

# Message from the Editor

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the *Hualin International Journal of Buddhist Studies*! I am pleased to share these important contributions from scholars across Europe and East Asia. This journal is a result of the Glorison Charitable Foundation's generous support through the creation of the Glorison Global Network of Buddhist Studies. This network connects scholars and students at ten universities throughout North America, Europe and East Asia, provides financial support for international exchange, and encourages collaboration between scholars of Buddhist Studies.

A geographic and disciplinary divide often discourages academics of Buddhism from collaborating with overseas colleagues and from exploring topics unrelated to their own research. To help bridge this gap, the Glorison Global Network has sponsored the creation of the *Hualin Journal*: an English and Chinese language peer-reviewed scholarly journal on East Asian Buddhist Studies. This journal will be a platform for showcasing diverse, multidisciplinary and multimedia research produced by scholars across the globe. We believe that this collaborative platform will encourage exploration of new and understudied sources, and help scholars to connect with colleagues beyond their specialties.

Scholars of East Asian Buddhism have more tools and resources at their disposal than ever before. Online databases, digital repositories, and online communication allow them to research with greater efficiency and to exchange ideas more readily. In theory, these tools should open up the field of Buddhist Studies by bringing new historical sources to light, or excite us with the potential to research, teach, and learn together virtually. However, significant disciplinary and theoretical boundaries still remain to be overcome and limit our ability to make the best use of the wealth of resources at our disposal. For instance, the scholarly lens often magnifies texts and people of authority thus prioritizing the study of canonical texts over those not certified by religious authorities. Disciplinary boundaries also limit us: while

disciplinary training has great advantages, there are few changes to cross these cultural and national borders. To break away from these limits, the *Hualin Journal* encourages the study of Buddhist texts, art, and material culture beyond the canon, and expanding to include peripheral and understudied sources that we, as international scholars in the digital age, can access. By exploring new methods, references, and academic communities, I believe that the *Hualin Journal* will amplify diversity within the broad umbrella of Buddhist Studies in an increasingly interconnected scholarly network.

We also often limit ourselves to geographical boundaries. Scholars continue to specialize in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese Buddhism, collaborating with scholars who share their same national specialty. In reality, these regions are deeply interconnected. When we contrast this with Buddhism's incredible long history in East Asia, contemporary national borders are recent inventions. This becomes especially true when we consider how Chinese Buddhism becomes a central authority in the field of Buddhist Studies more broadly. Past scholarship often frames China as the centre of Buddhist texts and innovation and the surrounding areas as peripheral members of a Buddhist world. With so much shared Buddhist history, cultures, and text, we ought to consider Buddhism as a religion beyond national borders. Our first issue offers an additional perspective of Buddhism beyond national borders. In fact, as one will see in this inaugural issue, our authors have cited multi-lingual sources well beyond East Asian languages. For the benefit of our English readership, our team of editors undertook to translate foreign publications whenever possible.

Most of the papers we feature in this inaugural issue were the result of the 2016 conference 'When the Himalaya Meets with Alps: International Forum on Buddhist Art and Buddhism's Transmission to Europe', held in Madrid, Spain, sponsored by the Guangdong Tianzhu Charitable Foundation. Like the conference itself, this inaugural issue *Buddhism in the West*, de-centers East Asian Buddhism as a force best understood in East Asia alone, that Buddhism is not simply a tradition exported abroad. The history of Buddhist Studies in Europe is familiar to many of us: Buddhism arrived in Europe through the research of

early Indologists and Sinologists who studied philosophical texts with an Orientalist lens. In the past two centuries, however, we find that this initial academic fascination has been supplemented and challenged by lived religious experience of Buddhist on the ground, as well as by dialogues between Asian, European, and North American scholars.

We see the importance of lived experience and religious innovation of Buddhism in Europe clearly in Krause and Parbuono's contributions to this issue. Each author is concerned with how Buddhists and their institutions take shape in Germany and Italy, and how the context of twenty-first century Europe affect the success of Buddhist institutions and practices. We also learn how East Asian texts and authors are reinterpreted by Western academics in Barrett, Deeg, Rösch, and Travagnin's work. From Anglophone understandings of Zen texts on art, to German art collectors and wellness movements, and East Asian responses to celebrated Western scholarship, these papers also point to Buddhism's influence beyond the European academy. These contributions are just a small sample of the myriad ways that influential Western thinkers interacted with East Asian Buddhist authors and texts.

From early translations of Pali and Sanskrit text into Classical Chinese, to contemporary translation of eminent monastics' biographies, translation has always been integral to Buddhism's global rise. The very task of translation itself is a systematic process that require both technical linguistic finesse and sensitive cultural understanding. Hong and Hou expertly handled translation issues in their discussion about some of the early European translations of Buddhist texts that, although at times were controversial, ultimately pave the way for broader cross-cultural and transnational academic exchanges.

As much as translation is essential to religious development, we often forget that the laborious process of producing a physical form for a body of text is also crucial for transporting and transmitting religion. Kim's historical account on the propagation of Korean printed Buddhist text in East Asia is a revelation on the printing press' debated origins. His paper is a perfect example of dissemination of religion through technology that parallels the spread of Christianity in the West.

Through papers by Sun and Thévoz, we can better understand how personal encounters with Buddhist cultures also shaped European understandings of Buddhism. In Thévoz, we see how Segalen's personal encounters inspired remarkable works of theatre, and in Sun's paper, we see how European Christian missionaries fostered interreligious dialogue with Buddhist in mainland China.

This issue demonstrates the wide range of research possible in studying Buddhism in the West, including texts and practices from the late nineteenth century to the present day. Going forward, the *Hualin International Journal of Buddhist Studies* will continue to showcase Buddhism beyond its centre, through understudied sources, and in the many areas of the world that forms of East Asian Buddhist practice find their home.

### Acknowledgements

This journal could not have happened without the support of the Glorisun Charitable foundation and Dr. Charles Yeung, our chief advisor and sponsor of the *Hualin Journal*. I thank him not only for supporting the creation of this journal, but also for funding the Glorisun Global Network of Buddhist Studies, which is doing important work to promote high quality scholarship internationally.

I am indebted to my colleagues on the editorial board for their expertise, support, and guidance. I am grateful for all the authors who contributed to this inaugural issue. Importantly, I also need to thank the people working behind the scenes to prepare this journal for publication. Vicky Baker, our administrative coordinator, and Carol Lee, *Hualin Journal* typesetter and Glorisun communications officer, were both absolutely essential to the success of this project. I must also extend my thanks to the executive editors and editorial assistants, who worked carefully to review each paper.

*Ru Zhan*, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF