronic *Zhaocheng Edition* 趙城藏.

The construction of a set of Buddhist canon was a big project, requiring sufficient funds and man power. One may take it for granted that this would not be a problem for the imperial court because the emperors were rich enough to provide sufficient money for making the wooden printing blocks. In fact, the Ming emperors were responsible for the construction of three sets of woodblocks of the Buddhist canon. The first was the *Hongwu Southern Canon* 洪武南藏 which was under the patronage of the first Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (r.1368–1399). The second, the *Yongle Southern Canon* 永樂南藏 was initiated by Emperor Yongle (r.1403–1424). He issued a decree to construct this canon immediately after the destruction of the temple where the woodblocks of the *Hongwu Southern Canon* were kept. He sponsored the *Yongle Northern Canon* 永樂北藏 when he decided to move the capital from Nanjing to Beijing. When Emperor Shenzong 明神宗 (r.1573–1648) ascended the throne, his mother, Empress Dowager Li 李太后 (1546–1614), sponsored the carving of 41 *han* 函 (cases), totaling 410 volumes, as supplements. The imperial family seemed to have monopolized the carving and printing of the Buddhist canon, which was considered

a religious merit-making business. Further studies show that the imperial family also invited some eunuchs, concubines and court maids to donate money to print the Buddhist canon. They were allowed to share this merit-making with the imperial family. Further investigation shows that even common folks raised funds to obtain a set of *Yongle Northern Canon* during the reign of Emperor Shenzong (1598).[18] As further copies of the canon are discovered and carefully studied, scholars have had to modify their previous conclusions accordingly.

For the editions sponsored by common folks, it took them years to raise funds to start the construction, and it took tens of years, or even a century or more, to accomplish the carving work. The *Qisha Canon* 磧砂藏 is one of the longest and most complicated canons. In this volume, Lucille Chia discusses how this edition came into life and afterlife, and Darui Long dwells upon how common folks raised funds for the construction of the *Jiaxing Thread-Bound Canon* 嘉興方冊大藏 in Jiang Wu and Lucille Chia's book *Spreading Buddha's Word in East Asia*.

Since the 1980s, Chinese scholars, after almost three decades of suspension from international exchanges, have begun to travel abroad to investigate the Chinese Buddhist canon and scriptures kept in Japan, Korea, North America and Europe. At the same time, foreign scholars have been able to travel to China to exchange their views on Chinese Buddhist studies, enabling them to conduct in-depth studies on the Buddhist canon. As an example of this interaction, engraving of the *Qisha Canon* 磧砂藏 began in the years 1225–1228 and was mostly completed by 1322. However, forty years later, the son of Guan Zhuba 管主八, Guan Nianzhenchila 管輦真吃剌, who was called Master Yongxing 永興大師, decided to donate a whole set of woodblocks for the esoteric scriptures to Qisha Monastery, and this was the true end of the engraving of the *Qisha Canon*. Li Jining 李際寧 made this conclusion after comparing the colophons found in both the *Qisha Canon* kept at the National Library in China and the *Puning Canon* at Saidai-ji in Nara 奈良西大寺, Japan. Li pointed out that due to the complicated history and features of the *Qisha Canon* and its complicated connections to other editions of the Chinese Buddhist canon, it has left us many unsolved puzzles. Each copy or print has its unique features that need to be studied carefully.

In the past twenty years, Buddhist scholars have further explored various manuscript editions of the canon which were generally created before the printed editions; secular sources not included in various editions of the canon (the so-called extra-canonical sources); and canonical texts with quotes or paraphrases, scriptural or non-scriptural, of earlier ones. Jinhua Chen's chapter opens a new horizon, examining the data he gathered from different sources, including manuscript versions (*xieben* 寫本) preserved at the Kōshō temple 興聖寺, Kyoto, Japan; ten other editions of the Chinese Buddhist canon; and other editions. This collating has been undertaken with the aim of creating a critical edition for each of the two letters he discusses in his chapter. The discrepancies found between these editions call for further examination of both the early texts and later texts. They certainly offer us insight into our knowledge of the historical background and help us to comprehend the text in a more objective way.

Chinese historical records are widely acknowledged to be rich, but sometimes such abundant sources may cause confusion, and some historical records are ambivalent. The chapter written by Zhang Aimin 張愛民, who is a staff member of Yunju Monastery, Fangshan, Beijing 房山雲居寺, examines the legendary story of the master-disciple relationship between Venerable Nanyue Huisi 南岳慧思 (515–577) and Venerable Jingwan 敬琬 (?-639).[19] Jingwan was a key figure in initiating the project to carve Buddhist scriptures on stones in Yunju Monastery during the Sui dynasty. It was in the sixteenth century that Venerable