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The Economics of the Jiaxing Edition of the Buddhist Tripitaka*

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Abstract

This essay draws on economic information in the colophons and catalogues of the Jiaxing Tripitaka to examine the fluctuations of its costs and price in the late Ming and early Qing. The price of the texts included in the Jiaxing Tripitaka increased from the mid-seventeenth century onwards, as did the costs for transcribing and carving wood-blocks. Relative to the value of rice in the Yangzi Delta from 1589 to 1715, the value of a volume of the Tripitaka generally rose. Yet the relative value of a book is not the same as its affordability, which is determined by the book's price, its value relative to other commodities, the real income of the purchaser, and other economic and non-economic elements. It is hoped that this investigation will contribute new views to the history of books in late imperial China.

Resumé

Cette étude se fonde sur les données de nature économique contenues dans les colophons et les catalogues du Tripitaka publié à Jiaxing pour étudier les variations de par son coût de production et de son prix de vente à la fin des Ming et au début des Qing.

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Le prix des ouvrages inclus dans le Tripitaka de Jiaxing a augmenté à partir du milieu du XVII^e siècle, de même que le coût de la transcription et de la gravure. La valeur des volumes du Tripitaka s'est en général accrue par rapport à celle du riz dans le delta du Yangzi entre 1589 et 1715. Cependant la valeur relative d'un livre n'est pas la même chose que son accessibilité, déterminée par le prix de l'ouvrage, sa valeur par rapport à d'autres produits, le revenu réel de l'acheteur, ainsi que d'autres facteurs économiques ou non. L'on espère que cette recherche apportera de nouveaux éléments à l'histoire du livre dans la Chine impériale tardive.

Keywords

Tripitaka, Jiaxing edition, economics, book history, publishing history, late imperial China

The use of woodblock impressions to manufacture books in China began in the ninth century at the latest and caused an expansion of commercial publishing that reached its peak in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹ To assess the impact of this expansion on Chinese society during this period it is necessary to explore the economics of book production, especially production costs and book prices, as these determine books' circulation, affordability, and accessibility among readers. And yet evaluating publishing costs and book prices is a frustrating task because of the very limited and incomplete records that survive. Earlier historians of Chinese print culture have extracted figures from diverse sources, but these data are invariably too few and scattered to establish a price series.² Over the last twenty years, Japanese scholars

¹) Ōki Yasushi notices the dramatic increase in the number of printed books in sixteenth-century China; Inoue Susumu holds that the printed book became dominant over the manuscript in the second half of the sixteenth century. Actually, as early as 1943 K.T. Wu asserted that the turning point in the publishing history of Ming China came by the mid-sixteenth century. See K.T. Wu, "Ming Printing and Printers"; Ōki Yasushi, "Min-matsu Kōnan ni okeru shuppan bunka no kenkyū," pp. 14, 15-28; Inoue Susumu, *Chūgoku shuppan bunka shi*, Ch. 13 and 14. See also Kai-wing Chow, *Publishing, Culture, and Power in Early Modern China*, p. 22. [Full citations are provided in the end bibliography.]

²) For example, Tsuen-hsuei Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, pp. 370-73; Lucille Chia, *Printing for Profit*, pp. 190-92; Kai-wing Chow, *Publishing, Culture, and Power in Early Modern China*, pp. 19-56; Shen Jin, "Mingdai fangke tushu zhi liutong yu jiage"; Zhang Xiumin, *Zhongguo yinshua shi*, pp. 668, 674-75. Evelyn Rawski notes that "the relative expense of a book fell as the number of copies to be printed rose," but bases this conclusion on only one example from Shanghai in the 1840s. See Rawski, *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China*, pp. 121-22. Cynthia Brokaw describes the limited sources on the economics of publishing in traditional China and discusses how these sources differ in kind and

have attempted to pinpoint the affordability of printed books in late Ming China by comparing book prices with grain prices. Working from printed vernacular Chinese novels, Isobe Akira has argued that printed novels were rather expensive and that only scholars, officials, and wealthy merchants were their target readers. For his part Ōki Yasushi regards the price of printed books as much lower than Isobe suggests, identifying the growing numbers of government students as the main body of the reading public.³ More cautious on this issue, Inoue Susumu has simply noted the decrease in book prices from early to late Ming.⁴

None of these studies offers a statistical analysis, however, nor does any of them set book prices and grain prices in the broader context of economic history. In fact, the commercial publishing industry of the Ming-Qing period produced books in diverse physical forms to meet the requirements of a segmented market,⁵ suggesting that the economics of book production may have fluctuated as socio-economic circumstances changed. In theory it is feasible to compare book prices with readers' incomes in order to gauge the trend of affordability. This feasibility has encouraged some scholars to reckon the economical significance of book prices for a broad audience,⁶ but the available materials lack diachronic continuity as well as temporal and spatial particularity, which are indispensable for describing a historical trend. An economic history approach, employing primary data over an extended period of

availability from those available to Western historians. See "On the History of the Book in China," in Brokaw and Chow, eds., *Printing and Book Culture in Late Imperial China*, pp. 20-21.

³ The debate on book prices occurred mainly between Isobe Akira and Ōki Yasushi in the 1980s and 1990s. See Isobe, "Minmatsu ni okeru *Saiyūki* no shutaiteki juyōzō ni kansuru kenkyū"; "*Saiyūki* juyōshi no kenkyū," pp. 20-27, 30-34; Ōki, "Minmatsu ni okeru hakuwa shōsetsu no sakusha to dokusha ni tsuite"; "Minmatsu Kōnan ni okeru shuppan bunka no kenkyū."

⁴ Inoue, *Chūgoku shuppan bunka shi*, pp. 262-66.

⁵ Robert Hegel relates the physical quality of printed novels with the diverse audiences. According to him, affluent and well-educated readers bought the novels in fine editions with nice illustrations, while less affluent readers of more modest abilities also purchased novels but in lesser editions. See Hegel, "Niche Marketing for Late Imperial Fiction."

⁶ In their studies, Shum Chum (Shen Jin) and Kai-wing Chow both attempt to evaluate the affordability of books to potential purchasers by analyzing income levels. See Shen Jin, "Mingdai fangke tushu zhi liutong yu jiage," pp. 116-17; Chow, *Publishing, Culture, and Power in Early Modern China*, pp. 48-56.

time, may help to correct the non-chronological tendency that occasionally mars descriptions of the economic aspects of Chinese print culture.

An economic investigation of Chinese publishing history demands sources that can show prices and costs over time. Fortunately we do have such primary materials for the Jiaxing edition of the Buddhist Tripitaka (*Jiaxing zang* 嘉興藏, hereafter Jiaxing Tripitaka) published from the late sixteenth through the early eighteenth centuries, as well as the catalogues to this voluminous collection. In the Jiaxing Tripitaka itself, colophons appear at the end either of a text or of a chapter (*juan* 卷) within the text giving the costs of transcribing the text and carving the woodblocks. Similarly, cataloguers of the Jiaxing Tripitaka often list the precise price of a text, either below its title or after the titles of several works included in the same fascicle, so that the purchaser could know what price was fair.

Tripitaka (“three baskets”) is the main body of Buddhist sacred texts. For most schools of Buddhism, it consists of the *sūtras* (discourses delivered by the Buddha or others accorded equivalent authority), the *vinaya* (texts on monastic discipline) and the *abhidharma* (scholastic treatises and higher doctrine that systematize the teachings). After the introduction of Buddhism into China around the first century C.E., the Chinese version of the Tripitaka developed into a comprehensive collection, though the canon itself came to include texts of increasing magnitude and diversity too huge to fit within the tripartite structure of the original Tripitaka.⁷ The first printed edition of the Chinese Tripitaka was produced in scroll form in today’s Sichuan Province between roughly 971 and 983. From the eleventh through the eighteenth century, at least fourteen editions of the Chinese Tripitaka were published.⁸ While the Jiaxing edition was being published and circulated,

⁷ For a description of the Buddhist canon and its evolution in China, see Lewis Lancaster, “Buddhist Literature: Its Canons, Scribes, and Editors”; Reginald A. Ray, “Buddhism: Sacred Text Written and Realized.”

⁸ Those fourteen editions are the Chongning 崇寧 edition (1080-1104, Fuzhou), the Bilu 毗廬 edition (1115-50, Fuzhou), the Yuanjue 圓覺 edition (1132-?, Huzhou), the Jin 金 edition (1148-73, Zhaocheng, Shanxi), the Zifu 資福 edition (ca. 1237-53, Huzhou), the Qisha 磧砂 edition (1231-1322, Suzhou), the Puning 普寧 edition (1269-86, Yuhang), the Hongfa 弘法 edition (1277-94, Beijing), the Yuan imperial 元官 edition (ca.1330-1336, Beijing?), the Southern 南 edition (1372-1403, Nanjing), the Northern

three other Chinese editions were also in circulation: the Southern (1372-1403), Northern (1410-41), and Dragon (1735-38) editions. The Southern and Northern editions were sponsored by the Ming royal family, and the Dragon edition by the Yongzheng emperor (r. 1723-35) and his son the Qianlong emperor (r. 1736-95). The Jiaxing edition was the only edition published outside the court, and more materials pertaining to the economics of its production are available for it than for the other editions.⁹

The standard Chinese format for reproducing the Tripitaka since the eleventh century was to bind it in concertina form (*jingzhezhuang* 經摺裝, literally “folding binding”). Unlike editions contemporary with it, the Jiaxing Tripitaka broke ranks and was woodblock-printed on sheets that were then stitched into fascicles (*xianzhuang* 綫裝, literally “stitched binding”), like most books.¹⁰ Its woodblocks were carved on a format of ten columns of twenty characters per half leaf, which was standard usage from the Song (960-1279) through the Qing (1644-1911) dynasty.¹¹ This page format, stipulated for the project at

北 edition (1410-41, Beijing), the Wulin 武林 edition (ca. 1522-66, Hangzhou), the Jiaxing edition (1579-1707, Jiaxing and Yuhang), and the Dragon 龍 edition (1735-38, Beijing). See Li Yuanjing 李圓淨, “Lidai Hanwen dazangjing gaishu” 歷代漢文大藏經概述, in Zhang Mantao, ed., *Dazangjing yanjiu huibian*, vol. 1, pp. 93-99; Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉, “Song Yuan Shizang kanben kao” 宋元釋藏刊本考, *ibid.*, pp. 271-80; Carrington Goodrich, “Earliest Printed Editions of the Tripitaka”; K. T. Wu, “Chinese Printing under Four Alien dynasties (916-1368 A.D.)”; Kenneth Ch'en, “Notes on the Sung and Yuan Tripitaka.”

⁹) The price for a whole set of the Southern edition is recorded, but little is known about its production costs or the fluctuations of costs or prices. For the prices of the Southern edition and regulations for subscribing to it, see Ge Yinliang, *Jinling Fancha zhi*, 49:1a-78b. For a comprehensive historical study of this edition, see Nozawa Yoshimi, *Mindai daizōkyō shi no kenkyū*; Nozawa describes the subscription process on pp. 299-320. See also Darui Long, “A Note on the Hongwu Nanzang.”

¹⁰) Before the Jiaxing Tripitaka, the Wulin edition was the first to be bound in the stitched style, but it soon disappeared because of the poor quality of the carving and printing. For the development of the physical forms of Chinese Buddhist books, see Kōgen Mizuno, *Buddhist Sutras: Origin, Development, Transmission*, pp. 176-77; Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, pp. 227-33. For the Wulin edition, see Daoan, *Zhongguo dazangjing diaoke shihua*, p. 140. Before the publication of the Jiaxing Tripitaka, a few Buddhist texts were circulated in the stitched style, though these were mainly used as portable reference books for Buddhist pupils or for the laymen studying on their own. The stitched form gained broad acceptance after the publication of the Jiaxing Tripitaka. See Hasebe Yūkei, *Min Shin bukkyō kenkyū shiryō: bunken no bu*, p. 24. For the evolution of Chinese bookbinding from the scroll to the stitched style, see Edward Martinique, *Chinese Traditional Bookbinding*, Ch. 3.

¹¹) In his study of print culture in late imperial China Robert Hegel emphasizes the

its beginning and reconfirmed in 1601, was not strictly followed, but the deviations were slight and seem of negligible importance for those who received the woodblocks.¹² All characters in the texts proper were carved in the artisanal style only, which is dominant in Ming-Qing printed books.¹³ Given that it shares the formal characteristics of commercially published books, the Jiaxing Tripitaka is a good case for studying the publishing industry in Ming-Qing China.

At present, no complete set of the Jiaxing Tripitaka is extant in mainland China or Taiwan.¹⁴ All are treated as rare books, and thus hard to access. Part of the collection in the National Central Library (Taipei) was published in facsimile in 1986-87, however, and this is the edition I have used for this essay.¹⁵ This edition includes 658 titles produced in various places from 1589 through to the beginning of the eighteenth century,¹⁶ which roughly represents the full publishing history of the Jiaxing Tripitaka. Even though photos of some colophons were excluded or damaged in production, sufficient information on

standardization of the printed graph and of the number of columns and characters per leaf. See his *Reading Illustrated Fiction in Late Imperial China*, pp. 113-14, 121.

¹² The ten column/twenty character format was confirmed in “Kechang qianliang jingfei huayi” 刻場錢糧經費畫一, in *Ke Zang yuanqi*, 55a. Nakajima Ryūzō found at least nineteen page formats in the Jiaxing Tripitaka, though such divergences are to be expected in a project that lasted for over a century. See Nakajima, “Shinbunhō shuppan kōshi inkō *Minban Kakō daizōkyō* ni tsuite,” pp. 75-79.

¹³ For the technique and style of carving woodblocks he had in mind, Mizang, the first director of the Jiaxing Tripitaka project, preferred to recruit carvers from Huizhou, Jiangxi, and Fujian rather than from Jiangsu and Zhejiang, because the former were skilled at carving characters of artisanal style with a lower cost and higher efficiency. See Mizang, “Yu Wu Kangyu jushi” 與吳康虞居士, in *Mizang Kai chanshi yigao*, 1:39a-40a. For the reduction in the production cost as a result of carving in the artisanal style, see Joseph P. McDermott, *A Social History of the Chinese Book*, pp. 26-31.

¹⁴ Zhongguo guji shanben shumu bianji weiyuanhui, ed., *Zhongguo guji shanben shumu (zibu)*, p. 885; Guoli zhongyang tushuguan, ed., *Guoli zhongyang tushuguan shanben xu ba jilu (zibu)*, vol. 3, pp. 488-662; vol. 4, pp. 1-315.

¹⁵ *Mingban Jiaxing dazangjing* (28 vols.). Before this edition, some works from the Jiaxing Tripitaka were reprinted in *Zhonghua dazangjing* 中華大藏經, Part II (80 vols. Taipei: Xiuding Zhonghua dazangjing hui, 1982-83). Eighty-four more titles are included in the Xinwenfeng edition. For a comparison between the inclusions in these two editions, see Nakajima, “Shinbunhō shuppan kōshi inkō *Minban Kakō daizōkyō* ni tsuite,” pp. 73-75.

¹⁶ The publisher Xinwenfeng claims that 685 titles are included in its edition, but Nakajima Ryūzō found only 658 titles in it after a careful calculation. See *Qisha, Jiaxing dazangjing fence mulu, fenlei mulu, zong suoyin*, p. 311; Nakajima, “Shinbunhō shuppan kōshi inkō *Minban Kakō daizōkyō* ni tsuite,” p. 72.

how the Tripitaka was published can be gleaned from the facsimile edition.

In the essay that follows, I will first reconstruct the story of how the Jiaxing Tripitaka was published, stressing the economic factors that determined costs and prices. The second section describes the development and contents of catalogues of the Jiaxing Tripitaka. The third analyzes economic information included in the catalogues and the colophons, and from these data considers production costs and book prices as measured against rice prices. The fourth section will examine circulation. This essay cannot settle all questions concerning production costs and book prices, nor does it trace the historical trend of affordability of any particular title in the Jiaxing Tripitaka. Instead, its purpose is to offer suggestions about how to approach the study of publishing in Ming-Qing China in economic terms.

The Publishing History of the Jiaxing Tripitaka (1589-1707)

The Jiaxing Tripitaka has attracted the attention of scholars since early in the twentieth century, especially historians of Chinese Buddhism; yet the economics of its production and distribution have mostly been neglected.¹⁷ Its publishing history can be roughly divided into two

¹⁷ E.g., Lü Cheng, *Fodian fanlun*, 26b-33b, esp. 30b-31a; Qu Wanli, "Ming Shi zang diaoyin kao" 明釋藏雕印考, in *Qu Wanli xiansheng wencun*, vol. 3, pp. 1179-84; Ye Gongchuo, "Lidai zangjing kaolüe" 歷代藏經考略, in Ye, *Xid'an huigao*, vol. 2, pp. 378-92; also in Zhang Mantao, ed., *Dazangjing yanjiu huibian*, vol. 1, pp. 49-65; also available in English as Yeh Kung-Cho, "Chinese editions of the Tripitaka"; Chen Haochu 陳豪楚, "Jingshan si ke zang shu" 徑山寺刻藏述, in Zhang, *Dazangjing yanjiu huibian*, vol. 2, pp. 181-88. In 1939, Chen Yuan found a whole set of the Jiaxing Tripitaka in a monastery in Beijing and referred to some works from it in his study of Buddhism in the Ming-Qing transition. See Chen Yuan, *Mingji Dian Qian Fojiao kao*. Since 1949, scholars in Taiwan have conducted detailed research on the Jiaxing Tripitaka. See Daoan, *Zhongguo dazangjing diaoke shihua*, pp. 140-44; Lan Jifu, "Jiaxing dazangjing de tese jiqi shiliao jiazhi"; Lan Jifu, "Jiaxing zang yanjiu" 嘉興藏研究, in his *Zhongguo Fojiao fanlun*, pp. 115-79. As my bibliography illustrates, Japanese scholars have contributed much more to the study of the Chinese Tripitaka, including the Jiaxing edition, than the Chinese. For its study in mainland China, see Zhang Hongwei, "Gugong Bowuyuan cang Jiaxing Zang de jiazhi," pp. 541-44. Nozawa Yoshimi describes the field of the study of Chinese Tripitaka in postwar Japan in his *Mindai daizōkyō shi no kenkyū*, pp. 20-26. I have not found any description of the Jiaxing Tripitaka in English except for a few lines in Joseph Edkins, *Chinese Buddhism*, p. 275; Chou Hsiang-kuang, *A History of Chinese Buddhism*, p. 193; and Kōgen Mizuno, *Buddhist Sutras*, pp. 180, 181-84.

periods: 1589-1622, when the staff collected donations (which were always insufficient) and could control what was included in the Tripitaka; and 1623-1707, when the earlier principles of management and compilation were partly abandoned. To illustrate the breakdown of these principles, I will add an early-nineteenth-century episode.

Principles Established, 1589-1622

When the Buddhist monk Zibo 紫柏 (1543-1603) and his disciple Mizang 密藏 (d. ca. 1593) advocated the compilation of a new Tripitaka,¹⁸ their call had strong support from influential scholars and officials; yet the real impetus for the project came from layman Yuan Huang 袁黃 (Yuan Liaofan 了凡, 1533-1606). Yuan in 1573 proposed to Huanyu 幻予 (d. 1595), a disciple of Zibo, that the Tripitaka be bound in the stitched rather than the concertina style.¹⁹ Seizing on Yuan's idea and encouraged by another leading Buddhist monk, Hanshan 憨山 (1546-1623), Zibo persuaded Mizang and Huanyu to take on this project. He argued that, if bound in the new style, the Buddhist canon would circulate more widely, being more affordable and portable.²⁰ The idea of changing the format from concertina to stitched style was denounced by conservative Buddhists, obliging Zibo and

¹⁸ According to Qu Ruji 瞿汝稷, who was one of his patrons and close friends, Mizang disappeared in 1593; another disciple Dongwen 洞聞, (d. 1623), was still looking for him in 1598. Hasebe Yūkei guesses that Mizang perhaps died in 1600, though without any clear evidence. See Qu Ruji, "Song Dongwen shangren bianli mingshan qiu Mizang shangren ji" 送洞聞上人遍歷名山求密藏上人偈, in his *Qu Jiongqing ji*, 6:9a-b; Hasebe Yūkei, *Min Shin bukkyō kenkyū shiryō: bunken no bu*, p. 29.

¹⁹ Yuan Huang, "Ke Zang fayuan wen" 刻藏發願文, in Mizang, *Mizang yigao*, "Yuanwen": 11a-13b. For Yuan Huang's life as a Buddhist layman, see Peng Shaosheng, "Yuan Liaofan zhuan" 袁了凡傳, in Peng, *Jushi zhuan*, 45:1a-9a; more details about his life and religious idea can be found in Sakai Tadao, *Chūgoku zensho no kenkyū*, pp. 318-55. Sakai describes Yuan's suggestion to Mizang and Huanyu on pp. 339-40. For Huanyu's life, see Qu Ruji, "Huanyu shangren taming" 幻予上人塔銘, in Song Kuiguang, *Jingshan zhi*, 6:32a-34a.

²⁰ Zibo, "Ke Zang yuanqi" 刻藏緣起, in *Zibo zunzhe quanji*, pp. 427-28; Mizang, "Ke dazang yuanwen" 刻大藏願文, in *Mizang yigao*, "Yuanwen": 2a-b. Scholars and officials who supported the project emphasized the convenience and affordability of the planned Tripitaka; see, e.g., Feng Mengzhen, "Ke dazang yuanqi" 刻大藏緣起, in Song, *Jingshan zhi*, 5:5b-8a; Wang Shizhen 王世貞, "Ke Dazang yuanqi xu" 刻大藏緣起序, *ibid.*, 5:12a-14b; Fu Guangzhai 傅光宅, "Mizang Kai chanshi muke dazang xu" 密藏開禪師募刻大藏序, *ibid.*, 5:23b-24b. For Hanshan's attitude towards this project, see Nakajima Ryūzō, "Kanzan Tokusei to hōsatsu zōkyō." For his life and Buddhist thought, see Sung-Peng Hsü, *A Buddhist Leader in Ming China*.

Hanshan to defend this transformation.²¹ Rather than solicit a few large donations from wealthy devotees only, Zibo suggested that funds be raised from the people—as many as possible—whose donations, however modest, would allow them to enjoy Buddha's favor and to cultivate their minds.²² Such an idea led Zibo in 1586 to turn down as tactfully as possible the financial aid promised by the Wanli emperor's (r. 1573-1620) mother, Empress Dowager Cisheng 慈聖 (1546-1614), a devoted laywoman and generous patron of eminent Buddhist monks and famous monasteries.²³ Between 1584 and 1586, Mizang received positive responses to this initiative from dozens of scholars and officials in the Yangzi Delta and Beijing.²⁴ In February 1587, he led ten scholars and officials to make a vow before the bodhisattvas that they would devote themselves collectively to the project. Some of this group, later joined by other eminent contemporaries, composed appeals for fundraising. Most of these were collected in a printed book entitled *Ke Zang yuanqi* 刻藏緣起 [The origin of the publication of the Tripitaka], also distributed as a part of the collection.²⁵ According to their plan,

²¹ For details, see Zhang Hongwei, "Fangce zang de kanke yu Mingdai guanban dazangjing," p. 154; Honda Michitaka, "Kakō daizōkyō no kankoku jigyō to Shihaku Shinka," pp. 88-89.

²² Yu Yuli 于玉立, "Zeng Huanyu, Mizang er shi changyuan ke dazang xu" 贈幻余密藏二師唱緣刻大藏經, in Song, *Jingshan zhi*, 5:25a-27a. It was with the way of fundraising that the main disagreement occurred between Zibo and his followers. For more details, see Lan Jifu, "Jiaxing zang yanjiu," in Lan, *Zhongguo Fo jiao fan lun*, pp. 129-33; Honda Michitaka, "Kakō daizōkyō no kankoku jigyō to Shihaku Shinka," pp. 91-96.

²³ Hasebe mentions the Empress Dowager's attitude towards Zibo's plan in his *Min Shin bukkyō kenkyū shiryō*, p. 26. More details are mentioned in Yu Yuankai 于元凱, "Mizang chanshi yigao xu" 密藏禪師遺稿序, in Mizang, *Mizang yigao*, "Yu xu": 1b. For Cisheng's patronage, see Susan Naquin, *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400-1900*, pp. 156-61; Timothy Brook, *Praying for Power*, pp. 79, 188-89, 206, 241, 291. The Ming royal family did not involve itself into the publication of the Jiaxing Tripitaka, although Cisheng enjoyed friendships with Zibo and Hanshan and bestowed a set of imperial Northern Tripitaka on Lengyan Monastery. No colophon indicates imperial patronage of this project.

²⁴ Yuan Huang, "Ke zang fayuan wen," in Mizang, *Mizang yigao*, "Yuanwen": 11a-13b; Mizang, "Ke dazang yuanwen," in *Mizang yigao*, "Yuanwen": 2a-b.

²⁵ For their oaths, see *Mizang yigao*, "Yuanwen": 1a-18b; see also Mizang, "Ke dazang yuanwen," 2a-b. For the ten who made the vow, see "Jingshan kezang nianbiao" 徑山刻藏年表, in *Ke Zang yuanqi*, 65a-b. Three Chinese editions of *Ke Zang yuanqi* are extant: the original edition included in the first case of the entire set of the Jiaxing Tripitaka, from which the Japanese version perhaps derived; the Yangzhou edition (Yangzhou zangjing yuan 揚州藏經院, 1919); and the Nanjing edition used here (Zhina neixueyuan, 1932).

the proofreading would be done by clergy, scholars, and lay officials on a volunteer basis. They were expected to use the Northern edition as the main source and to collate the texts by referring to the Southern, Song, and Yuan editions.²⁶

The project did not get underway until 1589. It was headquartered in Shanxi Province in Miaode Priory (Miaode an 妙德庵) on Mount Qingliang 清涼山 (i.e. Mount Wutai), a “pure land” that had attracted monks and pilgrims since at least the seventh century. Mizang, who directed the project, and Huanyu, his assistant, chose Miaode Priory in 1588 after praying to the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, on whose cult Mount Wutai was centered. The association with his cult may have helped them legitimize the plan to publish the Tripitaka in the “Confucian” stitched style rather than the orthodox “Buddhist” concertina form.²⁷ They may also have chosen Wutai because of unrest in Jiangnan.²⁸ The abbot of Miaode donated the priory as the carving workshop before his death.²⁹

Nakajima Ryūzō has reconstructed these authors’ ideas about the project based on their appeals. See Nakajima, “Kakō daizōkyō kokuin no shoki jijō.”

²⁶ Mizang, “Mizang chanshi dingzhi jiaoe shufa” 密藏禪師定制校訛書法, in *Mizang yigao*, “jiaoe shufa”: 19a-20a; “Yu Feng Kaizhi jushi” 與馮開之居士, in *Mizang yigao*, 2:19b-20a. Guan Zhidao 管志道 (1536-1608) enjoined scholars to volunteer to proofread works to be included in the Tripitaka. See Guan, “Ke dazang yuanqi” 刻大藏緣起, in Song, *Jingshan zhi*, 5:30b. In 1584 Guan Zhidao drafted a regulation on proofreading and collating referring to fines rather than payments; see his “Jian jing huiyue” 檢經會約, in *Ke Zang yuanqi*, 48a-49b. The voluntary nature of the proofreading is attested in the letters to Mizang from Feng Mengzhen, an enthusiastic supporter and proofreader; see “Bao Mizang shixiong” 報密藏師兄, in his *Kuixuetang ji*, 38:32a; “Yu Zang shixiong” 與藏師兄, *ibid.*, 42:33a. Nozawa Yoshimi’s bibliographical studies reveal the close affinity of the Jiaxing Tripitaka with the Northern edition and confirm the proofreading principle established by Mizang and his comrades. See Nozawa, *Mindai daizōkyō shi no kenkyū*, pp. 195-243.

²⁷ For the year when the project began, see Hanshan, “Jingshan Dagan Ke chanshi taming” 徑山達觀可禪師塔銘, in *Hanshan laoren Mengyou ji*, 27:8. For their praying to the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, see Mizang, “Yu Fu Shiyu” 與傅侍御, in *Mizang yigao*, 1:50a. For the Mañjuśrī cult on Mount Wutai and its place in the Buddhist sacred geography, see Raoul Birnbaum, “Thoughts on T’ang Buddhist Mountain Traditions and their Context”; Étienne Lamotte, “Mañjuśrī.”

²⁸ Zhang Hongwei, “Fangcezan de kanke yu Mingdai guanban dazangjing,” pp. 162-63. Zhang gives the same reasons I do on his pp. 162-64.

²⁹ Yue Jin 樂晉, “Wutai shan ke fangce dazang xu” 五臺山刻方冊大藏序 (1591), in *Ke Zang yuanqi*, 42a-b; Qu Ruji, “Wutai shan Dabo an Wubian heshang taming” 五臺山大博庵無邊和尚塔銘, in *Qu Jiongqing ji*, 11:41b-42a.

Mizang originally planned to complete the entire project within ten years with a budget of thirty thousand taels. Each of those who took the vow in 1587 agreed to donate 100 taels annually and to recruit ten laymen as leading donors, each of whom was to persuade three other laymen to act as co-benefactors. These forty were to recruit forty other benefactor groups in turn, each of whom would donate 100 taels annually over a period of ten years. Mizang suggested recruiting more than forty donor groups in the Yangzi Delta, Beijing, Shanxi, and Shandong, in case some groups failed to fulfill their pledges.³⁰ The first installment of funds was raised in 1584 when Lu Guangzu 陸光祖 (1521-97) wrote the first appeal for fundraising.³¹ Mizang's letters to his benefactors reveal how these funds were raised and conveyed to the project's headquarters. The leading benefactor was responsible for raising funds in his locality or among his acquaintances and for recording the details of the donors' names and amounts contributed. The funds, together with the details to be published in donation lists, were collected annually by Mizang's envoys or sent by the leading benefactors directly to the project's headquarters.³² Feng Mengzhen 馮夢禎 (1548-1605) records that he and his wife joined a donor group in Jiaxing on 10 June 1589 and pledged an annual donation of ten taels, equivalent to the cost of carving at least two chapters.³³ Three of his friends bought land in excess of 2500 *mu* yielding an annual rent

³⁰ Mizang, "Ke dazang yuanwen," in *Mizang yigao*, "Yuanwen": 2a-b; "Yu Xu Rudong shangbao" 與徐孺東尚寶, *ibid.*, 1:41b-43a; "Yu Gu Jinyu shaocan" 與顧襟宇少參, *ibid.*, 1:43a-44a; "Yu Wang Longchi fangbo" 與王龍池方伯, *ibid.*, 1:44b-45b; "Yu Zhenshi jushi" 與真實居士 (1), *ibid.*, 1:52a-54a.

³¹ See Lu Guangzu, "Muke dazangjing xu" 募刻大藏經序, in *Ke Zang yuanqi*, 1a-2b; "Jingshan ke zang nianbiao," *ibid.*, 64b.

³² Dozens of letters in *Mizang yigao* discuss fundraising, e.g., "Yu Shen Hengchuan jushi" 與沈恆川居士 (1:16a-17a); "Yu Yu Zhongfu jushi" 與于中甫居士 (1:31a-33a); "Yu Taiyuan Wang Longchi jushi" 與太原王龍池居士 (1:34a-b); "Yu Songjiang Kang Mengxiu jushi" 與松江康孟脩居士 (1:37b-38a); "Yu Wujiang Zhou Zhongda, Shen Ji'an, Wu Fuquan san jushi" 與吳江周仲大、沈及菴、吳孚泉三居士 (1:38b-39a); "Yu He Zhiji bozhong" 與賀知幾伯仲 (1:40b-41b; 2:20a-21b); "Yu Feng Kaizhi jushi" (2:37a-b); "Yu Shen Ji'an, Wu Fuquan, Zhou Zhongda, Zhou Jihua 周季華 si jushi" (2:8b-9b); "Yu Sun Zhonglai, Wang Yujing, Yu Zhongfu san jushi" 與孫仲來、王宇靖、于中甫三居士 (2:14b-15b); "Yu Xu Mengru, Kang Mengxiu, Lu Zhongfu san jushi" 與徐孟孺、康孟脩、陸中復三居士 (2:15b-16b); "Yu Zhang Meicun jushi" 與張梅村居士 (2:22a-b).

³³ Feng Mengzhen, "Kuaixuetang riji (*jichou*)" 快雪堂日記 (己丑), in his *Kuaixuetang ji*, 49:14a-b. On behalf of his group, Feng composed the oath "Kejing yuewen" 刻經約文, *ibid.*, 30:1a-b.

of over 3000 *shi* of rice to finance the project.³⁴ An enthusiastic project participant, Feng also served as a contact with other donors, one of whom pledged to finance the carving of woodblocks in his home, and sent several page models his carvers made for Feng's advice.³⁵ Volunteers were allowed to support the publication of particular texts they loved, which they could select from the planning catalogue.³⁶

It is impossible to know how much money was actually raised or what expenses were incurred at this stage, as no account book survives from those who volunteered to keep the accounts. But it is safe to say that the donations fell short of Mizang's expectations. Over the thirteen years from 1588 to 1600, most benefactor groups failed to meet their annual quota of 100 taels, and less than half of the project was completed.³⁷ When he took over the project in 1600, Mizang's disciple Nianyun 念雲 (1558-1628) drew up new regulations concerning how to manage donations. Not only were donations to be recorded in detail, but expenses were also to be reported to the sponsors after woodblocks for each chapter had been carved and an annual financial report submitted as well.³⁸

While he directed the project, Mizang found himself chronically underfunded. He employed some fifty carvers from Huizhou, Jiangxi, and Fujian at a cost of 2000 taels per year, but he acknowledged that the funds available to him were insufficient to support these craftsmen, whom he could neither refuse to pay nor lay off.³⁹ Funds raised in

³⁴ Feng Mengzhen, "Yu Guan Dengzhi xiansheng" 與管登之先生, *ibid.*, 36:18b; "Riji (*jichou*)," *ibid.*, 49:24b.

³⁵ Feng Mengzhen, "Da Bao qinjia Xinwei" 答包親家心韋, *ibid.*, 33:17a-b.

³⁶ For example, a Buddhist monk named Yunchuan 雲川 vowed to raise money to have the woodblocks carved for the *Zongjing lu* to be included in the Jiaying Tripitaka. See Qu Ruji, "Muke Zongjing lu shu" 募刻宗鏡錄疏, in *Qu Jionggong ji*, 12:17a.

³⁷ Wang Kentang 王肯堂, "Ke dazang yuanwen" 刻大藏願文, in Mizang, *Mizang yigao*, "Yuanwen": 18a-b. According to Qu Ruji, only twenty percent of the project had been completed by 1607. See Qu, "Huanyu shangren taming," in Song, *Jingshan zhi*, 6:33b.

³⁸ Mou Xiyong 繆希雍, "Nianyun Qin shangren jieguan Jizhao kechang yuanqi shiji" 念雲勤上人接管寂照刻場緣起實紀, in Mizang, *Mizang yigao*, "Yuanwen": 17a-b. For Nianyun's biography, see Shen Xun 沈珣, "Ming Wujiang jiedaisi jiansi qian Jingshan Jizhao an sizang Nianyun Qin gong taming" 明吳江接待寺監寺前徑山寂照庵司藏念雲勤公塔銘, in *Mizang yigao*, "Taming": 1a-4a; see also Hanshan, "Wujiang jiedaisi shifang changzhu ji" 吳江接待寺十方常住記, in *Hanshan laoren mengyou ji*, 26:36.

³⁹ Mizang, "Yu Yu Zhongfu, Runfu bozhong" 與于中甫潤甫伯仲, in *Mizang yigao*, 2:35a-36a.

north China were far less than those contributed in the south (especially the Yangzi Delta), where nearly half of the forty donor groups were located.⁴⁰ Blocks of pear wood were purchased in Zhending and Baoding (in modern Hebei Province),⁴¹ paper came from Fujian, and the books were bound in Shanxi before being conveyed to Jiaying for distribution.⁴² Cold weather, long distances, and difficult roads meant that costs for transporting the raw materials and printed books far exceeded what the donors could afford. At their suggestion, it was decided in 1593 to move the headquarters south, and in the following year the operation was relocated to Jizhao Priory (Jizhao an 寂照庵) on Mount Jing (Jingshan 徑山) in Yuhang County, near today's Hangzhou.⁴³ In 1594 the carved woodblocks were shipped there via the Grand Canal, possibly exempted from transit taxation thanks to governmental documents issued by official-benefactors in Beijing.⁴⁴ Thenceforth Jizhao Priory was where most of the woodblocks were carved; in the 1610s and 1620s, travelers found many carvers hard at work there.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Mizang, "Yu Wang Longchi fangbo," in *Mizang yigao*, 1:44b-45a; 2:41b-42b. Mizang describes the geographical distribution of the forty donor groups: twenty in Beijing, Hebei, and Shandong, ten in the Yangzi Delta, and ten in Huizhou (Anhui) and Puzhou (Shanxi). See Mizang, "Yu Xu Wenqing jushi" 與徐文卿居士, *ibid.*, 1:45b-47b. According to Nakajima Ryūzō, of all the Ming and Qing donors more than half were from south Jiangsu, north Zhejiang, and northeast Jiangxi. See Nakajima, "Iwayuru Banreki Kakō daizōkyō no kankoku to Fū Kōgyō no jokoku katsudō," pp. 70-72.

⁴¹ In a letter to Zibo, Mizang mentions that Huanyu went to Zhending and Baoding to buy pear wood for the project. See Mizang, "Shang benshi heshang" 上本師和尚, in *Mizang yigao*, 1:10b.

⁴² Jiaying shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Jiaying shizhi*, p. 1878. Mizang clearly mentions the fact. See Mizang, "Yu Xu Wenqing jushi," in *Mizang yigao*, 1:45b-47b. In a letter to Wang Longchi, Mizang apologizes for not sending him some books as presents, citing a lack of paper at Mount Wutai. See Mizang, "Yu Wang Longchi fangbo," *ibid.*, 2:41b-42b.

⁴³ With the help of Feng Mengzhen and Mou Xiyong, Huanju investigated Mount Jing. See Mizang, "Yu Feng Kaizhi jushi," in *Mizang yigao*, 1:29a-30a. Jizhao Priory was reconstructed in 1594 as the new headquarters with the financial support of Feng Mengzhen and Lu Guangzu. See Song, *Jingshan zhi*, 12:1b-2a.

⁴⁴ Mizang, "Yu Dumen tanyue" 與都門檀越, in *Mizang yigao*, 1:19b-22a.

⁴⁵ Wu Zhijing, "You Jingshan ji" 遊徑山記, in Wu, *Wulin Fan zhi*, 6:29a; also in Zhu Wenzao, *Yuhang xianzhi*, p. 98, and in Song, *Jingshan zhi*, 7:10b-16a. See also Li Gu 李穀, "You Jingshan ji," in Zhu Wenzao, *Yuhang xianzhi*, p. 99; also in Song, *Jingshan zhi*, 7:16a-20a. Wu Zhijing visited Jizhao Priory in 1610, and Li Gu in 1621.

Once the blocks were carved in Jizhao, they were transported by horse convoy to Huacheng Monastery (Huacheng si 化城寺), to the east of Mount Jing, for storage.⁴⁶ The proposal to reconstruct Huacheng Monastery as the project's warehouse was first made by Feng Mengzhen in 1594, though the work was not undertaken until 1610, when another of Zibo's disciples, Danju 澹居 (1561-1621), appointed abbot of Jizhao Priory, took charge of the project. The reconstruction was completed the following year.⁴⁷ Both Feng and Danju thought the conditions at Jizhao Priory, which was on the misty north side of a peak, too damp for storing woodblocks.⁴⁸ Possibly as early as 1611, it was decided to carve the woodblocks at Jizhao, store them in Huacheng, print copies at Jizhao or Huacheng, and then distribute the books at Lengyan Monastery.⁴⁹ For this reason the Jiaxing edition is also known as the Mount Jing Tripitaka (*Jingshan zang* 徑山藏) or the Lengyan Monastery edition (*Lengyan si ban* 楞嚴寺版). Actually, as the colophons indicate, woodblocks used for this edition were stored in all three monasteries. Wisdom Hall (Bore tang 般若堂) at Lengyan Monastery reserved the exclusive right to distribute all printed copies of the collection.

It appears that the project was supervised by one abbot from the various priories and monasteries involved, though no extant sources shed light on how or whether these institutions cooperated with each other. Some reports indicate that the abbot of Lengyan Monastery was prohibited from interfering with the management of the Tripitaka

⁴⁶ Wu Zhijing, "You Jingshan ji," in Wu, *Wulin Fan zhi*, 6:29a; also in Zhu Wenzao, *Yuhang xianzhi*, p. 98. Wu describes the three white horses used to move woodblocks to Huacheng Monastery.

⁴⁷ For Feng Mengzhen's suggestion to Mizang, see Feng, "Yi fu Huacheng shuyin" 議復化城疏引, in Wu, *Wulin Fan zhi*, 6:32a-33b. For the date of Feng's suggestion, see Wang Zaijin, "Chongfu Shuangxi Huacheng jidaisi beiqi" 重復雙溪化城接待寺碑記, in Song, *Jingshan zhi*, 7:21b. For the invitation from Wu Yongxian and other laymen to Danju to take charge of the project, see Wu, "Qing Danju Kai gong zhu ke zang" 請澹居鎧公主刻藏, *ibid.*, 8:27a-b. For Danju's biography, see Hanshan, "Jingshan Huacheng si Danju Kai gong taming" 徑山化城寺澹居鎧公塔銘, in *Hangshan laoren mengyou ji*, 29:1-8.

⁴⁸ Wu Yongxian, "Chongxing Huacheng jiedai si shu" 重興化城接待寺疏, in Wu, *Wulin fan zhi*, 6:33a-34b; Qian Qianyi, "Huacheng si chongjian dadian shu" 化城寺重建大殿疏, in his *Muzhai youxue ji*, pp. 1720-21.

⁴⁹ Qian Qianyi, "Muke dazang fangce yuanman shu" 募刻大藏方冊圓滿疏, *ibid.*, p. 1398. According to Qian it was Wu Yongxian who stipulated that all woodblocks be stored in Huacheng Monastery. It is well known that Mizang established the rule of carving woodblocks in Jizhao and distributing all printed copies at Lengyan Monastery. See *Jiaxing shizhi*, p. 1880.

Workshop in Wisdom Hall.⁵⁰ As the sole designated distributor of the Tripitaka, the workshop was financially independent, and Lengyan Monastery had to pay the workshop for all copies of the scriptures it acquired.⁵¹ Under the supervision of the director of Wisdom Hall, three monks served as cashier, accountant, and warehouseman, and regulations were established concerning handling of funds, costs, materials, sales, and stock.⁵² The autonomy of the workshop was apparently recognized until the 1810s, as we shall see below.

Principles Compromised, 1623-1707

When Xingcong 性琮 (1576-1659) was appointed abbot of Lengyan Monastery in the winter of 1622, he undertook a major renovation and reorganized the Tripitaka project, drawing up new rules and regulations. His courageous stewardship ensured that the woodblocks survived the Manchu conquest of Zhejiang in 1645-46.⁵³ No materials indicate what changes Xingcong made, but when the famous monk Yongjue 永覺 (1578-1657) bought a set of the Jiaxing Tripitaka in 1628, he complained that the Tripitaka Workshop was profit-seeking, against Zibo's will.⁵⁴ It was during the period of Xingcong's supervision that prices increased, as our third section will show. However, this income allowed for the carving of more woodblocks in Wisdom Hall from the 1630s through 1707, when the entire project was completed.⁵⁵ From

⁵⁰ Shi Yunyu, "Jiaxing Lengyan si jingfang ji" 嘉興楞嚴寺經坊記, in his *Duxuelu si gao*, p. 675.

⁵¹ The monks in Lengyan Monastery had to raise funds to buy dozens of copies of the *Flower Ornament Scripture* (*Avatam saka-sūtra*) and commentaries distributed by the Tripitaka Workshop. See Li Rihua, "Lengyan si muzao *Huayan jing shu*" 楞嚴寺募造華嚴經疏, in Li, *Tianzhitang ji*, 28:6b-8b.

⁵² See *Jiaxing shizhi*, p. 1880, where no citation is provided.

⁵³ Zhixu, "Baifa laozunxiu bazhi shouxu" 白法老尊宿八帙壽序, in his *Lingfeng Ouyi dashi zonglun*, 8.2:13a-15a; see also Qian Qianyi, "Baifa zhanglao bashi shou xu" 白法長老八十壽序, in Qian, *Muzhai youxue ji*, pp. 966-67; "Jiaxing Yingquan si Baifa zhanglao tabiao" 嘉興營泉寺白法長老塔表, *ibid.*, pp. 1261-63; "Lengyan si zhilue xu" 楞嚴寺志略序, *ibid.*, pp. 865-67. In the preface, Qian claimed, incorrectly, that Xingcong joined Lengyan Monastery in 1603. For the year when Xingcong joined the Monastery, see *Jiaxing shizhi*, p. 1878.

⁵⁴ Yongjue, "Qing fangce zangjing ji" 請方冊藏經序, in his *Gushan Yongjue heshang guanglu*, 15:2a.

⁵⁵ *Jiaxing shizhi*, p. 1878; Yang Yuliang and Xing Shunling, "Jiaxing zang zhengli ji," p. 211.

this point, Wisdom Hall combined the tasks of distributor, carving workshop, and warehouse.

Another alteration has to do with which texts should be included in the collection, for the Jiaxing Tripitaka under Xingcong came to include works Mizang had wished to exclude. This change led to confusion in the criteria for compiling the Tripitaka.⁵⁶ Xingcong in fact went further than this, allowing the inclusion of contemporary works, both orthodox and heterodox, perhaps to ease the financial burden. Declining donations also led to a dispersal of production to places other than Jizhao Priory. After consulting a planning catalogue to determine which works were still unpublished, lay sponsors undertook to employ carvers to cut woodblocks in their own houses.⁵⁷ For instance, over 1,000 chapters of Buddhist scriptures were carved in Mao Jin's 毛晉 (1599-1659) publishing house in Changshu.⁵⁸ In Xingcong's period, more woodblocks were carved in monasteries scattered in the Jiangnan area than in Jizhao, Huacheng, or Lengyan,⁵⁹ making it difficult to control what was included and the style in which it was carved. Wisdom Hall also began to accept woodblocks of contemporary Buddhist works from their authors' followers, with promises to include them in the Tripitaka.⁶⁰ Money obtained from distributing copies of contemporary works was to be used to support the publication of more orthodox scriptures, as Yu Runfu 于潤甫 (b. 1563) noted when he

⁵⁶ Nakajima Ryūzō, "Kakō nyūzō butten to Mitsuzō Dōkai no tachiba." Mou Xiyong, "Nianyun Qin shangren jieguan Jizhao kechang yuanqi shiji," in Mizang, *Mizang yigao*, "Yuanwen": 17a; also cited in Honda Michitaka, "Kakō daizōkyō no kankoku jigyo to Shihaku Shinka," p. 83.

⁵⁷ See Zhuanyu, "Ke fangce zangjing mulu xu" 刻方冊藏經目錄序, in Zhuanyu, *Zizhulin Zhuanyu Heng heshang yulu*, 7:22a-b.

⁵⁸ Qian Qianyi, "Mao Zijin liushi shou xu" 毛子晉六十壽序, in Qian, *Muzhai youxue ji*, pp. 936-37; "Yinhu Mao jun muzhiming" 隱湖毛君墓誌銘, *ibid.*, pp. 1140-42. See also *Jiaxing shizhi*, p. 1878.

⁵⁹ Both Yang Yuliang and Hasebe name monasteries other than Jizhao Priory where the woodblocks were carved. See Yang Yuliang and Xing Shunling, "Jiaxing zang zhengli ji," pp. 210-11; Hasebe, *Min Shin bukkyō kenkyū shiryō*, p. 29.

⁶⁰ E.g., in 1675-76 Faxi 法璽 employed carvers in Jiaxing to cut the woodblocks for his master Zhuanyu Guanheng's 顯愚觀衡 (1579-1646) work that was to be included in the Tripitaka. See the 1676 preface by Shi Bo 施博, the 1675 postface by Zhen Can 真璨, and 1676 postface by Faxi, in Zhuanyu, *Zizhulin Zhuanyu heshang yulu*, "Shi xu": 4b, "fulu": 41b, 43a, respectively. The unselected inclusions could explain why some page formats different from the format stipulated appear in the Jiaxing Tripitaka. See Nakajima Ryūzō, "Shinbunhō shuppan kōshi inkō *Minban Kakō daizōkyō* ni tsuite," pp. 75-79.

donated his woodblocks of Zibo's collection to Xingcong in 1631.⁶¹ In 1660, Shouguang 壽光, the abbot of Jizhao Priory, succeeded Xingcong as project manager. He decided to centralize production. With the support of scholars in Jiangsu and Zhejiang, he had the woodblocks carved by the Zhao 趙 family in Hanshan 寒山, the Ma 馬 family in Pinghu 平湖, and the Yu 于 family in Jinsha 金沙 conveyed to Huacheng Monastery. The woodblocks sponsored by Mao Jin were also transported from Changshu to Mount Jing.⁶² After this date, the publishing history of the Jiaxing Tripitaka becomes difficult to reconstruct. Xingcong's opening of the canon meant that the number of titles increased yearly, such that when the project was completed in 1707 the Jiaxing Tripitaka included around 2,191 titles, consisting of the main canon (*zheng zangjing* 正藏經), a first supplement (*xu zangjing* 續藏經), and a second supplement (*you xu zangjing* 又續藏經).⁶³

⁶¹ Li Rihua, "Zibo dashi ji xu," in *Zibo zunzhe quanji*, p. 310; also in Li, *Tianzhitang ji*, 14:5a-7b. For Yu Runfu's relation with Zibo, see Qian Qianyi, "Yu Runfu qishi xu" 于潤甫七十序, in his *Muzhai chuxue ji*, pp. 1027-29; "Yu Runfu bashi xu" 于潤甫八十序, *ibid.*, pp. 1029-30.

⁶² Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1582-1664) suggested this course and provided help. See Qian, "Mu ke dazang fangce yuanman shu," in his *Muzhai youxue ji*, pp. 1398-1400. For the support of scholars in Zhejiang and Jiangsu, see Qian Qianyi, "Yu Zhou Anshi (wushou)" 與周安石 (五首), in his *Qian Muzhai chidu*, 1:29b-31a; "Yu Wu Shiyong (2)" 與吳時應 (第二首), *ibid.*, 1:37b-38a. Regarding the transportation of the woodblocks carved in Mao's publishing house, see Qian, "Yu Huang Guangzhi," *ibid.*, 1:41a-b. Qian Qianyi also wrote to local officials in Zhejiang, asking for their support to transport the woodblocks to Yuhang. See Qian, "Yu Wang Zhongtian" 與王中恬 and "Yu Wang Chuxian" 與王楚先, *ibid.*, 2:26a-27a.

⁶³ Accounts differ as to how many titles were included in the Jiaxing Tripitaka and when the project was completed. According to Mou Yonghe, the project was not completed until 1707 and it includes 2,141 titles totalling 12,600 chapters in 347 cases. However, Daoan and Li Zhizhong state that the Tripitaka was completed in 1677 and includes 1,618 titles in 7,334 chapters. After comparing different versions of the catalogue of the Jiaxing Tripitaka, Cai Yunchen argues that the total number of titles is 2,191. See Daoan, *Zhongguo dazangjing diaoke shihua*, pp. 140-44; Mou Yonghe, *Mingdai chuban shi*, pp. 185-87; Li Zhizhong, *Gudai banyin tonglun*, pp. 266, 328-29; Cai Yunchen, "Jiaxing dazangjing ji Xu zang, You xu zang mulu kaoshi" 嘉興大藏經及續藏又續藏目錄考釋, in his *Ershiwu zhong cangjing mulu duizhao kaoshi*, pp. 511-17; reprinted in *Qisha, Jiaxing dazangjing fence mulu, fenlei mulu, zong suoyin*, pp. 295-307. See also Zhang Hongwei, "Gugong Bowuyuan cang Jiaxing Zang de jiazhi," p. 544. On the numbers of titles included in collections in Japan, see Nozawa Yoshimi, "Minban Kakōzō no zokuzō, yūzokuzō no kōsei ni tsuite"; Nakajima, "Iwayuru Banreki Kakō daizōkyō no kankoku to Fū Kōgyō no jokoku katsudō," pp. 69-70.

Principles Abandoned, 1800-1812

Yongzheng's accession to the throne in 1723 provoked a crisis. Li Fu 李馥 (1666-1749), Governor of Zhejiang, chose to celebrate the emperor's inauguration by financing the repair of the woodblocks.⁶⁴ Yongzheng suspected, however, that the two supplements of the Jiaxing Tripitaka included works by Ming loyalists who had become Buddhist monks in order to evade submitting to his dynasty. The production of the more contemporary works in the second supplement was halted after his accession, and a copy was transferred for inspection to the palace.⁶⁵ Under these conditions, the Tripitaka Workshop at Lengyan Monastery basically stopped carving any new woodblocks until 1807,⁶⁶ although censored copies of the Jiaxing Tripitaka, as individual works or the entire set, were available in the book markets throughout this period.

The project was revived early in the nineteenth century, when in 1802-03 the local magistrate had the existing woodblocks moved for temporary storage to Lengyan Monastery. The newly appointed director of Wisdom Hall, Zhenchuan 真傳 (1763-1815), made an inventory of the woodblocks and began to run the Tripitaka workshop "without any interference from Airu 藹如, abbot of Lengyan Monastery." This arrangement accorded with the principle established by Zibo and Mizang that the abbot of Lengyan should not be in charge (the case of Xingcong was an exception). Since the woodblocks were incomplete and rotten, Zhenchuan wrote to Wu Jing 吳璈 (1747-1822), the father-in-law of the patron who recommended him for the directorship, asking him to support the carving of a new set of woodblocks in the style set by Mizang. Together with other officials in Beijing, Wu Jing donated funds. This time the new woodblocks were carved in Beijing and sent to the Lengyan Monastery. The project took over ten years to complete,

⁶⁴ Yang Yuliang and Xing Shunling, "Jiaxing zang zhengli ji," p. 202.

⁶⁵ Zhang Dejun, "Guanyu Qing ke dazang yu lidai zangjing," esp. pp. 19-23. Two notes were found in the collection in the Palace Museum in Beijing, suggesting that a politically unacceptable work was removed from the collection. See Yang and Xing, "Jiaxing zang zhengli ji," p. 202. When checking some works in the 1987 edition, I was occasionally confronted with blackened characters, the consequence of Qing censorship.

⁶⁶ For the later operations at Lengyan Monastery, see Shi Yunyu, "Jiaxing Lengyan si jingfang ji," in his *Duxuelu si gao*, p. 675.

during which time both Zhenchuan and Airu died. Thereafter the workshop was managed by the abbot of Lengyan rather than the director of Wisdom Hall.⁶⁷

Scattered comments reveal that the director of Wisdom Hall and the abbot of Lengyan Monastery struggled over control of the woodblocks and the printing. To prevent the abbot from interfering, Zhenchuan planned to construct a new warehouse physically independent of Lengyan Monastery, where he could centralize the storage of the woodblocks.⁶⁸ We know of this from a poem his friend Jiang Yuan 江沅 (1767-1838) wrote in commemoration. Zhenchuan asked for donations from military and civilian officials, but suspicions of corruption among the Jiaying clergy meant that he was not able to construct the warehouse.⁶⁹ Thwarted, Zhenchuan withdrew in 1812 and retired to Suzhou.⁷⁰ The incident suggests that the burden of financial management, the corruption of the clergy, and interference of abbots for their own economic or political interests were the main causes for the final breakdown of both the Tripitaka Workshop and the project itself. It was probably to evade these problems that Wu Jing and his colleagues had the new woodblocks cut in Beijing, not in Jiaying. The new set was not complete, as Gong Zizhen (1792-1841) discovered when he found some Tiantai works unavailable during a visit to Lengyan Monastery in 1839.⁷¹

From 1603 through the 1810s, then, the regulations and principles established by Zibo and Mizang were not observed strictly. The relationship between the clergy and the donors who supported the publication of the Jiaying Tripitaka, however, remained the same: donors paid to cover the major expense of carving the woodblocks, and their donations,

⁶⁷ Shi Yunyu, "Jiaying Lengyan si jingfang ji," *ibid.*, pp. 675-76. For Zhenchuan's biography, see Gu Cheng 顧承, "Huigong heshang taming" 會公和尚塔銘, in Zhenchuan, *Cancha laoren ji*, Appendix: 1a-2a.

⁶⁸ Zhenchuan, "Yu Jiang Taoan jushi" 與江韜庵居士, *ibid.*, 1:5a.

⁶⁹ Jiang Yuan, "Ti *Cancha laoren ji* hou" 題參茶老人集後, *ibid.*, Appendix: 4b-6a.

⁷⁰ Gu Cheng, "Hui gong heshang taming," *ibid.*, Appendix: 1a-2a; Mingche 明徹, "Ti *Cancha laoren yixiang yimo hou*" 題參茶老人遺像遺墨後, *ibid.*, Appendix: 6a-b.

⁷¹ Gong Zizhen visited Xiushui County in 1839 and wrote a poem praising Zibo's contribution to the Jiaying Tripitaka and its role in the propagation of Buddhism in Zhejiang. In the note to the poem, he complains about the unavailability of some Tiantai books that previously had been available to common readers at Lengyan Monastery. See Gong, "Jihai zashi" 己亥雜詩, in *Gong Zizhen quanji*, p. 523.

which fluctuated, were supplemented by the income obtained from selling copies. As publisher, the Tripitaka Workshop did not pay carvers or authors directly from its own coffers; as printer, it covered the costs of paper and ink, and paid for the labour of binding and transporting the printing materials and printed books between Mount Jing in Yuhang and Lengyan Monastery in Jiaxing; and as distributor and bookseller, it did not concern itself with distribution fees nor pursue profit beyond recovering its costs (although the staff may have sought to make some profit, as Yongjue complained). Given this procedure, prices could be calculated simply on the basis of the costs of paper, ink, printing, binding, and shipping. As I will describe in the third section, not all the costs of transcription, carving, and distribution were factored in when prices were calculated. Nonetheless, given the non-commercial nature of the project, the price closely approximated the actual cost of paper, ink, printing, binding, and shipping from Mount Jing to Jiaxing.

The Catalogues of the Jiaxing Tripitaka

A catalogue of the main body of the Jiaxing Tripitaka was published in 1600 under the title *Da Ming chongkan sanzang shengjiao mulu* 大明重刊三藏聖教目錄 [Catalogue of the Ming republication of the holy teachings of the Tripitaka]. Its sequencing of titles matches the one in the catalogue of the Northern edition of the Tripitaka entitled *Da Ming sanzang shengjiao mulu* 大明三藏聖教目錄 [Catalogue of the holy teachings of the Great Ming Tripitaka].⁷² The catalogue of the first supplement likely originated, in part, from Mizang's *Zang yi jingshu* [The scriptures excluded from the Northern Tripitaka]. *Zang yi jingshu* is a list Mizang made of all Buddhist works known or read by him that were not included in the Northern edition. It records their authors,

⁷² See "Dazang zhulu yilanbiao" 大藏諸錄一覽表, in Zhang Mantao, *Dazangjing yanjiu huibian*, vol. 1, p. 353. The copy of the Northern catalogue collected in the Puban Collection in the Asian Library at the University of British Columbia was published in 1601 in Jizhao Priory and reprinted in 1679. The Northern catalogue is also included in Ono Gemmyo, *Bussho kyōten sōron*, pp. 894-913. For the English version, see Bunyiu Nanjio, *A Catalogue of the Chinese Translations of the Buddhist Tripitaka*. For the close relationship between the catalogues of the Northern and Jiaxing Tripitakas, see Cai Yunchen, "Jiaxing dazangjing ji Xu zang, You xu zang mulu kaoshi," pp. 509-19.

publishers, and places of publication in notes below each title, with explanations as to why the work should or should not be included in the Jiaxing Tripitaka.⁷³ The *Da Ming chongkan sanzang shengjiao mulu* and *Zang yi jingshu* served as planning lists. Neither of them, nor their combination, reflects the actual contents of the main canon and the two supplements.

The published works actually available in the Tripitaka Workshop were enumerated in the distribution catalogues, with their prices listed below each title or fascicle for ease of reference. The earliest distribution catalogue I have found is entitled *Jing zhi huayi* 經直畫一 [A price list of the scriptures], first published in 1595, revised and enlarged in 1609 and again before 1637.⁷⁴ As more works were incorporated into the Tripitaka and as printing costs and book prices fluctuated, the distribution catalogue had continuously to be revised and enlarged. The catalogue of the Jiaxing Tripitaka published in 1677 and again in 1723, which includes the titles in the main canon and both supplements, lists the prices established for each work or fascicle as of 1659, when prices were sanctioned by the local government for the first time in the early Qing (to be discussed in the next section).⁷⁵ For the remainder of the Qing period, this catalogue also circulated in manuscript form.⁷⁶ In 1920 it was newly printed in Beijing on the basis of the

⁷³ Qian Qianyi, “*Zang yi jing shu biaomu ji*” 藏逸經書標目記, in Qian, *Muzhai youxue ji*, pp. 1619-20. This list was published by Beijing kejingchu 北京刻經處 in 1918. Another edition was included in *Songlin congshu* 松鄰叢書 (Part I) (Renhe: Shuangzhaolou, 1917), vol. 3.

⁷⁴ Feng Mengzhen made a note to the catalogue in 1595. See Feng Mengzhen, “*Ti Jing zhi huayi*” 題經直畫一, in Feng, *Kuaxuetang ji*, 30:7a-b. According to his preface, dated 1609, Wu Yongxian asked the Tripitaka Workshop to publish a revised catalogue. Wu’s preface is cited in Zhang Hongwei, “Gugong Bowuyuan cang *Jiaxing Zang de jiazhi*,” p. 547 n. 3. A catalogue of the same title was also recorded in the gazetteer of Jiaxing County compiled in 1637. See Huang Chenghao, *Jiaxing xianzhi*, p. 728. Feng’s note was also included in “*Zōkyō mokuroku*” 藏經目錄 (1741), in Ōba Osamu, ed., *Kunaichō Shoryōbu zō Hakusai shomoku*, Fascicle 48:2a-b; see also Ōba Osamu, *Edo jidai ni okeru Chūgoku bunka juyō no kenkyū*, pp. 423-24.

⁷⁵ A copy of the 1723 edition is collected in the National Library of China in Beijing. See *Beijing tushuguan guji shanben shumū (zibu)*, p. 1636; see also *Beijing tushuguan putong guji zongmu*, vol. 1, *Mulu men*, p. 61.

⁷⁶ A manuscript entitled *Jingshan zang mu* 徑山藏目 (one fascicle) is in the National Library of China in Beijing, and one entitled *Zang jingzhi huayi mulu* 藏經值畫一目錄 (one chapter in two fascicles) is in the National Central Library in Taipei. The manuscript in Beijing was copied by Gong Cheng 龔橙 (1817-79), Gong Zizhen’s son. See *Beijing*

1677 edition, though this version also circulated in manuscript form.⁷⁷ The 1920 printed edition, known as *Zangban jingzhi huayi mulu* 藏板經直畫一目錄 [Catalogue of the Tripitaka with prices listed] or *Jiaxing zang mulu* [Catalogue of the Jiaxing Tripitaka], was included in 1924 in the Japanese edition, *Shōwa hōbō sōmokuoku*, though with the prices omitted.⁷⁸ These distribution catalogues show slight variations as a consequence of the different versions from which they derived. Whether prices are listed or omitted depended upon the purpose for keeping the catalogue: bibliophiles might be concerned with the titles only, whereas purchasers and booksellers wanted to see both titles and prices.

The distribution catalogue used for this essay is included in the *Xingsutang mudu shulu* [A list of books seen in the Xingsu Abode] compiled by the publisher/bookseller Zhu Jirong and published in 1885.⁷⁹ Scholars of the Buddhist Tripitaka have not paid attention to this catalogue. This copy, which lists prices because copies in the Jiaxing Tripitaka could be in Zhu's reservoir, seems reliable. Not only does Zhu tell that he has read or scanned all books listed in his catalogue, but the titles in the main canon are arranged in the same order as in the *Da Ming chongkan sanzang shengjiao mulu*.⁸⁰ After selectively exam-

tushuguan guji shanben shumu, p. 1636; Guojia tushuguan tecangzu, ed., *Guojia tushuguan shanben shuzhi chugao (zibu)*, vol. 3, p. 239.

⁷⁷ The 1920 edition was printed and distributed by Beijing kejingchu, reprinted in *Shumu leibian*, vol. 53, ed. Yan Lingfeng (Taipei: Chengwen, 1978). A manuscript produced in 1915 is in the National Library of China in Beijing. See *Beijing tushuguan putong guji zongmu*, vol. 1, p. 61.

⁷⁸ Takakusu Junjirō and Watanabe Kaigyoku, eds. *Shōwa hōbō sōmokuoku*, vol. 2, pp. 300, 301.

⁷⁹ Zhu Jirong, *Xingsutang mudu shulu*, ren 壬: 1a-70a; gui 癸: 1a-34b, run 閏: 1a-37a. Lu Ergu, "Xingsu caotang mudu shumuxu" (1875), in Zhu, *Mudu shulu*, jia 甲: 1b. Little is known of Zhu Jirong's life. Zhu's catalogue was also reprinted in *Shumu leibian*, vols. 57-60. Besides the bibliography, he published around 1887 a collectanea called *Huailu congshu* 槐廬叢書. For information on this series, see Shanghai tushuguan, ed., *Zhongguo congshu zonglu*, vol.1, pp. 238-39. An incomplete set is in the Puban Collection in the University of British Columbia Asian Library. No information on Zhu Jirong's life is given in gazetteers of Wu County, although his catalogue is listed in a gazetteer compiled in 1933. See Cao Yunyuan et al., *Wuxian zhi*, p. 950.

⁸⁰ Zhu Jirong, *Xingsutang mudu shulu*, jia: 2b-3a. Except for the edition without prices included in *Shōwa hōbō sōmokuoku*, the one published in 1920 Beijing, and the one with prices included published by Zhu Jirong, to date I have not had access to the editions in rare book collections in Japan, mainland China, and Taiwan.

ining the numbers of leaves of works included in the Jiaxing Tripitaka and the prices in Zhu Jirong's catalogue, I find that the prices reflect a rate of 0.08 tael per 100 leaves.

In addition to prices, Zhu Jirong includes four texts that shed light on costs and prices. The first, "Lengyan jingfang chongding *huayi yuanqi*" 楞嚴經坊重訂畫一緣起 [An account of revising the price list published by the Tripitaka Workshop at Lengyan Monastery] by Zhu Maoshi 朱茂時 and his cousin Zhu Maojing 朱茂暉 (*jinsshi* 1640), dated 1647, explains the increase in book prices as a consequence of the increasing costs of paper, ink, shipping, and labor.⁸¹ The undated second text, "Ken mian she qing jingdian shuo" 懇免賒請經典說 [An explanation of asking not to buy scriptures on credit] by Zhu Dayou 朱大猷 (*juren* 1612), suggests that purchasers pay at the listed prices.⁸² The third is a public announcement concerning the reduction of prices issued in 1664 by the magistrate of Xiushui County, where Lengyan Monastery was located. It describes the process of deciding the reduction, but does not mention any particular reasons.⁸³ The final text I have used consists of two notes dated 1677 concerning price totals calculated at the rate of 0.08 tael per 100 leaves, as well as prices of complete sets of the main canon and first supplement calculated at the reduced rate set in 1664, though again without explanation for the reduction.⁸⁴

The 1920 Beijing edition of the catalogue includes the account by Zhu Maoshi and Zhu Maojing and the explanation by Zhu Dayou. However, it includes a different public announcement, issued in 1659 by the assistant surveillance commissioner of the Jiaxing-Huzhou Circuit, dealing at greater length than the 1664 announcement with the fluctuation in book prices. In the two 1677 notes as reproduced in this edition, the reference to the reduced rate set in 1664 is deleted, suggesting that it may derive from some version unknown to us.⁸⁵ The

⁸¹ Zhu, *Mudu shulu*, ren: 2a-3a.

⁸² Zhu, *Mudu shulu*, ren: 4a-5a. Zhu Dayou got his *juren* degree in 1612. See Wu Yangxian et al., *Jiaxing fuzhi*, p. 1165.

⁸³ Zhu, *Mudu shulu*, ren: 8a-9a.

⁸⁴ Zhu, *Mudu shulu*, gui: 34a-b, run: 18a-b.

⁸⁵ For the documents mentioned in this paragraph, see *Jiaxing zang mulu*, 1a-b; 2a-3a; 4a; "Zangjing zhi huayi" 藏經直畫一, 93a; "Xu zangjing zhi huayi" 續藏經直畫一, 15b.

prices of the main canon listed in those two editions of the catalogue are the same, however, though the numbers of cases given in the two supplements are different.⁸⁶

The appearance of members of the Zhu family in the distribution catalogue indicates the degree of the local gentry's involvement, whether direct or indirect, in supervising the Jiaxing Tripitaka project. During the Ming-Qing transition, the Zhu family prospered through the political and cultural achievements of its members. The first distinguished son was Zhu Guozuo 朱國祚 (1559-1624), who was a grand secretary from 1621 to 1623.⁸⁷ The second was Zhu Daqi 朱大啓 (1565-1642), Guozuo's nephew, who served as the left vice-minister of justice during the Chongzhen period and gave donations to Jingshan Monastery and some of its priories every year.⁸⁸ Guozuo's grandson, Zhu Maojing, served as magistrate of Yichun County (Jiangxi) in the Chongzhen period.⁸⁹ In the same generation, Zhu Maoshi, son of Daqi, was offered an official position in 1643 in recognition of his father's government service and served as the prefect of Guiyang (Guizhou) before the fall of the Ming in 1644.⁹⁰ Both Zhu Guozuo and his son Dayou were longtime patrons of priories on Mount Jing.⁹¹ The involvement of both the Zhu family and the local government in determining the prices of the Tripitaka attests to the philanthropic and nonprofit aspects of its production and distribution, and also suggests the importance of the

⁸⁶ Both Zhu Jirong's edition and the 1920 edition list the main canon as consisting of 210 cases. Whereas Zhu lists the first supplement as 94 cases and the second as 43 cases, according to Nozawa Yoshimi, by 1677 the first supplement consisted of 90 cases and the second of 43 cases, just as the 1920 edition lists. See Nozawa, "Minban Kakōzō no zokuzō, yūzokuzō no kōsei ni tsuite", p. 44.

⁸⁷ For Zhu Guozuo's biography, see Zhang Tingyu et al., *Ming shi*, 240.6249-51; Ren Zhiding et al., *Xiushui xianzhi*, 5:23b-24a.

⁸⁸ For Zhu Daqi's biography, see Wu et al., *Jiaxing fuzhi*, p. 1412; Ren et al., *Xiushui xianzhi*, 5:26b-27a. For his sponsorship, see Song, *Jingshan zhi*, 11:11b.

⁸⁹ For Zhu Maojing's biography, see Wu et al., *Jiaxing fuzhi*, p. 1416; Ren et al., *Xiushui xianzhi*, 5:51b-52a.

⁹⁰ For Zhu Maoshi's life, see Wu et al., *Jiaxing fuzhi*, pp. 1301, 1417; Ren et al., *Xiushui xianzhi*, 5:57b-58a; Zhu Yizun, *Jingju zhi shihua*, pp. 599-600. Zhu Yizun 朱彝尊 (1629-1709), Guozuo's great-grandson, was well known as an outstanding poet and scholar in the early Qing. For the year when Zhu Maoshi got his official post in recognition of his father's service, see *Pian'an pairi shiji*, 8:153.

⁹¹ For Zhu Guozuo and Zhu Dayou's sponsorship of priories in Jingshan, see Song, *Jingshan zhi*, 11:10b.

project in local society. This situation may be contrasted with that of the Southern edition of the Tripitaka, which was published under official aegis in Nanjing but distributed via local private agencies known as Tripitaka shops (*jingpu* 經鋪). In contrast, the Jiaxing edition relied on the social network consisting of a leading gentry family and county officials for its existence and distribution.⁹² No evidence indicates that agents or booksellers other than Wisdom Hall were authorized to distribute any books in the Jiaxing Tripitaka, or that anyone outside the gentry and clergy were involved in its production.

Production Costs and Book Prices

In the first section of this essay I demonstrated that donors paid for producing the woodblocks, and that the income from selling the Tripitaka was put back into the funds used to pay for the carving of more woodblocks in Wisdom Hall. In this section, I will examine the fluctuation of book prices and production costs, try to figure out the relationship between costs and prices, and then offer an experiment to determine the economic significance of prices to potential purchasers in the Yangzi Delta throughout the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. Due to extremely limited materials, we cannot conclusively determine the affordability of a book in the Tripitaka, but we can locate the economic elements that affected affordability.

Fluctuations in Book Prices

Books in the Tripitaka vary greatly in size. Some consist of more than ten thousand leaves, others less than a hundred. By what unit, then, should we measure the price of a “book”? Lucille Chia and Kai-wing Chow describe prices as “per book” or “per fascicle,”⁹³ but this does

⁹² Nozawa Yoshimi, *Mindai daizōkyō shi no kenkyū*, pp. 299-320. Tripitaka shops were commercial private booksellers specializing in printing and selling Buddhist scriptures. Nozawa traces their origin back to the first half of the twelfth century, when the term *jingpu* appeared for the first time, in present-day Hangzhou. See Nozawa, “Genmatsu Minsho ni okeru daizōkyō inzō to kyōho,” p. 60.

⁹³ Chia, *Printing for Profit*, pp. 190-91; Chow, *Publishing, Culture, and Power in Early Modern China*, pp. 38-56.

not represent the way in which the price of a book—a common book, not a collector's book—was calculated in the Ming and Qing. If we go back to the Song, judging from some extant colophons and advertisements as early as 1147, we find that prices were not listed per book or per fascicle but per “set” or copy (*meibu* 每部).⁹⁴ Later, though it is unclear when, the unit “per 100 leaves” came into use for book prices. In other words, the number of sheets was considered the main factor in distinguishing the cost of one book from the next. Based on the prices of titles in the Jiaxing Tripitaka, the price per fascicle varied from 0.03 to 0.14 tael, so the number of fascicles will not yield the logic of price. Only the numbers of leaves can do this accurately.⁹⁵

There are no prices from the early years of the Jiaxing Tripitaka. The earliest record I know of is found in one of Mingzang's letters. Citing Zibo's lay disciple, Wu Weiming 吳惟明, Mizang mentioned that the *Hongming ji* was sold at a price of 0.8 tael per copy in Zhejiang, and suggested that the price be raised to 1.0-1.1 taels in north China so as to cover the cost of transportation.⁹⁶ The book Mizang mentioned must be the joint edition of Sengyou's (445-518) *Hongming ji* and Daoxuan's (596-667) *Guang Hongming ji* with glossaries, published by Wu Weiming in 1586 and distributed widely during the Wanli era. Wu Weiming vowed to publish this joint edition in the stitched style at Zibo's suggestion in 1584, when the collation of the planned texts began.⁹⁷ According to Mizang, this edition circulated as an early exam-

⁹⁴ Denis Twitchett describes a colophon dated 1147 to illustrate the economics of printing under the Song. The colophon says, “xiancheng chumai, meibu jiaqian wu guan wen sheng” 見成出賣每部價錢五貫文省 (Now the book is available at the price of five strings of one thousand cash per set). See Twitchett, *Printing and Publishing in Medieval China*, pp. 64-65. The evidence collected by Shum Chum also demonstrates that the term “per set” was used to describe book prices during the Ming, though it is not reliable for determining comparative prices. See Shen Jin, “Mingdai fangke tushu zhi liutong yu jiage,” pp. 110-14.

⁹⁵ Rawski measures the cost of production and book price “per character,” a method that ignores the factors of quality and quantity of paper. See Rawski, *Education and Popular Literacy in Ch'ing China*, pp. 121-22. Even so, remuneration “per character” or “per 100 characters” was and still is used to pay authors, editors, and compilers.

⁹⁶ Mizang, “Yu Xu Wenqing jushi,” in *Mizang yigao*, 1:45b-47a.

⁹⁷ *Zhongguo guji shanben shumu (zibu)*, p. 970. For a brief description of the *Hongming ji* published by Wu Weiming, see Zhang Hongwei, “Fangce zang de kanke yu Mingdai guanban dazangjing,” pp. 154-55. More details were recorded by Wu Weiming himself in “Ke dazang yuanwen” 刻大藏願文, in Mizang, *Mizang yigao*, “Yuanwen”: 10a-b. As

ple of his project, and carvers followed its page format and calligraphic style as he required.⁹⁸ Wu's edition has been collotyped and included in the *Sibu congkan* in 1929. Given that this book consists of 1,367 leaves (371 leaves for the *Hongming ji* and 996 for the *Guang Hongming ji*), its price of 0.8 tael per copy suggests a rate of 0.0585 tael per 100 leaves of paper; in other words, roughly 0.06 tael per 100 leaves. New woodblocks were carved for these two works a few decades later: for the *Guang Hongming ji* at Jizhao Priory in 1611, and for the *Hongming ji* from 1616 to 1617 with the patronage of He Maoxi 賀懋熙. When the blocks were recarved, the tighter placement of glossaries at the end of each of the chapters (increased to forty from the original thirty) resulted in a smaller total of 1,327.5 leaves. Using the rate of 0.08 tael per 100 leaves of paper set in 1659, the price for the *Guang Hongming ji* was pegged at 0.780 tael, and for the *Hongming ji* at 0.282 tael, totaling 1.062 taels for the two.⁹⁹

The price mentioned in Mizang's letter could have appeared in the distribution catalogue published in 1595.¹⁰⁰ The first price fluctuation occurred about 1609, when Wu Yongxian 吳用先 (*jinsshi* 1592) wrote in his preface of that year to the newly edited catalogue that purchasers did not have to pay at the earlier prices and that the workshop was expected to be generous rather than seek profit. His logic was that lower prices would cause larger sales, generating more income to support more carving of woodblocks, especially as the number of available texts had doubled by then.¹⁰¹ Another description of lowered prices in the Wanli era can be found in an announcement issued in 1659 by the assistant surveillance commissioner of the Jiaying-Huzhou Circuit. Citing a petition from Yao Shengxiu 姚升秀, Yan Dacan 顏大參 (1600-64), and other government students, the commissioner noted that prices had been set at a rate of 0.03 tael per 100 leaves until 1647,

aforementioned, it was in 1584 that Guan Zhidao made the regulations on proofreading and collating Buddhist texts to be included in the collection (see note 26 above).

⁹⁸ Mizang, "Yu Wu Kangyu jushi," in *Mizang yigao*, 1:39a-b.

⁹⁹ For the republication of the *Hongming ji* and *Guang Hongming ji*, see *Guoli zhongyang tushuguan shanben xu ba jilu (zibu)*, vol. 3, pp. 561, 562. For their prices in 1659, see Zhu Jirong, *Xingsutang mudu shulu*, 10:20b.

¹⁰⁰ Feng Mengzhen, "Ti Jingzhi huayi," in Feng, *Kuaixuetang ji*, 30:7a-b.

¹⁰¹ Wu Yongxian, "Preface," cited in Zhang Hongwei, "Gugong Bowuyuan cang *Jiaying zang* de jiazhi," p. 547 n. 3.

when they were increased.¹⁰² This rate must be the one that Wu Yongxian set in 1609.

The commissioner's announcement in 1659 indicates that the first rise in book prices occurred in 1647. This was due to an increase in the costs of labor, shipping, paper and other printing materials. The local community agreed after discussion to double the rate from 0.03 tael to 0.06 tael per 100 leaves. The monks of the Tripitaka Workshop, however, without consultation increased the rate to 0.1 tael per 100 leaves and revised the prices in the catalogue accordingly. In 1659, as just noted, students petitioned the local government for a decrease. Yao Shengxiu suggested a rate of 0.086 tael per 100 leaves, while Yan Dacan proposed 0.07 tael. Ultimately, the assistant surveillance commissioner decided on 0.08 tael. He banned the 1647 catalogue and ordered the workshop to publish a new edition listing the officially mandated prices.¹⁰³ The 1659 catalogue, listing prices at a rate of 0.08 tael per 100 leaves, became the source from which Zhu Jirong's edition and the 1920 edition originated.

These prices did not remain in effect for long. In 1664, Yan Dacan petitioned for a further reduction. The assistant military surveillance commissioner ordered the magistrate of Xiushui to initiate a discussion of Yan's request among the gentry and clergy. Yan suggested a rate of 0.06 tael per 100 leaves, while the monks countered with a slightly higher 0.064 tael. The magistrate accepted the monks' suggestion.¹⁰⁴ So although the prices listed in Zhu Jirong's catalogue give a rate of 0.08 tael per 100 leaves, as of 1664 the books were actually sold at 0.064 tael per 100 leaves. A notice issued in 1664 by the Tripitaka Workshop was included in the set imported to Japan in 1741, the catalogue of which was copied by the inspecting censor for imported Chinese books (*Shomotsu aratameyaku* 書物改役) in Nagasaki. According to the notice, the entire set cost 181.61 taels (or, a rate of 0.117 tael per 100 leaves) before 1658, close to the official rate of 0.1 tael per 100 leaves; 124.23 taels (0.08 tael per 100 leaves) in 1659-63; and 99.289 taels (0.064 tael per 100 leaves) in

¹⁰² See *Jiaxing zang mulu*, 1a.

¹⁰³ *Jiaxing zang mulu*, 1a.

¹⁰⁴ Zhu, *Xingsutang mudu shulu*, ren: 8a-9a.

1664.¹⁰⁵ The lower rate set in 1664 is further confirmed in the 1677 notes appended to the catalogue of the main canon and first supplement published by Zhu Jirong.¹⁰⁶ No change in price occurred in 1723, when Li Fu repaired and supplemented the woodblocks.¹⁰⁷ The rate set in 1664 may even have remained in effect until 1741. These price fluctuations are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: The Official Price of the Jiaxing Tripitaka (1589-1741)

Period	Rate per 100 leaves (in taels)
1589-1608	0.06
1609-1646	0.03
1647-1658	0.1
1659-1663	0.08
1664-1741	0.064

Wu Yongxian did not provide an economic rationale for his 1609 price reduction; indeed, it seems to go against what we know about the rise in the prices of other commodities at this time. The price increase in 1647 can be understood as compensating for this unreasonably low price. Another cause of the increase may have been the effects of the Manchu pacification of Zhejiang, where the books were printed and bound, and of Fujian, where the paper was produced. Thereafter the prices decreased in 1659 and again in 1664 (by 20% each time), never returning to the Ming levels of 1589-1644, however. The reduction in 1659 seems to agree with the downward trend in prices in 1656-57, when rice and cotton prices in the Yangzi Delta decreased to less than half of what they had been in the preceding years. From 1661 onward, rice prices in the Yangzi Delta fell into a long-term decline—what has been called the “Kangxi depression” (1660-90)—which was accompanied by growing distress and unem-

¹⁰⁵ “Zōkyō mokuroku” (1741), in Ōba, ed., *Hakusai shomoku*, 48:63b; see also Ōba, *Edo jidai ni okeru Chūgoku bunka juyō no kenkyū*, p. 424.

¹⁰⁶ Zhu, *Xingsutang mudu shulu*, gui: 34a-b, run: 18a-b.

¹⁰⁷ See Li Fu, “Buke Jiaxing Lengyan si Zangjing xu,” cited in Zhang Hongwei, “Gugong Bowuyuan cang *jiaxing zang* de jiazhi,” p. 547 n. 1.

ployment among the urban trades.¹⁰⁸ Both the 1659 and 1664 price reductions appear to have reflected this depression.

The prices listed are those at which the monks in the workshop were supposed to sell the books. They were not allowed to increase them without the approval of the local community of benefactors (people like Feng Mengzhen, Wu Yongxian and Zhu Dayou), and of the local officials. Whether private booksellers were involved in selling the books and at what prices, we do not know. Nor do we know anything about prices in the used book market. All we know is that purchasers were expected to pay at catalogue prices, and to do so in cash and not on credit.¹⁰⁹

Fluctuations in Production Costs

Two documents tell us about the cost of transcribing and carving woodblocks. The first, “Kezang guize” 刻藏規則 [Regulations on carving woodblocks for the Tripitaka], may have come into being on Mount Wutai in 1589-93, when Mizang supervised the project. According to this document, only blocks of pear wood of one *cun* thickness and in good condition were acceptable. They cost 0.03 tael a piece. It is unclear why this document does not fix rates of payment for transcribing and carving characters; but, fortunately, Mizang does mention in a letter that the rate of 0.04 tael per 100 characters was common in north China from 1589 through 1592. According to the regulations, a carver was remunerated at a rate of 0.02 tael per leaf for carving of the first class, 0.01 tael per leaf for second class, and not rewarded, or even fined, for third class (no criteria for these classes are mentioned). For carving of unexpectedly low quality, the carver was required to compensate the workshop for the waste in woodblocks and time. In addition, the work of planing the four edges of the carved woodblock was paid at the rate of 0.02 tael per 10 blocks.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Richard von Glahn, *Fountain of Fortune*, pp. 211-13.

¹⁰⁹ Feng Mengzhen, “Ti Jingzhi huayi,” in Feng, *Kuaixuetang ji*, 30:7a-b; Wu Yongxian, “Preface,” cited in Zhang Hongwei, “Gugong Bowuyuan cang *Jiaxing Zang* de jiazhi,” p. 547 n. 3; Zhu Dayou, “Ken mian she qing jingdian shuo,” in Zhu Jirong, *Xingsutang mudu shulu*, ren: 4a-5a; *Jiaxing zang mulu*, 1a; Zhu, *Mudu shulu*, ren: 8a-9a.

¹¹⁰ “Kezang guize,” in *Ke Zang yuangqi*, 50a-51b. For the average rate for transcribing and carving in north China, see Mizang, “Yu Wu Kangyu jushi,” in *Mizang yigao*, 1:39b.

Those regulations were renewed in “Kechang qianliang jingfei huayi” 刻藏錢糧經費畫一 [Standards of costs and expenses for carving the Tripitaka], a document that was issued in 1601 in Jizhao Priory, to which the carving workshop had been moved. It stipulated that characters were to be carved on both sides of a woodblock using a page format of ten columns of twenty characters per half leaf. One woodblock could thus contain a maximum of eight hundred characters, carved on both sides. The rate for transcribing the characters onto a block was 0.004 tael per 100 characters; for carving them, 0.035 tael per 100 characters. One woodblock could be bought and conveyed to Jizhao Priory for a price of 0.034 tael, its surfaces polished for 0.002 tael, and four edges sawn off and smoothed for 0.002 tael. According to the official assessment, the cost for a completed woodblock was 0.36 tael. As the carving workshop was expected to produce around 1200 woodblocks a year, we can quickly get a sense of its annual production costs. In addition to the cost of materials and labour, over 80 taels was spent on clothing for the staff, transport, fodder for horses, and sundry expenses. As a result of negotiations with local officials and benefactors, the carvers were able to get these costs covered by having 0.01 tael per 100 characters added to the piece rate.¹¹¹ According to the document of 1601, at a production rate of 1,200 woodblocks, or 960,000 characters, per year, the annual budget of Jizhao Priory was 526 taels (432 taels for carving the blocks and 96 taels to cover additional expenses). These figures would mean a real cost close to 0.055 tael per 100 characters.

In any event, the cost of transcribing characters and carving blocks fluctuated significantly over the next century. According to my statistics, from 1650 through 1676 it was 0.057-0.06 tael per 100 characters, more than 20% higher than in the period from 1600 to 1641, and nearly 100% higher than the cost at Lengyan Monastery in 1644, where some woodblocks were carved. In Table 2, other than for the period 1589-92 the cost of transcribing and carving 100 characters is

¹¹¹ “Kechang qianliang jingfei huayi,” in *Ke Zang yuanqi*, 55a-b. According to my calculation, the cost for a carved woodblock ready for printing was 0.35 tael, including additional expenses, rather than 0.36. The reason for the deviation is unclear. For the techniques and procedures used in carving woodblocks, see Tsuen-Hsuein Tsien, *Paper and Printing*, pp. 196-201.

derived from the records of total costs in the colophons. The lowest prices appeared during the collapse of the Ming (1642-44), while during the period 1650-76 they increased.¹¹² Nakajima Ryūzō confirms this trend on the basis of a selective investigation in which he found the cost for transcribing and carving one character rising from 0.0005 tael in 1629 to 0.0006 in 1660, an increase of 20%.¹¹³ Moreover, the cost for blocks of pear wood also rose from a rate of 0.034 tael per block in 1601, to 0.04-0.05 tael in 1642-44,¹¹⁴ and 0.08 tael in 1655.¹¹⁵

Table 2: The Costs for Transcribing and Carving Woodblocks of the Jiaxing Tripitaka (1589-1676)

Period	Rate (Tael per 100 Characters)
1589-92	0.040
1601-32	0.05-0.055
1634-41	0.045-0.05
1642-44	0.03-0.04
1650-76	0.057-0.06

SOURCE: The colophons of all the works included in Volumes 1-10 and 17-19 of the photomechanically printed *Mingban Jiaxing dazangjing*.

¹¹² The reasons for this fluctuation are hard to determine. Possible causes include variations in political and economic circumstances, regional conditions, carvers' skills, the hardness of the blocks, calligraphic style, the size and construct of characters, and the quality of illustrations.

¹¹³ Nakajima Ryūzō, "Iwayuru Banreki Kakō daizōkyō no kankoku," p. 79.

¹¹⁴ In 1642-44, the woodblocks of three parts of the Tripitaka were carved in the Yushan Huayang 虞山華嚴閣 owned by Mao Jin, who paid 0.04 tael for each block of pear wood. See "Fo shuo Molizhitian tuoluoni zhou jing" 佛說摩利支天陀羅尼呪經 (1642), in *Mingban Jiaxing dazangjing*, vol. 1, p. 241; "Fo shuo Ganlujing tuoluoni" 佛說甘露經陀羅尼 (1643), *ibid.*, p. 235; and "Sheng jiudu Fomu ershiyi zhong lizan jing" 聖救度佛母二十一種禮贊經 (1644), *ibid.*, p. 254. A sum of 0.65 tael was paid for thirteen woodblocks for "Dacheng lengjia jing weishi lun" 大乘楞伽經唯識論 in 1644, as indicated in Mou Yonghe, *Mingdai chuban shi*, p. 312. An exception is the cost for seventy-seven pear woodblocks for the "Lushan Lianzong baojian" 廬山蓮宗寶鑒 (153 pages), *viz.* 6.6 tael, a rate of 0.086 tael per block. This very high rate is likely due to the forty-nine exquisite Buddhist illustrations in the book, which required blocks of higher quality. See *Jiaxing dazangjing*, vol. 9, pp. 415-52.

¹¹⁵ 0.56 tael was paid for seven woodblocks for "Foshuo bukong juansuo zhoujing" 佛說不空羂索咒經 in 1655, as cited in Mou, *Mingdai chuban shi*, p. 312. The cost for blocks during the Kangxi period was probably no lower than in 1655.

Production Costs and Book Prices

To what extent did the increase in production costs influence prices? The materials I have examined indicate that the cost for transcribing and carving was not fully taken into consideration when prices were calculated. Publishing the Tripitaka was basically a nonprofit enterprise. According to Zhu Dayou, the economic intention underlying the distribution of books at a reasonable price was to get enough of a return to pay for more woodblocks to be carved until the project was completed.¹¹⁶ As many colophons illustrate, as of 1644 the Tripitaka Workshop at Lengyan Monastery financed the carving of many woodblocks using income from sales. In their account of the 1647 price increase, Zhu Maoshi and Zhu Maojing did not mention the increasing costs of producing the blocks but emphasized instead the increasing cost of printing, binding, paper, and transport labor to move printing materials and printed books to and from Mount Jing. In their response to the price reduction of 1664, the monks in charge of distribution drew attention to these same economic elements plus the cost of repairing and correcting woodblocks. According to them, these costs could not be covered unless books were sold at the rate they suggested. Thus, it is safe to say that the expense of transcribing and carving woodblocks, which basically came out of benefactors' pockets, was not factored into prices. Indeed, this principle for setting prices was established at the outset of the project, when Feng Mengzhen stated in 1595 that the rate should be based on the average costs of paper, printing, and binding.¹¹⁷ If that procedure was followed, the rate of 0.064 tael per 100 leaves (Table 1) must be very close to the actual cost of 100 leaves printed, bound, and transported from 1664 onward.

The price of a book, theoretically, is the result of a negotiation between the publisher's supply and the purchasers' demand. The amount a purchaser is willing to pay reflects the valuation he or she puts on the book, and the amount charged by the publisher or printer conveys information as to the value of the effort and inputs needed for production. Suppliers of printing materials, shippers, booksellers, and binders

¹¹⁶ Zhu Dayou, "Ken mian she qing jingdian shuo," in Zhu Jirong, *Xingsutang mudu shulu*, jia: 5a.

¹¹⁷ Feng Mengzhen, "Ti Jing zhi huayi," in Feng, *Kuaixuetang ji*, 30:7a-b.

also affect the formation of book prices, as do authors, publishers, printers, and purchasers. External elements, such as political and legal sanctions, economic and social conjunctures, and intellectual influences have an impact as well.¹¹⁸ As noted earlier, the Tripitaka Workshop concurrently functioned as publisher, printer, binder, and bookseller of the Jiaying Tripitaka. It negotiated over prices by engaging the local Buddhist community face to face, setting them with the intervention of the local government. Given the dependency of the price on the supply of printing materials, binding, transportation, and labor, the book price would have been more significant for the Tripitaka's reading public than for the workshop, which operated on a nonprofit basis.

The Economic Significance of Book Prices

How significant were the prices of religious books to Buddhist devotees on the Yangzi Delta in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries? Was a fascicle in the Tripitaka affordable to the common people? Were the prices of books in the Tripitaka high or low in the Ming and Qing economic context? As it is difficult to answer these questions definitively, in the rest of this section I would like to run an experiment to figure out whether book prices were relatively high or low.

Wheat prices were analyzed by John Locke (1632-1704) and Adam Smith (1723-90) to measure price fluctuations and ascertain the relative values of commodities in England. So too, grain prices can be used to measure price trends in China.¹¹⁹ Since around 1450, silver circulated as the indispensable currency in China, more so in economically advanced regions such as the Yangzi Delta where rice was the main staple and one of the most important commodities on the market. Copper coins also circulated, yet the prices of most commodities were given in weights of silver.¹²⁰ Comparing the price of books with the contemporary price of rice should help us to assess the economic burden of the Jiaying Tripitaka for Buddhists. This is what I have done in Table

¹¹⁸ In this regard, Robert Darnton's communication circuit model is stimulating for studying the economics of book history. See "What is the History of Books?", in Darnton, *The Kiss of Lamourette*, pp. 111-13.

¹¹⁹ Peng Xinwei, *Zhongguo huobi shi*, pp. 494-96, 504 n. 1.

¹²⁰ For the circulation of silver as a legal currency from the 1480s onward, see Peng, *Zhongguo huobi shi*, pp. 452-58.

3 by dividing book prices per 100 leaves by rice prices per *shi* (107.4 litres or 100 *sheng*), as these are reported for Suzhou and Jiaxing prefectures in the work of Kishimoto Mio.¹²¹ The trend of their relative values is shown in Figure 1.

An increase in the price of rice in Jiaxing before 1594 is confirmed by Feng Mengzhen, who complained in letters to three friends that the price had risen to 1.7 taels.¹²² In Table 3, the years when the relative values appeared low witnessed unusual rice prices in the Yangzi Delta: flood in 1608, bad harvest in 1620, warfare, famine, and banditry in 1640-46,¹²³ natural disasters in 1679-80, serious drought in 1707, and severe flooding in 1708-09. Generally, as the polynomial trendlines indicate, the Tripitaka's value relative to rice prices increased from 1589 to 1715. It fell a little due to increasing rice prices in the 1590s-1640s, falling to a low point in the 1620s-40s, but dramatically increased in the 1650s-1710s, peaking in the 1680s-90s.

As the Jiaxing Tripitaka's value relative to rice increased, the cost in rice of 100 leaves of a Buddhist text from the Tripitaka Workshop was more in the 1680s than in the 1640s. Affordability is not a straightforward matter of the relative value of books to grain, however. Books, unlike grain, are not daily necessities. Their prices are not affected in the same way that grain prices are when food is scarce. More importantly, the Tripitaka's relative value was not the only factor determining its affordability. Its affordability also depended upon the purchaser's harvest or real income after paying for food and necessities. What follows are several experiments to suggest how this might be done.

Prices and wages fluctuated wildly in the seventeenth century. In the Chongzhen period, from the late 1620s to mid-1640s, the price of rice rose precipitously due to famine, natural disaster, warfare, and

¹²¹ Kishimoto Mio, *Shindai Chūgoku no bukka to keizai hendō*, pp. 114-15. Yeh-Chien Wang outlines the behavior of rice prices in the Jiangnan area from 1638 through 1935 by considering as annual prices in the Jiangnan area those of Shanghai in 1638-95 and those of Suzhou in 1696-1740. See Wang, "Secular Trends of Rice Prices in the Yangzi Delta," Table 1.1 on pp. 40-42; 39.

¹²² See Feng Mengzhen, "Yu Xu Rudong xiansheng" 與徐孺東先生, "Yu Pan Quhua" 與潘去華, and "Bao Fu Bojun" 報傅伯峻, in Feng, *Kuixuetang ji*, 32:17b-18b; 35:29b-30a; 43:2b. In his letters to Xu and Pan, Feng mentions the plan to move the headquarters of the Jiaxing Tripitaka from Mount Wutai to Mount Jing, which was carried on in 1594.

¹²³ For a description of extreme grain prices in the late Ming, see Timothy Brook, "The Fall of the Ming and the Price of Grain."

Table 3: Rice Prices, Prices of the Jiaxing Tripitaka, and Their Relative Values in Suzhou and Jiaxing (1589-1715)

RP: Rice Price (tael/shū); BP: Book Price (tael/100 leaves); RV: Relative Value (BP/RP)

Year	RP (Suzhou)	RV (Suzhou)	RP (Jiaxing)	RV (Jiaxing)	BP	Year	RP (Suzhou)	RV (Suzhou)	RP (Jiaxing)	RV (Jiaxing)	BP
1589	1.8	0.0333			0.06	1656	0.7	0.1429			0.1
1608	1.2	0.0500	1	0.0600	0.06	1657	0.7	0.1429			0.1
1620	1.8	0.0167	1.5	0.0200	0.03	1659	1.8	0.0444			0.08
1624	1.5	0.0200			0.03	1661	1.7	0.0471	1.7	0.0471	0.08
1625	1.2	0.0250			0.03	1665	0.9	0.0711			0.064
1627	1.5	0.0200			0.03	1669			0.6	0.1067	0.064
1637	1.1	0.0273			0.03	1679	3	0.0213			0.064
1638	2	0.0150	1	0.0300	0.03	1680	2.4	0.0267			0.064
1640	1.8	0.0167	3	0.0100	0.03	1682			2.5	0.0256	0.064
1641	4	0.0075	4.5	0.0067	0.03	1683	0.8	0.0800			0.064
1642	5	0.0060	4	0.0075	0.03	1692	0.8	0.0800			0.064
1643			4	0.0075	0.03	1693	1	0.0640			0.064
1646	2.7	0.0111	4	0.0075	0.03	1696	0.7	0.0914	0.5	0.1280	0.064
1647	5	0.0200	4	0.0250	0.1	1698	1	0.0640			0.064
1648			3	0.0333	0.1	1701	0.8	0.0800			0.064
1649	1	0.1000	1.7	0.0588	0.1	1703	0.5	0.1280			0.064
1650			1	0.1000	0.1	1706	1.43	0.0448			0.064
1651	4.4	0.0227	5	0.0200	0.1	1707	2.4	0.0267	1.8	0.0356	0.064
1652	2.7	0.0370	3	0.0333	0.1	1708	2.4	0.0267	2.2	0.0291	0.064
1653			3	0.0333	0.1	1709	2.4	0.0267			0.064
1654			3	0.0333	0.1	1712	0.9	0.0711			0.064
1655			1.7	0.0588	0.1	1715	1	0.0640			0.064

SOURCE: Kishimoto Mio, *Shindai Chūgoku no bukka*, pp. 114-15. When two or more prices are listed for a same year, I select the highest one, which works better for my purpose. The prices in copper cash (five occurrences) were converted into prices in tael at the common ratio of 1000:1, although the ratio perhaps varied temporally and spatially.

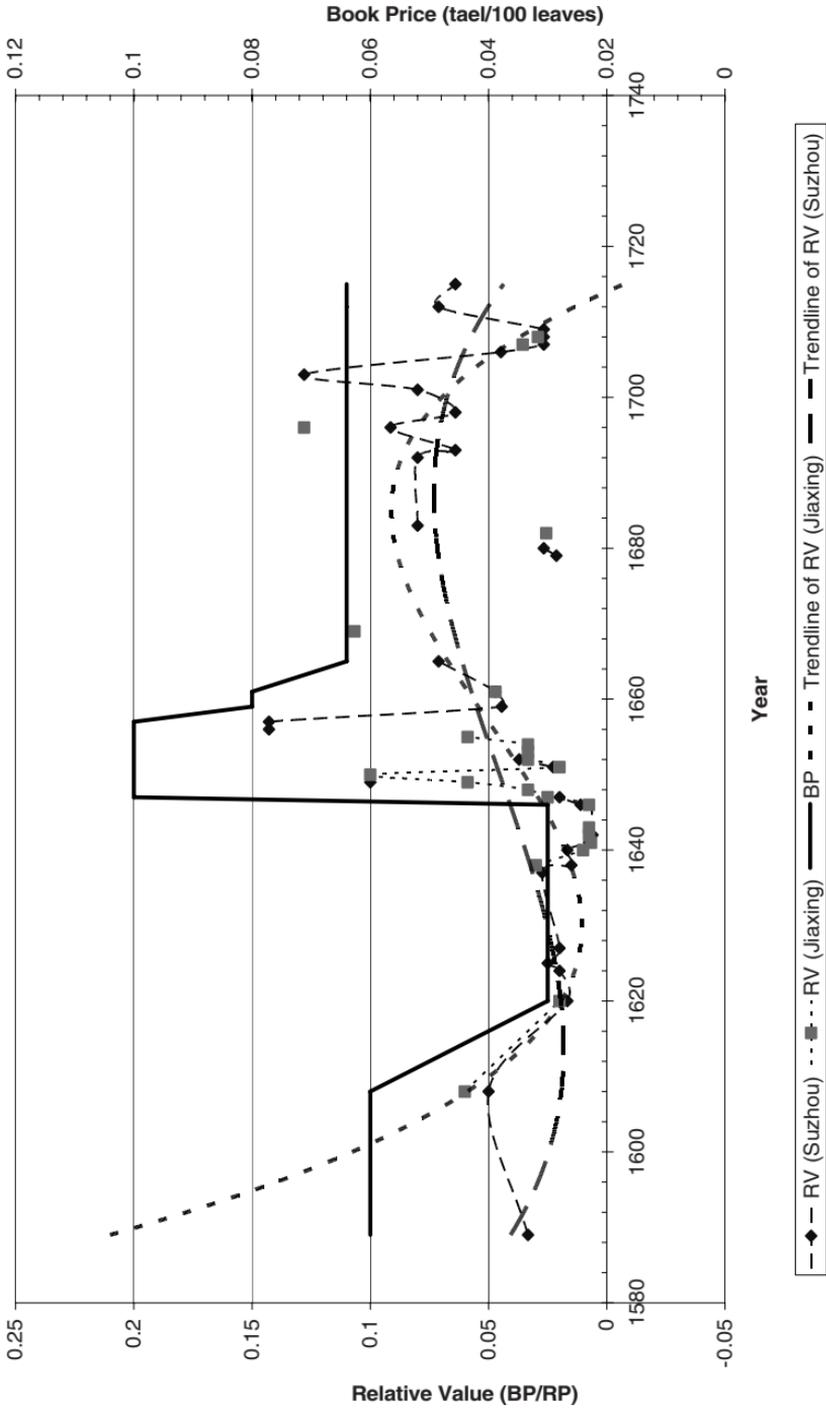


Figure 1: The Book Prices and Relative Values of the Jiaxing Tripitaka in Suzhou and Jiaxing (1589-1715)

banditry. During the depression of the early Kangxi era in the 1660s, on the other hand, rice was plentiful but prices fell, and many farmers could not meet their rent and loan payments. Wages also fluctuated. We can see this from the wages that the Suzhou prefectural government paid to river dredgers. According to this data, the daily wage for an unskilled labourer was 0.02 tael in 1640. It rose to 0.07 tael in 1657, and declined to 0.04 tael in 1681.¹²⁴ If we match these data with rice prices for the same years—1.8 tael per *shi* in 1640, falling to 0.6 tael in 1657, and then rising to 2.4 tael in 1681¹²⁵—we can make an assessment of the affordability of our Buddhist books.

To make this calculation, we compare the price of books with the price of rice by measuring both against income. In 1640, one day's labour paid for 1.1 *sheng* (1.2 litres) of rice or 67 leaves of books. In 1657, one day's labour paid for 11.7 *sheng* (12.5 litres) or 70 leaves. In 1681, it paid for 1.7 *sheng* (1.8 litres) or 62.5 leaves. These data suggest that, relative to wages, rice was very expensive in 1640, less expensive in 1681, and least expensive in 1657. Books were also least expensive in 1657. Unlike rice, however, they were roughly as affordable in 1681 as they had been in 1640. Even though the nominal price of books in the Tripitaka in 1681 was over twice what it had been in 1640, this comparison with wages and commodity prices suggests that the books were even cheaper in 1681 than they had been in 1640.

What this calculation does not include is the changing cost of the rice that a person actually consumed. To factor the cost of grain consumption in, we must estimate the amount of grain a labourer would consume. Estimates of annual per capita grain consumption in eighteenth-century Jiangnan vary from 2.2 to 2.5 *shi*, which we may equate roughly to a daily consumption of 0.6 *sheng* (0.64 litres).¹²⁶ If rice cost 1.8 taels per *shi* in 1640, then a single day labourer had to spend roughly 0.011 tael to feed himself. At a daily wage of 0.02 tael, he was

¹²⁴ Kishimoto Mio, *Shindai Chūgoku no bukka*, p. 161.

¹²⁵ I have estimated the price of rice in 1681 by extrapolating from Kishimoto's data for Suzhou in 1680 (2.4 tael per *shi*) and Jiaying in 1682 (2.5 tael per *shi*).

¹²⁶ Robert B. Marks gives 2.2 *shi* as the annual per capita grain consumption in eighteenth-century Jiangnan in his "Rice prices, food supply, and market structure in eighteenth-century south China," pp. 77-78. Pierre-Étienne Will and R. Bin Wong set grain consumption at 2.5 *shi* per person; see Will and Wong, *Nourish the People*, p. 465.

left with 45% of his income to meet other expenses.¹²⁷ In theory, that surplus above food subsistence would allow him to buy 31 leaves of the Tripitaka. If we make the same calculations for the other two dates, a day labourer in 1657 had to spend 0.0036 tael to feed himself, leaving enough of a surplus to buy 66 leaves. In 1681, his daily rice intake would cost 0.015 taels, leaving a surplus that allowed him to afford 39 leaves. This calculation produces a more precise sense of affordability. From it, we can conclude that the Jiaxing Tripitaka was much more affordable in 1657 than in 1640 and 1681, even though this was when its nominal price was at its highest.

These calculations do not take into consideration the other expenses that made up the cost of living, however. Real affordability would have been much lower. Nor do they show how affordability varied for those earning more than a day labourer: obviously, the question of affordability was much different for a scholar or merchant with good income. Consider Feng Mengzhen. A modest landlord, Feng in the 1590s owned over 300 *mu* of arable land, which produced an annual land rent of over 300 *shi*. This harvest was enough to support his family's gentry lifestyle. In a year of bad harvest, however, they could run short of food, and a gift of ten taels from a friend helped him considerably.¹²⁸ Even under such financial conditions, Feng was able to purchase books from the Tripitaka Workshop, as we shall see in the next section. Despite the obvious fact that richer people were better able to afford books than poorer people, rich and poor may not have needed to buy Buddhist books to the same extent, and the extent to which either could afford books has to take this need into account. The measurement of a book's affordability must therefore take account of its reading public: their reading context, their need for books, and their financial capacity.

Putting all these factors together, I would argue that the overall increase in the price of books from the 1590s to the 1710s does not mean they became less affordable. When real income is taken into

¹²⁷ This percentage corresponds closely to Fang Xing's estimate that a farm laborer on the Yangzi Delta between the seventeenth and the early nineteenth centuries spent 55% of his earnings in cash and kind on food. See Fang, "Qingdai Jiangnan nongmin de xiao-fei," pp. 93, 95.

¹²⁸ Feng Mengzhen, "Bao Fu Bojun," in Feng, *Kuaixuetang ji*, 43:2b.

consideration, the affordability of a book has to be measured differently. These calculations suggest that the Tripitaka was no more expensive in the early Qing than in the late Ming. The wider circulation of the Jiaxing Tripitaka in this period compared to the Ming, and of this edition compared to others, supports this conclusion.

The Circulation of the Jiaxing Tripitaka

We can also attempt to assess affordability by considering circulation. As mentioned above, the engraving of the woodblocks of the Jiaxing Tripitaka was paid for by donations from benefactors. This arrangement largely removed this part of the production process from market logic. Where the logic of supply and demand came into play was with the material and labor costs of printing, binding, and shipping. These were the costs on which book prices were calculated, and the main causes of price fluctuation. Given that purchasers were required to pay at the official prices, that buying on credit was forbidden, and that copies donated to monasteries were not given away but had to be paid for by a benefactor, it would be reasonable to suppose that any increase in these costs would slow down acquisition and reduce circulation. Yet it appears that the circulation of the Jiaxing Tripitaka increased. More fundraising appeals for purchasing the Jiaxing edition have been found for the early Qing than the late Ming, and more copies were exported, either as a set or as separate items, to Japan from the 1650s.

Here we need to consider the editions that might have competed with the Jiaxing Tripitaka for buyers on the Yangzi Delta. This was a prosperous region with a higher rate of literacy than elsewhere and a Buddhist tradition going back to the early sixth century.¹²⁹ Jiaxing Prefecture was representative of this culture. During the late Ming, it was known for its many Buddhist monasteries, and Buddhist assemblies were popular.¹³⁰

¹²⁹) From the twelfth to the early sixteenth centuries, some 426 Buddhist monasteries existed successively in Hangzhou Prefecture alone; see Wu Zhijing, *Wulin Fan zhi*.

¹³⁰) Qian Qianyi, "Lengyan si zhilue xu," in his *Muzhai youxue ji*, p. 865. In his description of local customs the Jiaxing gazetteer author denounces popular Buddhist assemblies among laymen from his Confucian perspective; see Huang Chenghao, *Jiaxing xianzhi*, p. 637.

From the twelfth through the seventeenth century, six Chinese editions of the Tripitaka were published in the Yangzi Delta.¹³¹ During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as already mentioned, four editions were available: the Southern edition, the Northern edition, the Wulin edition, and the Jiaxing edition. Little is known about the Wulin edition since it was lost right after it appeared.¹³² Of the two editions sponsored by the Ming royal family, the Southern edition was stored and printed in a monastery in Nanjing, where it was distributed publicly and remained accessible until 1645, though the woodblocks had rotted significantly by then and the books printed were of poor quality.¹³³ The distribution of the Southern edition was controlled by a set of regulations drawn up in 1607 by the Central Buddhist Registry (*Senglusi* 僧錄司). Unlike the catalogues of the Jiaxing Tripitaka, however, these regulations listed no prices for separate titles, but only for a full set, with variations depending on quality of printing and binding materials. This suggests that indeed the Southern Tripitaka was distributed as a full set only. Although the Southern edition included fewer titles than the Jiaxing edition, a full set of the finest quality cost 289.882 taels, compared to 181.61 taels for the main canon of the Jiaxing Tripitaka at its highest price (1647-58). The lowest-quality Southern edition cost 64.652 taels, though again this is still higher than the Jiaxing Tripitaka at its lower price (55 taels at the rate of 0.03 tael per 100 leaves).¹³⁴ It is reported that the Southern edition was “printed and circulated widely” during the Wanli era. Around twenty sets were printed each year.¹³⁵

As for the Northern edition, its woodblocks were stored in the Forbidden City in Beijing, and only a limited number of full sets were

¹³¹ These are the Yuanjue, Zifu, Qisha, Puning, Wulin, and Jiaxing editions (see note 8 above for details).

¹³² Zibo, “Ke zang yuanqi,” in *Zibo zunzhe quanji*, p. 427.

¹³³ In 1645, a Buddhist monk named Hanke 函可 arrived at Nanjing from Canton to buy the Southern edition. See Chen Yuan, *Dian Qian Fojiao kao*, p. 92. The printing quality of the Southern edition was already poor in Zibo’s time. See Zibo, “Ke zang yuanqi,” in *Zibo zunzhe quanji*, p. 427; see also Feng, “Jingkou Beigushan Ganlu si qijian cangjingge muyuan shuwen” 京口北固山甘露寺啓建藏經閣募緣疏文, in Feng, *Kuai-xuetang ji*, 26:6b-8a.

¹³⁴ For the various prices of the Southern Tripitaka, see Ge Yinliang, *Jinling Fancha zhi*, 49:67a-74b.

¹³⁵ Zhang Xiumin, “Mingdai Nanjing de yinshu” 明代南京的印書, in *Zhang Xiumin yinshua shi lunwen ji*, p. 143.

produced for bestowal on favoured monasteries or clerics in the name of the Ming emperors. In some cases this gift was in response to a request, and in all cases it required an official permit issued in advance by the Ministry of Rites or the Central Buddhist Registry.¹³⁶ Once the application was approved, the applicant's monastery was expected to construct a library to house the Tripitaka before it was bestowed.¹³⁷ It was hard to obtain this favor from the emperor or raise the money to construct a library. Moreover, as stipulated in the imperial licenses or edicts, the bestowed Tripitaka was inaccessible to common worshippers, even to someone such as Feng Mengzhen who volunteered his services to proofread the Jiaxing Tripitaka.¹³⁸ Similarly, the Dragon edition of the Qing emperors could not be subscribed to without the permission of the Imperial Household Department (*Neiwufu* 內務府) or the Central Buddhist Registry. In contrast, the Jiaxing Tripitaka was accessible to common Buddhists, who were not expected to apply for any license in advance.

¹³⁶ Feng Mengzhen mentioned in 1601 the difficulties of getting a whole set of the Northern edition bestowed by the Wanli Emperor; see Feng, "Song Rou'an He shangren yi qing dazang ru Jingshi xu" 送柔菴和上人以請大藏入京師序, in *Kuaixuetang ji*, 4:30b-31b. Other contemporaries noticed the same difficulties; see Zibo, "Ke zang yuanqi," in *Zibo zunzhe quanji*, p. 427. According to Lu Guangzu, only several copies of the Northern and Southern editions had been bestowed up to the 1580s; see Lu, "Mu ke dazangjing xu," in Song, *Jingshan zhi*, 5:8b. In his study of the Northern edition, Nozawa Yoshimi collects information on 139 bestowed copies; see Nozawa, "Mindai hokuzō kō (1): kashi jōkyō o chūshin ni," esp. Fig. 1. For an example of the official certificates or permits required in advance, see Feng Mengzhen's letter to Lu Guangzu, "Shang Taiweng" 上臺翁, in Feng, *Kuaixuetang ji*, 36:12b-13a. During the Wanli period, some monks succeeded in obtaining full sets of the Northern edition of the Tripitaka through Empress Dowager Cisheng, as Timothy Brook illustrates with some examples in *Praying for Power*, pp. 241, 291, 365 n. 47.

¹³⁷ Zhang Hongwei, "Fangce zang de kanke yu Mingdai guanban dazangjing," pp. 150-51.

¹³⁸ For the 1592 edict bestowing a copy of the Northern edition on Lengyan Monastery, see Huang Chenghao, *Jiaxing xianzhi*, p. 316. The 1600 edict on bestowing copies on some prominent monasteries is included in Wu Zhijing, *Wulin Fan zhi*, 7:3a. Both edicts forbade the common people from having access. Such prohibitions are confirmed by Wang Daokun 汪道昆, who praises the anticipated affordability and accessibility of the planned Jiaxing Tripitaka; see Wang, "Ke dazangjing xu" 刻大藏經序, in Song, *Jingshan zhi*, 5:14b-16b. In his letter to Mou Zhongchun, Feng Mengzhen complained that it was hard to borrow copies of the bestowed Northern edition to use while he was proofreading the Jiaxing edition. See Feng, "Da Zhongchun" 答仲淳, in his *Kuaixuetang ji*, 38:27b.

Few documents are available to show the extent to which the Jiaxing Tripitaka circulated among laymen, but it is certain that many bought or otherwise had access to at least some of the titles in the collection.¹³⁹ Feng Mengzhen, for instance, subscribed to the Tripitaka and obtained a full set.¹⁴⁰ To do this, he supplied the paper to the Workshop, together with a deposit and a book list. Feng also ordered some titles for a friend.¹⁴¹ For another instance, we know that Wang Zaijin 王在晉 (1564-1643, *jinsshi* 1592) obtained a set from Danju.¹⁴² Most of the extant materials indicate that monasteries were either the main subscribers or the intended recipients of copies that wealthy laymen bought. In 1628, Teng Xiushi 滕秀實 (d. 1632) donated money to Yongjue specifically to buy a full set.¹⁴³ A Cantonese layman, Qiao Zongshao 喬宗紹, did the same for some monasteries in Guangdong.¹⁴⁴ So too in 1679, the former grand secretary and Manchu nobleman Mingju 明珠 (1635-1708) subscribed for a full set and donated it to the Qianfo Monastery (*Qianfo si* 千佛寺).¹⁴⁵ Despite these examples, it was not easy for a layman of modest means to afford a set. Around 1676, a layman named Sun Yunji 孫允吉 made a vow to donate a copy

¹³⁹ The seal “Renlizi yin” 人里子印 is found in the copy of *Sijia yulu* 四家語錄 in the Harvard-Yenching Library, indicating that this copy once was owned by a layman. Two other seals indicate the names of two monasteries, suggesting that it may have been donated by the layman to one of the monasteries, from which it was moved into the other. See Shen Jin, *Meiguo Hafo daxue Hafo-Yanjing tushuguan Zhongwen shanben shuzhi* (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 1999), pp. 492-93.

¹⁴⁰ Mizang, “Yu Xu Wenqing jushi,” in *Mizang yigao*, 1:45b-47b. According to Mizang, another layman named Yuan Weizhi 袁微之 was also willing to subscribe to the *Tripitaka* after Feng had done so.

¹⁴¹ See Feng Mengzhen, “Yu Zang shixiong,” in Feng, *Kuaxuetang ji*, 43:19b-20a; “Da Zhou Yuanfu” 答周元孚, *ibid.*, 35:4b.

¹⁴² Wang Zaijin, “Yu Kai gong” 與鎧公, in Song, *Jingshan zhi*, 8:28a.

¹⁴³ Yongjue, “Qing Fangce zangjing ji,” in *Gushan Yongjue heshang guanglu*, 15:2a-b; “Ji Teng Xiushi jushi” 祭滕秀實居士, *ibid.*, 16:9b-11a.

¹⁴⁴ Hanshan, “Jinghui si Qiao Zongshao gong qing fangce dazangjing xu” 淨慧寺喬宗紹公請方冊大藏經序, in *Hanshan laoren mengyou ji*, 19:8-9.

¹⁴⁵ See the colophon on the last page of the copy of *Da Ming sanzang shengjiao mulu* collected in the Asian Library at the University of British Columbia. For Mingju’s biography, see Zhao Erxun et al., *Qing shi gao*, 269.9992-94; Arthur W. Hummel, ed., *Eminent Chinese of the Ch’ing Period*, pp. 577-78. For further examples, see Zhuanyu, “Muhua zangjing shu” 募化藏經疏, in his *Zizhulin Zhuanyu Heng heshang yulu*, 10:2b-4b; “Guyou Bao’en si mu zangjing shu” 古攸報恩寺募藏經疏, *ibid.*, 10:5b-6b; “Deshan Qianming si mu zangjing shu” 德山乾明寺募藏經疏, *ibid.*, 10:8a-10b; Li Rihua, “Lushan Jinzhuping muyuan shu” 廬山金竹坪募緣疏, in *Tianzhitang ji*, 28:30b-31b.

of the Tripitaka to a monastery in Jiangxi, but after three years in Jiaxing he was able to get only a fifth of the full set completed.¹⁴⁶ It should be added that the distribution of the Jiaxing Tripitaka was empire-wide. In addition to the Yangzi Delta, copies of it were collected in monasteries in Jiangxi, Hunan, Beijing, and even in Yunnan and Guizhou in the southwest.¹⁴⁷

The Jiaxing Tripitaka also went to Japan. In 1654, the Chinese monk Ingen Ryūki 隱元隆琦 (1592-1673) brought a full set with him when he moved to Japan. Copies were also shipped to Japan during the Edo period (1603-1867).¹⁴⁸ Imported books had to be registered on arrival in Nagasaki under the supervision of the inspecting censor for imported Chinese books, some of whose catalogues are extant in *Hakusai shomoku* [Catalogues of imported Chinese books]¹⁴⁹ and in the archives in the Nagasaki Municipal Museum. Arriving mainly from Nanjing and Ningbo, the Jiaxing Tripitaka accounted for a large proportion of the imported books, both economically and physically, though none of the records give the prices paid. We know of one full set imported in 1718, three in 1719, three in 1724, two in 1735, one in 1740, and one in 1741.¹⁵⁰ The fact that the set imported in 1740 was for the Nagasaki monastery Kōfuku ji 興福寺, established there by Chinese

¹⁴⁶ To help Sun Yunji, Faxi composed an appeal that Sun would use to raise funds. See Faxi, "Jiangxi Huangbo shan muqing shuben zangjing yuan shu," in *Faxi Yin chanshi yulu*, 12:6a-b.

¹⁴⁷ For the monasteries in Yunnan and Guizhou where copies of the Jiaxing Tripitaka were collected, see Chen Yuan, *Mingji Dian Qian Fojiao kao*, pp. 87-88, 89, 90-91, 93-94.

¹⁴⁸ The Jiaxing Tripitaka was known in Japan variously as the Ming Tripitaka (*Minzō* 明藏), the Wanli Tripitaka (*Banrekizō* 萬曆藏), the Jiaxing Tripitaka (*Kakōzō* 嘉興藏), or the Flat Tripitaka (*bōsatsuzō* 方冊藏). See Tetsugen Dōko, "Koku daizō engi sobun" 刻大藏緣起疏文, in: Takakusu and Watanabe, eds., *Shōwa hōbō sōmoku*, vol. 2, p. 437; "Dai-Nihon kōtei shukukoku daizōkyō engi" 大日本校訂縮刻大藏經緣起, *ibid.*, p. 439. Tetsugen wrote his essay in 1669.

¹⁴⁹ Ōba Osamu, ed., *Kunaichō shoryōbu zō Hakusai shomoku*.

¹⁵⁰ Ōba Osamu, *Edo jidai ni okeru Chūgoku bunka juyō no kenkyū*, p. 422, and Ōba Osamu, ed., *Hakusai shomoku*, Fascicles 13:34-39, 21:74-75, 46:29-44, 47:5, 48:1-74. I checked Ōba Osamu's description against the records in *Hakusai shomoku* and added those for 1718 and 1724. Other full sets imported to Japan in the eighteenth century were donated to the Bairin ji 梅林寺 (Kurume, Fukuoka) in 1715, Shōmyō ji 称名寺 (Ōmi-hachiman, Shiga) in mid-century, and Zuishin ji 瑞蓮寺 and Hōkō ji 法光寺, both in Kyōto. See Nozawa Yoshimi, "Minban Kakōzō no zokuzō, yūzokuzō no kōsei ni tsuite," pp. 20-23. The set at Zuishin Monastery is now in the Komazawa University Library.

Buddhists from Nanjing who might have been expected to order a copy of the Southern Tripitaka from their native city, suggests that the Jiaxing Tripitaka was the more popular edition. Some Japanese devotees of Buddhism went to Jiaxing to purchase the Tripitaka rather than import it through commercial middlemen. In 1677, an original copy of the Jiaxing Tripitaka was imported into Japan at great expense and stored in the Tenyū ji 天祐寺 as an offering to the purchasers' former lord.¹⁵¹

Individual titles in the Jiaxing Tripitaka were also imported. As early as 1640, the Jiaxing edition of the *Jingde chuandeng lu* (J. *Keitoku dentōroku* 景德伝燈録) arrived in Kyōto, where a commercial publisher, Tahara 田原, reproduced it shortly thereafter.¹⁵² Yet other commercial reproductions of Tripitaka texts appeared in Kyōto in the 1650s in numbers suggesting a large demand for the works. The page formats of the Japanese editions are similar to, if not identical with, their Chinese originals, though with Japanese pronunciation marks (*kunten* 訓点) added. These editions oftentimes even duplicated the publication notes (*kaihan kanki* 開版刊記) particular to the Jiaxing Tripitaka.¹⁵³ Perhaps the strongest indication of the popularity and authority of the Jiaxing Tripitaka is the fact that it served, via these Kyōto commercial editions (*machiwan* 町版, literally "town editions"), as the stylistic and textual model for the Tenkai and Ōbaku editions of the Tripitaka published in Edo.¹⁵⁴ The Ōbaku Tripitaka standardized the publication of

¹⁵¹) Included in this imported copy of the whole set are copies of the *Huqiu Long heshang yulu* 虎丘隆和尚語錄 and *Yun'an Zhenjing chanshi yulu* 雲菴真淨禪師語錄, both of which are in the Harvard-Yenching Library. The lord's son made a note about the importation. See Shen Jin, *Zhongwen shanben shuzhi*, pp. 493-94, 494-95.

¹⁵²) The following history of the Jiaxing Tripitaka in Edo Japan is taken from Nozawa Yoshimi, "Edo jidai ni okeru Minban Kakōzō yunyū no eikyō nitsuite."

¹⁵³) For example, the *Guang Hongmingji* was duplicated in this way by Yoshinoya Gonbē 吉野屋権兵衛 in 1654. See *Guojia tushuguan shanben shuzhi chugao*, vol. 3, p. 241.

¹⁵⁴) The Tenkai edition (1637-48) was planned by Tenkai Jigen 天海慈眼 (1536-1643) under Tokugawa Iemitsu's 德川家光 (1604-51) patronage. Though it followed the arrangement of titles in the Later Sixi Tripitaka (*Go Shikeizō* 後思溪藏) of the Southern Song supplemented with the Puning Tripitaka (*Funeizō* 普寧藏) of the Yuan, the Tenkai edition took originals from the Jiaxing Tripitaka or its commercial Japanese reproductions. The Jiaxing Tripitaka was basically reproduced by Tetsugen Dōkō 鉄眼道光 (1630-82), one of Ingen Ryūki's disciples. Tetsugen vowed to publish the Tripitaka after he saw the Jiaxing edition his master had brought to Japan. This became the Ōbaku edition (1671-81). It partly reproduced the commercial Japanese editions, but its texts were completely

Buddhist texts in Japan. Once that edition was completed in 1681, according to Nozawa Yoshimi, the duplication of titles in the Jiaxing Tripitaka declined.¹⁵⁵ This does not mean that the Jiaxing Tripitaka was no longer brought to Japan; as I have noted, it made up a large part of the Chinese books imported into Nagasaki after the Tenwa reign (1681-84). But basically, thanks to the Jiaxing Tripitaka, the Japanese now had their own authoritative edition.

We do not know in total how many full sets or individual titles were distributed between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries in China or Japan. It has been suggested that at least three thousand copies of the *Hongming ji* and *Guang Hongming ji* were printed before 1593.¹⁵⁶ Another observer claimed in 1616 that the Buddhist books distributed by the Tripitaka Workshop were “collected and read in every household” in Jiaxing.¹⁵⁷ In 1667, monk Xingya 行涯 solicited donations sufficient to print 288 copies of the full set and stored them in Ruru Priory (Ruru an 如如庵);¹⁵⁸ one of them was donated by Mingju to the Qianfo Monastery in 1679, as mentioned above. This number is almost fifteen times greater than the number of copies (twenty) of the Southern edition printed yearly in the Wanli period. Although it does not seem likely that works from the Tripitaka were “collected and read in every household,” I am inclined to regard the evidence of distribution in central and frontier China as well as Japan as attesting that this edition seized a larger part of the market than any of the three imperial editions, thanks to its relative affordability, portability, and accessibility.

from the Jiaxing Tripitaka, basically imitating its page format. Lü Cheng provides examples of the layouts of both editions, illustrating that the latter follows the former; see Lü, *Fodian fanlun*, Figs. 11, 14.

¹⁵⁵ Nozawa Yoshimi, “Edo jidai ni okeru Minban Kakōzō yunyū no eikyō nitsuite,” p. 52.

¹⁵⁶ Mizang, “Yu Xu Wenqing jushi,” in *Mizang yigao*, 1:45b-47b.

¹⁵⁷ Zhu Dayou, “Lengyan si Miaozhuangyan lu ji” 楞嚴寺妙莊嚴路紀, in Huang Chenghao, *Jiaxing xianzhi*, pp. 916-17.

¹⁵⁸ Four red rectangular seals in the copy of the *Da Ming sanzang shengjiao mulu* at the University of British Columbia tell this story. See 2:1a, 3:1a; 4:1a.

Conclusion

In this essay, I have reconstructed the publishing history of the Jiaxing Tripitaka from the 1590s to the 1810s, relying extensively on its colophons and catalogues to elucidate the economics of its production and distribution. Relative to rice prices on the Yangzi Delta between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, the nominal prices of the Jiaxing Tripitaka generally increased. From my experiments with comparative data, however, I argue that this increase may not have negatively affected its affordability. Not being daily necessities, these books were more elastically priced than grain and remained within the buying power of most people. Affordability depends upon the relative value of other commodities to the purchaser's real income, as well as on other economic and non-economic factors that can only be discovered by exploring the larger context of production and consumption. All these elements suggest that Buddhist texts from the Jiaxing Tripitaka were not unaffordable luxuries for common readers.

Records do not survive that would allow us to write a full economic history of the book industry in China, on either its production or its consumption side. What I have tried to do in reconstructing the economics of the Jiaxing Tripitaka is no more than a small part of that history. Moreover, not only is this study incomplete in itself, it may not be typical of commercial publishing. So, much more remains to be understood both about the book industry as a whole and about the rest of the economy within which books were produced and sold. We need to know what a purchaser paid, not just for books but for all the commodities he had to buy, how these prices varied with place and time, and how much real income that would leave to buy books. We also need to know more about how supply and demand affected book prices.

Despite these limitations, the publishing history of the Jiaxing Tripitaka does yield some useful economic information. Its colophons tell us who donated how much for the carving of how many characters or woodblocks, and this data can help us understand the economic conditions that shaped the Tripitaka's history. A complete survey of the colophons in all surviving copies in mainland China, Taiwan, and Japan is still needed if we hope to develop a more comprehensive statistical analysis. We must also recognize that, even with that data, final

answers to our questions about the economics of publishing in late-imperial China may still elude us.

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