

Preface:
Relaunch of the
Hualin International
Journal of Buddhist Studies

Entrusted by Buddha Śākyamuni in Varanasi, Bodhisattva Maitreya preached Dharma in three occasions and has thereby enlightened countless beings. Maitreya delivered his first sermon sitting atop the Diamond Throne, whereas his subsequent sermons both took place in the Hualin Park. Buddha Śākyamuni has once planted here a dragon-flower tree whose shadow of blessing shrouds all sentient beings. By virtue of its blessing, true Dharma lives on in the park so that each and every one could find their serenity under its fresh foliage. Enchanted by its allure, disciples who abide by their vows all long for setting foot in the park. Here precious tress and ponds abound; flowers display variegated blossoms, rousing the sense of the beholder while exotic fruits are abundantly available for sating the thirst of the passers-by.

The royal Hualin Park was first established during the Jin Dynasty (266–420) and prospered until the end of the Southern Dynasties (420–589). Its establishment was not for indulging vanity nor lavishness but for fostering culture. Since Xiao Yan 蕭衍 (464–549; i. e., Emperor Wu of Liang 梁武帝 [reigning 502–549]) from Lanling 蘭陵 seized the reign of the Qi Dynasty (409–502) and founded Liang (502–557), Liang emperors have erected a great many monasteries in the capital Jiankang 建康 (today's Nanjing) and also restored the dilapidated Hualin Park. They have the Chongyun Palace 重雲殿 built and have monastics and lay followers regularly convened to contemplate on Buddhist teachings. Emperor Wu of Liang presided over his peaceful reign and, in person, convened Dharma assemblies attended by all high ministers. Em-

peror Wu also forsook, at least three times, his throne in order to join the retinue of Buddhist masters. His devotion transformed the city of Jiankang which occupied a precipitous terrain like a crouching tiger, into a land where monasteries rose high towards the sky and Buddhist flags draped to the ground. It is said that Jiankang used to house over 700 great monasteries. It was a veritable Buddhist centre where auspicious energy condensed.

Emperor Wu also ordered Ren Fang 任昉 (460–508) to amass secular literature and Sengyou 僧祐 (445–518) to compile Buddhist scriptures. Their search replenished the Wende Palace with Confucian texts while deposited plentiful Buddhist texts in the Hualin Park. Sengyou and his companions went about tracing fragments of Buddhist teachings before collating them into a whole. Meanwhile, Saṃghabhara 僧伽婆羅 (460–524) and Paramārtha 真諦 (499–569) received the commission to translate the texts. Baochang 寶唱 (active in the early 6th century), Sengmin 僧旻 (467–524) and others were put in charge of collating Buddhist manuscripts. With its bustling scholarly activities, the Hualin Park was truly the fountainhead for the precious Dharma and the place of congregation for monks and learned men. For this reason, in spite of our meagre talent, we appropriate the esteemed name of ‘Hualin’ as the incentive to spur us to follow the footsteps of our great ancestors.

Recalling the past days when I started this journal, I remember the onerous duties and the overwhelming distress. Relying on my dull wit, I kept my diligence day and night and spared no time for an easy rest, hoping only that the journal would amount to a work of success. Earlier this century, the journal was published, followed by two more issue. But the hustle of my professional duties soon caught up and forced my hands to let go. For a long time, I contemplated on reviving it but could never translate it into true actions. How time flies! Two decades then fled away, leaving me in sorrowful regret.

But today we find ourselves in a time when the country is peaceful and materially abundant; and with other countries, cordial and amicable. Resources could therefore be made available for fostering arts and spiritual matters. Mr. Yang Zhao 楊釗 of the Glorison Enterprise, a devoted Buddhist layman, is the paragon of such generosity.

Acclaimed by many as a man of virtue, Mr. Yang valued spiritual attainment above material gains and charitably shared his wealth. It is with Mr. Yang's charity that this Buddhist Studies journal could experience its renaissance and reclaim its original intent to serve scholars and Buddhism. In the past, the Hualin Park was situated in the Capital of Yang 楊都 (Jiankang's sobriquet) while today the *Hualin Journal* subsists on the largesse of Mr. Yang! Is this not an uncanny echo in time? And not a manifestation of the intricate working of life's interdependency?

Today we re-launched the journal. By this inauguration, we are propelling a stronger wind to uplift the flag of Dharma and re-opening the nectar gate of the Buddhist teaching. In collaboration with scholars in China and abroad, we want to aid the spread of Buddhist Studies in foreign lands and call forth the cooperation from Buddhist scholars whose mother tongues differ. It is our hope that this journal could rise up as a platform where scholars of all sub-fields and of all nationalities could voice their erudition with freedom. In this relaunch, the journal will operate bilingually, preparing Chinese and English version for each article. Its editorial team also comprises exceptional scholars from the Glorisun Global Network. It is only with the courtesy of their patience that I could say few words here as the humble preface for the journal.

Ru Zhan, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
(English translation prepared by Weiyu Lin)