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“A Shared Passion and Love for the Light of the Buddha”: A History of Fóguāngshān in Austria

Joseph Chadwin and Lukas K. Pokorny

1. Introduction

The present-day Austro-Buddhist community comprises an estimated 30,000 individuals, who are largely committed to traditions within the Tibetan and Japanese Buddhist spectrum, as well as, lesser so, the Theravāda. Particularly, the clientele of the former two is largely a local (or European) one with only a relatively minor (Tibetan or Japanese) ethnic membership. The number of practitioners manoeuvring within the Chinese-Buddhist panorama in Austria is considerably smaller than that of the “big three.” Chinese-Buddhist providers chiefly fall into two areas. First, what we elsewhere called “Shàolín Buddhism,” a tradition that notwithstanding its “markedly dimmed [...] religious tenor” (Chadwin and Pokorny 2021: 144), serves as an important distributor specifically of basic Chán thought and practice. Their clientele almost exclusively consists of non-ethnic individuals. Chán is presented among these providers—in varying perspicuity—as the notional fabric of Shàolín kung fu. Even if considering only those Shàolín practitioners who clearly identify as Buddhists (the larger portion of practitioners does not do so), their number well exceeds that of the second major area of Chinese Buddhism in practice—the ethnic Chinese Buddhist community. This community is effectively a Taiwanese diasporic one. Until recently, Austria was home to three of the four largest Taiwanese Buddhist movements, which together comprise several million followers worldwide (Pokorny 2022: 359). These included Zhōngtáishān (literally, Middle Platform Mountain), Fójiao Cíjì Gōngdé Huì (Buddhist Compassion Relief Merit Society) or Cíjì (Compassion and Relief), and Fóguāngshān (Buddha’s Light Mountain; emically, Fo Guang Shan).¹ Whereas Zhōngtáishān and its Linz-based Pu Fa Meditationszentrum ceased its operations in 2016 and the Austro-Cíjì community, which is largely

¹ The fourth one being Fāgǔshān (Dharma Drum Mountain), which, however, has hitherto not maintained a presence in Austria.

at home in Vienna, has largely discontinued its activities (Chadwin and Pokorny 2021: 120–121, 126–127), Fóguāngshān keeps gaining visibility, albeit slowly.²

A certain degree of visibility (especially when compared to the other ethnic Chinese Buddhist providers) aside, Fóguāngshān is notable for at least three other reasons with respect to the Austro-Buddhist landscape. First, besides *Shaolin Tempel Österreich* (Shaolin Temple Austria), it is the only group representing Chinese Buddhism among the member organisations of the national Buddhist umbrella institution, the Austrian Buddhist Religious Society (*Österreichische Buddhistische Religionsgesellschaft*; ÖBR). Second, with its *Fo Guang Shan Tempel Wien*, it maintains the single largest temple building of all Buddhist groups in Austria. Third, since its inception, it is basically the chief Buddhist organisation catering to the ethnic Chinese/Taiwanese community in Austria.

Following our previous overview (Chadwin and Pokorny 2021: 122–126), we now aim at providing a more comprehensive portrayal of the historical development of Fóguāngshān in Austria. The data presented in the following sections is based on: (1) semi-structured, guided interviews with members of Fóguāngshān in Vienna, (2) personal correspondence with members and participant observation in online and physical meetings, (3) as well as various temple archive materials³—all collected over a period of fifteen months (July 2021–September 2022).

In the next section, the general history and chief tenets of Fóguāngshān are briefly introduced, after which the historical development is outlined in subsequent sections addressing the periods between 1991–2003 (Section Three), 2004–2010 (Section Four), and 2011–2019 (Section Six). In Section Five, we overview main features of the Vienna temple, whereas in Section Seven we look at most recent developments since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴ In the concluding part of this article we briefly assess the challenges and prospects of Austro-Fóguāngshān.

2 Another previously notable venue of Taiwanese Buddhism in Austria is Wéiyěna Cīēn Fótáng (Compassion and Kindness Buddha Hall Vienna) at Vienna's Althanstraße 35 (Chadwin and Pokorny 2021: 127–128). Yet, the group has been largely defunct since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3 Namely, letters, diary entries, notes, and logbooks.

4 We are grateful for the support offered by the Austro-Fóguāngshān members and leadership.

2. Fóguāngshān: An Outline

Established in 1967 by the Línjǐ-ordained monk Xīngyún (b. 1927; emic transcription: Hsing Yun) in Taiwan as a distinct amalgamation of the Chán and Pure Land traditions, Fóguāngshān has emerged at the forefront of global Humanistic Buddhism or “Buddhism for the Human Realm” (*rénjiān fójiào*). Headquartered at Fóguāngshān Monastery (*Fóguāngshānsì*) in southern Taiwan’s Gāoxióng (Kaohsiung) County, the movement presently maintains more than two hundred temples and centres worldwide, comprising an estimated some one to two million practitioners. Whereas most of the members reside in Taiwan rendering Fóguāngshān a major religious actor on the island,⁵ the majority of temples and centres are operated abroad—specifically in the United States (26) and Malaysia (18),⁶ but also increasingly in mainland China, where Xīngyún was born (as Lǐ Guóshēn) and spent his formative years in the Nánjīng region before he emigrated to Taiwan in 1949. Wherever a Taiwanese diasporic community manifests, Fóguāngshān follows suit, whose facilities serve the additional function of a social and cultural centre (Yao and Gombrich 2017: 235). To date, Euro-Fóguāngshān maintains fourteen temples and centres across ten countries (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom). The heydays of international expansion in the 1990s and 2000s was facilitated through the establishment of the Buddha’s Light International Association (*Guójì fóguāng huì*; BLIA) in 1991. Its international branch and world headquarters was founded the subsequent year at Fo Guang Shan Hsi Lai Temple (*Fóguāngshān xīlǎisi*) in Hacienda Heights, Los Angeles County. Gaining special consultative status as an NGO at the United Nations Economic and Social Council in 2003, BLIA “integrates the monastic and lay dimensions as well as the various cultural, educational, and charitable operations of Xīngyún’s organisation into a global network of local chapters devoted to promote his vision of Buddhism” (Günzel 2018: 475).⁷

5 On Fóguāngshān’s societal impact in Taiwan, see Chan 2015; Madsen 2007: 21–26. On the impressive Gāoxióng headquarters, which has also become a chief tourist site, see Irons 2020.

6 For Fóguāngshān in Malaysia, see Wong and Levitt 2014; Hóu 2019; Tan 2020: 112–121. For Fóguāngshān in the United States, see Chandler 2004: 268–286.

7 Fóguāngshān’s transplantation to Europe became visible with temple openings in London (September 1991) and Paris (September 1991) as well as Berlin (1993). The German mission began in April 1992, whereas BLIA Switzerland was incorporated in October of the same year. For Fóguāngshān in Germany, see Shì Miàoyì 2014. Austro-Fóguāngshān is touched on in Deeg 2005: 59–61.

This vision is an extension and modern-day engaged application of the Chinese monk Tàixū's 太虛 (1890–1947) Humanistic Buddhist project that is steeped in progressive millenarian thought (see Ritzinger 2017: 187–201).⁸ Tàixū coined the notion of *rénjiān jìngtǔ* (The Pure Land in the Human Realm), thereby crucially vesting large portions of contemporary Chinese Buddhism with a world-transformative agenda. Whereas he located the full realisation of *rénjiān jìngtǔ* in the mythological future, the transformative path towards its actualisation became the heart of his soteriological programme. Tàixū's soteriology was notably adopted, developed further, and practically executed by the founding masters of the four main neo-Buddhist groups in Taiwan,⁹ including Xīngyún, who to this day represents Fóguāng-shān's exclusive doctrinal authority.¹⁰ Xīngyún's millenarianism centres on the notion of *fóguāng jìngtǔ* (Pure Land of Buddha's Light). This is

a “world transformed by Buddhism.” In the Pure Land of Buddha's Light everyone takes refuge in the Three Jewels, accepts and upholds the Five Precepts, is clear about causes and understands the effects, and widely forms good affinities. The Pure Land of Buddha's Light is a “world of goodness and beauty.” In the Pure Land of Buddha's Light all that everyone sees are beautiful things, all that everyone hears are pleasant sounds, all that everyone speaks are good words and beautiful phrases, all that everyone does are virtuous actions and righteous deeds. The Pure Land of Buddha's Light is a “world of peace and bliss.” In the Pure Land of Buddha's Light there is no envy among people—only respect; no hatred—only peace; no avarice—only joyous giving; no harm—only accomplishment. The Pure Land of Buddha's Light is a “world of joy.” In the Pure Land of Buddha's Light everyone is roaming in the warm spring breeze, every family is bathed in the compassionate light of the dharma, every day is a beautiful day, and all places are replete with ultimate wisdom.¹¹

8 Being, however, stripped off its aspect of millennial imminence.

9 The others being Cǐjì's Zhèngyán (b. 1937), Fǎgǔshān's Shèngyán (1931–2009), and Zhōngtáishān's Wéijué (1928–2016).

10 On Xīngyún's hagiographical dimension, see Chia 2015.

11 所謂「佛光淨土」，其實就是一個「佛化的世界」，在佛光淨土中，每一個人都皈依三寶，受持五戒，明因識果，廣結善緣。佛光淨土是一個「善美的世界」，在佛光淨土裡，大家所看到的都是美麗的事物，所聽到的都是悅耳的聲音，口中所說的都是良言美語，手中所做的事情都是善行義舉。佛光淨土是一個「安樂的世界」，在佛光淨土裡，人與人之間沒有嫉妒，只有尊重；沒有憎恨，只有祥和；沒有貪欲，只有喜捨；沒有傷害，只有成就。佛光淨土是一個「喜悅的世界」，在佛光淨土裡，人人都翱遊在和煦的春風中，家家共沐在佛法的慈光裡，時時都是良辰美日，處處都是般若天地。(Xīngyún 2006).

The Pure Land envisaged by Xīngyún is what our future holds, that is, “a society of compassion and joyous giving” and a “world of eternal bliss and purity [...] illuminated by the light of Buddha” (Xīngyún 2006). In order to bring this millennial vision to pass, human civilisation needs to profoundly embrace Humanistic Buddhism as laid out by Xīngyún by virtue of the teachings of Fógūāngshān—for Fógūāngshān is the literal venue where Buddha’s light shines. Hence, the increasing promotion and spread of Fógūāngshān is meant to signal the gradual construction (Jones 2021: 131–133) of the Buddhist paradise to be. Humankind is in the midst of this transition where impurity shifts to brilliance, a process fostered by Buddhism in general and Fógūāngshān in particular.

Naturally, therefore, the Fógūāngshān mission is deemed universal and requires global dissemination (cf. Mair 2014). As one version of the Fógūāngshān mission statement puts it, practitioners are requested “to give faith [xìnxīn 信心], hope [xīwàng 希望], joy [huānxǐ 歡喜], and service [fāngbiàn 方便] to other people” (cited in Günzel 2018: 478), beaconing them to Buddha’s light so that the Pure Land can arise. To this end and true to the spirit of the wider Engaged Buddhist current, Fógūāngshān employs a wide range of cultural, educational, social, and diplomatic/political activities.¹² Since the 1990s, the Buddha’s light also “shines in Vienna.”

3. Fógūāngshān Arrives in Austria, 1991–2003

Fógūāngshān formally arrived in Austria in 1996 during which Xīngyún visited Vienna in order to conduct a dharma talk (*jiāngzuò*) and allow neophytes to take refuge (*guīyī diǎnlǐ*).¹³ Indeed, Xīngyún’s visit acting as a “dharma catalyst” in Vienna is the narrative one hears today upon visiting *Fo Guang Shan Tempel Wien*:

Since 1996, when Master Xīngyún, the founder of Fógūāngshān, came to Vienna [...] Fógūāng devotees in Vienna were thirsty for the dharma. At the

12 Regarding the latter, see, for example, Laliberté 2003: 169–175; 2004: 66–85. The best book-length studies on Fógūāngshān’s global outlook are Chandler 2004 and Reinke 2021. For a brief overview, see Günzel 2018.

13 Namely, a formal ceremony in which the practitioner “takes refuge” in the Buddha, the *dharma* (the teachings of the Buddha), and the *sangha* (the monastic community).

time, everyone wanted a home of dharmakāya¹⁴ [*fāshēn*] and the life of wisdom [*huìmìng*]” (Interview with Miào yì on July 12, 2021).¹⁵

However, the genesis of the group’s activities in Austria can be traced back to 1991, when a small group of Taiwanese migrants living in Vienna “became desperate for a venerable master who could teach the dharma” (Interview with Zhī yí on May 26, 2022). Herein, the main figures were Qiū Yùwén, Zhū Jùnyǔ, Jiǎ Yíng, and Zhāng Zhiwěi. The former, Qiū Yùwén, who since moving to Vienna has run her own restaurant (she sold it in 2022), has been associated with Fòguāngshān since 1991 and was the main driving force behind making Xīngyún’s visit to Vienna into a reality. She reportedly lost her husband in a plane crash and subsequently “turned her grief into strength”¹⁶ by converting to Buddhism (Interview with Qiū Yùwén on September 26, 2022). Similarly, Zhū Jùnyǔ converted to Buddhism after living in Vienna for several years. He sought to reconnect with his Taiwanese heritage, turning to Buddhism and working towards strengthening Taiwanese Buddhism in Vienna. They were greatly aided in their mission to have a dharma master (*fāshī*) visit Austria by the married couple Jiǎ Yíng and Zhāng Zhiwěi, who, like Qiū, run their own restaurant. Although the initial driving force of the then small group came from Qiū, Jiǎ and Zhāng (both long-time devotees of Buddhism) provided monetary aid to help actualise Xīngyún’s visit. Xīngyún himself described the visit thus:

In 1996, on the occasion of the thousandth anniversary of the founding of Austria, I went to Vienna to preach the dharma. In the auditorium of the Hilton Hotel, I hosted a ceremony for taking refuge and a dharma talk for Buddhist devotees. Afterwards, a lay Buddhist, Hóng Zīyuán,¹⁷ expressed his desire to

14 Buddhist embodiment of Truth and law. It is one of the three bodies—*sānshēn* (Sanskrit: *trikāya*)—of a Buddha. It essentially constitutes that which is wholly inconceivable. It is the unmanifested aspect of a Buddha.

15 从1996年佛光山开山星云大师莅临维也纳...在维也纳的佛光人求法若渴，其时大家就已希望有一法身慧命之家。

16 It should be acknowledged that the language employed by interviewees in this paper are a mixture of Mandarin and English. Interviewees would sometimes switch between the two. During the cases in which the interviewees conversed in Mandarin, we have added the original text in footnotes.

17 Although Hóng Zīyuán remained an active member of the lay community, he was for the most part uninvolved regarding the organisation of the group.

provide a venue as a place for the public to practise together. Seeing his sincerity, we agreed. Shortly after a simple renovation, the “Vienna Mission in Austria” was officially established (Xīngyún 2017).¹⁸

With Xīngyún’s visit to Vienna came the official launch of the Fóguāngshān mission in Austria. From 1996 to 1998, the Vienna group consisted of approximately thirty devotees, a membership number which would keep stable for more than ten years. They established a “dharma reading” (*fǒfǎ dúshū*) group that focused on Buddhist texts. More specifically, since their inception, these reading groups have focused on the writings of Xīngyún. Moreover, sūtra recitations (*xí chán*) and lectures were occasionally put on. All these meetings and events took place in the homes of the group members, and more often than not, as in the years before, in Qiū’s restaurant “Le Pho,” which was located at Gumpendorfer Strasse 97, 1060.

In 1998, the group started to rent a larger space (which was agreed upon during Xīngyún’s visit) in the fourth district’s Waggasse 12/14. The space was essentially a converted flat in which the living room had been changed into a classroom, dharma hall, and dining room, with the bedroom doubling as the Master’s sleeping space, a reading room, and an office. Although the space could only accommodate twenty people, this was a large step up from holding meetings in the private flats of devotees or the restaurant premises. The opening of a permanent centre was accompanied by the incorporation (ZVR no.: 140193903) of the group as an association (*Verein*) on June 14, 1998, under the name “FO GUANG SHAN Internationale [*sic*] Buddhist Progressive Society (Internationale Progressive buddhistische Gesellschaft).”¹⁹

Moreover, in 1999, the nun Mǎnlún arrived in Vienna, having been sent by Xīngyún to act as the monastic representative in Vienna. This changed the dynamics of the group considerably as they now had an ordained member who was formally authorised to carry out ceremonies as well as instruct the dharma.²⁰ The same year, on October 7, 1999, Austro-Fóguāngshān became a formal member of the Austrian Buddhist Religious Society. In 2001, Mǎnlún was followed by a fellow nun, Rúqún (b. 1966), who had been tasked to assist her in the Vienna mission.

18 一九九六年，適逢奧地利建國一千年之際，我到維也納弘法，在希爾頓飯店的禮堂裡，為信眾主持了一場皈依典禮和佛學講座。之後，一位信眾洪梓源居士表達了想要提供場地，作為大眾共修之處的心意。見他誠意殷殷，我們也就同意了。在簡單的裝修之後，不久，「奧地利維也納布教所」正式成立。

19 Presently, the association is officially headed by the nuns in residence Juéróng (Yáng Qīngwén) as president and Zhīyí (Zhèng Xiùwén) as vice-president.

20 Prior to having ordained members, the group carried out lay-led ceremonies and lectures.

In various conversations, members in hindsight defined this period by a sense of ambition and excitement. The group had quickly grown from “humble beginnings” and was already demonstrating desire for further development. Zhīyí described this period thus:

Before the temple was built, Fóguāngshān in Vienna was humble. You could say that we “rose from humble beginnings.” It was really just a handful of lay persons who had a shared passion and love for the light of the Buddha. “They were of one heart and mind,” placing their trust in Amitābha. It was truly thanks to the efforts of these devotees that we have a temple in Vienna today (Interview with Zhīyí on May 26, 2022).

Over the next years, a new desire to establish a fully-fledged temple arose. It quickly became an initiative, with the group raising funds—although at this stage, this was reportedly not done very successfully (Interview with Qiū Yǔwén on September 26, 2022)—and deepening relations with Fóguāngshān Monastery.

4. The Establishment and Building of the Temple, 2004–2010

On January 19, 2004, Vienna’s Fóguāngshān community put on its largest event yet: a general meeting combined with an end of year party. The event was hosted by Zhū Jùnyǔ and the nun Mǎnlún, and almost one hundred people were in attendance, including a representative (Haydar Sari) from the Cultural Department of the Vienna Municipal Government. At the meeting, the 2003 financial report was concluded and a presentation of all Fóguāngshān-related activities that took place in 2003 was given. Additionally, the work plan for 2004 was addressed, which, for the most part, revolved around the construction of a new temple. The result of this meeting also saw the group move location to the sixth district’s Mollardgasse 40/21. This was to be as close to the proposed temple construction site as possible at the time. Like the group’s previous location on Waggasse, this new venue was a converted apartment that could accommodate approximately twenty devotees. And like before, the living room acted as a classroom, a dharma hall, and a dining room, and the bedroom was a sleeping area for the nuns as well as an office space and reading room (see Figure 1).

In early November 2004, Xīngyún returned to Vienna to oversee the beginning of the construction of the temple at Sechshauserstraße 50 in the fifteenth district. More specifically, Xīngyún presided over a Groundbreaking

Purification Ceremony (*dòngtǔsǎ jìng diǎnlǐ*) on November 8, in which he acknowledged the accumulated history and karma of a particular site, calling upon any lingering presences and ultimately preparing the ground for a new construction (see Figures 2–4). Notably, during his visit, Xīngyún was also to present the 2004 Energy Globe Award—alongside the then Minister of the Environment Josef Pröll (b. 1968) and Paul Rübig (b. 1953), then an Austrian member of the European Parliament—a private Austrian initiative that is reportedly “the world’s leading environmental prize, with more than 180 participant countries and between 2,000 and 3,000 projects submitted every year” (Advantage Austria 2021). The ceremony itself took place at the Ceremonial Hall of the Vienna Stock Exchange. Although the organisers even went to Fógūāngshān Monastery to personally invite Xīngyún, he was mistakenly introduced as the “Head of Chinese Zen Buddhism” (*das Oberhaupt des chinesischen Zen-Buddhismus*; APA OTS 2004). To this day, members of Fógūāngshān in Vienna are deeply proud of this event:

The whole world was watching! The award ceremony was filmed by the Austrian national TV station ORF and it was broadcast to the whole world! I think it made people notice us in Austria. Master Xīngyún can show everyone the light of the Buddha and when people saw him on television, they knew that Fógūāngshān was truly great! (Interview with Lín Yùjiāo on November 19, 2021).

The main figures during this period were the nuns Mǎnlún, Rúqún, and Juéróng as well as the two lay followers Qiū Yùwén and Lín Yùjiāo. The nun Miàoxiáng was also a notable addition to the temple, but only arrived at the end of 2010. The four nuns were all sent to oversee the Vienna mission. Mǎnlún was the first to arrive (1999), hosting Xīngyún in his November 2004 visit alongside Rúqún (2001). On top of navigating the temple construction, Mǎnlún also paid particular attention to developing ties with the local Chinese community in Vienna:

She was especially good at spreading the word. Without her, I don’t think we would have half the members that we do today. She is the sort of person who knows everyone. “She knows everyone in the neighbourhood. Everyone likes her!”²¹ Back then, it felt like the Chinese community in Vienna was more closely knit and I think she had a lot to do with this. Today it feels like hardly anyone knows one another in the Chinese community. Everyone likes to keep to themselves. We need another Dharma Master Mǎnlún! (Interview with Lín Yùjiāo on November 19, 2021).

21 方圆左近的中国人，她都认识。人人都喜欢她！

Before becoming a nun, Miàoxiáng was a dedicated student of German language and came close to pursuing a career in academia before deciding to be ordained. She was initially sent to Europe by Xīngyún to be responsible for preaching the dharma in German-speaking countries residing at the *Fo-Guang-Shan Tempel Berlin* (*Bólin Fóguāngshān*; Ackerstraße 85–86). She arrived in Vienna in 2010 in order to specifically assist with the Vienna mission. However, unlike Mǎnlún, Miàoxiáng did not take up permanent residence in Vienna during this time. Instead, in line with her role of overseeing the Fóguāngshān mission in the German-speaking world, she often moved between Austria and Germany.

Juéróng was the last to arrive in 2007. Reportedly sent for her organisational abilities (Interview with Lín Yùjiāo on November 19, 2021), she today serves as the head nun of the temple as well as the vice-head nun of Europe.

The lay practitioner Lín Yùjiāo arrived in Vienna in 1975 to study vocal music at the University of Music and Performing Arts. After graduating she decided to remain in Vienna. She reportedly began a long period of self-discovery that she describes thus:

After decades of pursuit and wandering, I finally found the spiritual home—Buddhism. In 2005, due to mature karma, I joined the Fóguāngshān group in Vienna and actively participated in the Buddhist practice and various group activities (Interview with Lín Yùjiāo on November 19, 2021).

Since joining the group in 2005, Lín has been a key member and today acts as the temple's main contact point, the head administrator, and the formal point of contact with the Austrian Buddhist Religious Society. Similarly, this period also saw Jiǎ Yíng adopting a more central position, taking a more official role (after previously being an ordinary member of the temple) in 2009 when she became the first president of the Austrian branch of the Buddha's Light International Association.

During this period, membership grew to approximately seventy official members (Interview with Zhīyí on September 22, 2022). The group activities between Xīngyún's visit and the construction of the temple remained for the most part unaltered: dharma talks, lectures, and a reading group constituted the majority of the group's activities. Moreover, in 2006 the *Buddha-Licht News Austria* (Buddha Light News Austria) was established, a Chinese (and occasionally partially bilingual) quarterly newsletter. These newsletters were usually three to four pages long and consisted of brief summaries of the group's activities as well as short texts written by the resident nuns pertaining to various Buddhist teachings. *Buddha-Licht News Austria* was discontinued

in early 2014, and a new website was launched instead (<https://www.fgsvienna.at>).²²

Unsurprisingly, the vast majority of the group's time, efforts, and funds went into the temple project. However, despite the reported success of both the Groundbreaking Purification Ceremony and the Energy Globe Award ceremony, Xīngyún's second visit also heralded the beginning of a rather tumultuous period for Fógūāngshān in Vienna. Although the land where they wanted to build the temple had been purchased, planning permission had not yet been granted. Moreover, there were severe financial setbacks as well as various "problems" with architects. The latter was to the degree that the architect changed three times when, allegedly, the first three did not "sufficiently understand" Buddhist culture. Adding to the financial and architectural problems, a number of proposed temple designs were denied by the Vienna building authority. Lín described this period thus:

This was probably the most difficult time for our group. If we did not have the Buddha's light to show us the way, the temple would never have been built. That is why we would all pray every day that our precious temple would be more than just a dream (Interview with Lín Yùjiāo on November 19, 2021).

Similarly, the later head nun Miàoyì describes how the devotees would concentrate their practice on the temple construction project during this period:

In order to pray for the success of the new temple project, almost every believer [...] has their own personal recitation plan. Then, at the end of the year, all of the merit [accumulated from these recitations] was dedicated (Interview with Miàoyì on July 12, 2021).²³

After this trying period, building permission for the temple was finally granted in April 2009, and later that month (April 29) the construction of the temple began, utilising an agreed upon design drawn up by Thomas Hoppe who was the architect, Wolfgang Edlbacher who was the head builder, and Lǚ Shànghuán who was the architectural Buddhist consultant.²⁴ The following twenty months saw the group doubling their efforts:

²² Prior, from 2007, the Vienna temple's Internet presence was accessible through a Taiwanese host at dharma.fgs.org.tw/shrine/vienna.

²³ 为祈求新道场工程一切顺利圆满，几乎每一个信众 [...] 都有自己的修持表，每个人选一与自己有缘的经典、咒语，每天不间断地修持，然后在年底将功德全部回向。

²⁴ As this had been a previously identified problem, it was Lǚ Shànghuán's role to ensure that the construction project remained ethically sound in a Buddhist sense.

We all started to pray even more for the successful completion of the temple. It was very important that all of our good karma went towards the building (Interview with Lín Yùjiāo on November 19, 2021).

In November 2010, *Fo Guang Shan Tempel Wien* or *Wéiyěnnà Fóguāngshān* was completed, and on November 28, the site hosted its grand opening ceremony. The event was attended, among others, by Mǎnqiān, the Bussy-Saint-Georges-based (France) chief abbess of Fóguāngshān Europe (*Fóguāngshān Ōuzhōu zǒng zhùchí*) and member of the Fóguāngshān Religious Affairs Committee (*Fóguāngshān zōngwù wéiyuánhùi wéiyuán*); Chén Liánjūn, representative of the Taipei Representative Office in Austria (*Táiběi zhù àodìlì dàiibiāo*); Gerhard Zatlöckl (b. 1960), the district chief (*Bezirksvorsteher*) of Vienna's fifteenth district; Johann Figl (b. 1945), Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Vienna from 1986 until 2013; Gerhard Weißgrab (b. 1952), the President of the Austrian Buddhist Religious Society; and some 400 Fóguāngshān adherents from across Europe. In total, the ceremony attracted upwards of 800 visitors. The event opened with live classical music followed by Jiǎ Yíng and Lín Yùjiāo presiding over the ribbon cutting. This was followed by the unveiling of the five-tons two-metre tall Jade Buddha (Fernsebner-Kokert 2010) that sits in the temple's main shrine hall (the Jade Buddha Hall) and a presentation of offerings to the temple from various Buddhist organisations from across Europe. Finally, Mǎnlún was officially recognised as the head of the temple, with Miàoxiāng acting as the second head nun. After the opening ceremony, the temple held a dharma ceremony that was attended by some 300 people.

5. The Temple

The temple itself is a sizable building, comprising more than 1,300 square metres of usable floor space across five levels (Die Presse 2010), with a unique design: it is intended to depict a monk in meditation with the black right-hand side representing the monk's exposed shoulder and the yellow brick that stretches from the right represents the monk's robe. The monk is designed to be turning towards the central shrine room that lies in the centre of the building and the meditation room situated at the top of the building is meant to signify the monk's set back head in contemplation (see Figure 5). Moreover, the building is intended to represent the Three Jewels (*sānbǎo*). The Jade Buddha seated in the Jade Buddha Hall (*yùfú bǎodiàn*)—which lies at the very centre of the complex—represents the Buddha, the various scriptures that can be found in the library symbolise the dharma, and the shape of

the building itself (i.e., the monk in meditation) represents the sangha (*sēngjiā*). Finally, the building was designed to be fully environmentally sustainable with solar panels installed on the roof.

Upon entering the building, one finds a reception area (see Figure 6) that leads to a library, café, and shop. This library and shop area (see Figure 7) is called the “Little Drop Shop” (*dīshuǐ fāng*), a name taken from the longer expression “for every drop of compassion, good merit springs forth for all.”²⁵ The library has various books pertaining to Fóguāngshān and Buddhism as a whole that the public are allowed to borrow. The shop sells, among other things, books, Buddhist statues, incense, tea, CDs, and DVDs. The room, as is the case throughout the entire building, is decorated with various calligraphy pieces by Xīngyún.

The basement floor of the building has several seminar rooms as well as a room called the “Music Classroom” (*yīnyuè jiàoshì*). During the design phase of the temple construction, Xīngyún reportedly insisted that a Fóguāngshān temple in Vienna would require a dedicated music classroom that can focus on European classical music to “attract more local people with the music that the local people are most familiar with”²⁶ (Interview with Miào yì on July 12, 2021). The basement floor also has a kitchen.

The first floor is where the main shrine hall is located. This room is mostly taken up by eight seating platforms as well as floor seating space in which cushions are often placed. The aforementioned Jade Buddha statue dominates this room. Situated in front of this statue is a smaller statue of Guānyīn (Sanskrit: Avalokiteśvara; a bodhisattva who is typically associated with compassion). On the right of the Buddha sits a statue of Wéi Tuó (a bodhisattva who is typically regarded as being the protector of the dharma), and a statue of Guān Yǔ (a bodhisattva who typically represents virtue and loyalty) sits to the Buddha’s right. In front of these statues is an altar in which temple attendees can make offerings of candles, flowers, food, and incense among others (see Figure 8).

One also finds another seminar room as well as a memorial hall on the first floor. The latter houses a statue of Dìzàng (Sanskrit: Kṣitigarbha; a bodhisattva more commonly known by his Japanese name Jizō who accompanies those in death) and tablets with the names of people (both living and dead) who, for various reasons, have been deemed worthy of being remembered. The second floor is given entirely to seven en suite twin guest rooms. Finally, the third floor houses a meditation room replete with meditation cushions (see Figure 9), as well as a rooftop rock garden.

25 滴水之恩，當湧泉相報。

26 藉由當地人最熟悉的音樂接引更多本土人士。

6. Growth and Increase in Activity, 2011–2019

The completion of the temple was a turning point for Fóguāngshān in Austria. Indeed, it ushered in a period of new activity and growth.

The opening of the temple led to a vast increase in group activity as well as a surge in group composition. Regarding the latter, the group's official membership rose from seventy during the construction of the temple to 152 today (i.e., September 2022). However, larger ceremonies are attended by upwards of 300 people. Members are predominantly Taiwanese but, increasingly, also mainland Chinese.²⁷ There are currently ten Austrian members. The majority of members are between forty and seventy years old, although some younger members (including children) do attend larger events. Most members are women with men comprising only approximately a quarter of the overall membership. Meetings became more frequent and regular, with a weekly sūtra recitation every Sunday from 15:30 to 17:00. During these meetings, the group gathers in the main hall and at least one of the nuns leads the sūtra recitation. This is followed by a lecture that focuses primarily on the specific teachings of Xīngyún. Afterwards, members often linger in the café area while the nuns field questions. Moreover, the group began organising and hosting more reading and study sessions, and introduced a course programme to attract a wider public involving, among others, *tàijí* classes for adults. Large-scale annual events became commonplace once the temple opened its doors.²⁸ Prior to the opening of the temple the group very much observed annual festivals but these were small-scale events that were attended only by the original members. After the temple opened, these became relatively large public events. Today the temple observes a Full Moon Light Offering Service²⁹ (*guāngmíng dēngfāhuì*) from 11:00 to 12:30 every first

27 The temple (notably alongside several Yíguàndào buddha halls or *fótáng*) also appears on information leaflets pertaining to religious venues that are informally circulating among the ethnic Chinese community in Vienna.

28 This also included, for example, the hosting of an interreligious new year celebration event in January 2015, centring on a joint peace prayer with representatives of the Catholic and Protestant Churches, the *Israelitische Kultusgemeinde* (Jewish religious community), the Islamic Faith Community in Austria, the Austrian Buddhist Religious Society, the Bahá'í, and the Hindu community.

29 This ceremony is of particular importance in the international Fóguāngshān community. The main service involves lighting lamps as an offering to the Buddha while reciting the *Pradīpadānīya Sūtra* (*Shīdēng gōngdé jīng*), also referred to as the *Sūtra of the Merit of Offering Light*.

and fifteenth of the Chinese lunar calendar; Chinese New Year (*chūnjié*) celebrations that usually take the form of a cultural festival (see Figure 10);³⁰ a Double Ninth Festival (*chóngyáng jié*);³¹ a Qīng Míng Ancestor Memorial Service (*qīng míng fǎhuì*);³² an Ullambana Dharma Service (*xiàodào yuè fǎhuì*; see Figure 11);³³ a Medicine Buddha Dharma Ceremony (*yàoshī fǎhuì*);³⁴ an Amitabha Ceremony (*mítuó fǎhuì*);³⁵ a Bathing of the Buddha Ceremony (*fódàn jié yùfó fǎhuì*);³⁶ and a Vesak celebration (*fótuó dànnén jìniàn rì*).³⁷ The language of most of the temple's events is Mandarin; yet when non-Chinese speakers are present, a German translation is usually provided. Videos shown and online events from Fógūāngshān Monastery are in Mandarin, and events for all the devotees in Europe are conducted in Mandarin and English.

The temple also began organising tea meditational (*chá chán*) ceremonies and classes in which one can learn how to use the brewing and drinking of tea as a meditative practice. Although these have not been regular per se, the temple holds tea meditational ceremonies and classes approximately four times a year. During this period the Vienna group also began to work in collaboration with the wider European Fógūāngshān community. In 2017 a seven-day meditation retreat took place at the European head temple, the

30 The group has an outward desire for the temple to become something of a hub for Chinese people living in Vienna. To this end, the group's observation of Chinese New Year constitutes not only classic Buddhist ceremonies but also Chinese cultural events, such as traditional Chinese music and dance performances as well as Chinese calligraphy classes.

31 A traditional Chinese festival that is observed on the ninth day of the ninth month according to the lunar calendar. During the festival, one typically venerates one's ancestors by visiting their graves.

32 A service that takes place every year on the fourth or fifth of April and revolves around remembering and honouring one's ancestors. The temple itself observes this service over two days during which sūtras are chanted and the merit accumulated from this chanting is dedicated to all participants as well as the ancestors of those participating.

33 The name of this festival literally means "Dharma meeting of the Day of Filiality." During this service, food is offered to the Buddha and saṅgha and the resulting merit accumulated is subsequently dedicated to the parents of the participants.

34 A service in which participants receive healing.

35 A ceremony in which the *Amitabha Sūtra* (*Āmítuó jīng*) is recited.

36 A ceremony in which participants generate merit by pouring fragrant water over the statue of an infant Buddha.

37 This is a celebration of the Buddha's birthday. The temple has in the past celebrated this day by taking part in an international sūtra writing ceremony and conducting refuge ceremonies.

Fóguāngshān Fǎhuá Temple (*Fóguāngshān fǎhuá chǎnsì*) in Bussy-Saint-Georges (3 allée Madame de Montespan).³⁸

This period also saw the group starting to join in with the praying ceremonies held during Vesak, organised by the Austrian Buddhist Religious Society. Moreover, various changes in the temple's management took place. With Mǎnlún officially recognised as the head nun, Zhū Jùnyǔ stepped down from his managerial role and Lín Yùjiāo became something of an unofficial temple secretary. Moreover, in 2011, Mǎnlún returned to Taiwan and was replaced as head nun by Miàoyì who arrived in Vienna in 2010. Miàoyì served as the head of the temple from 2011 to 2013 and particularly focused on the establishment of Buddhist reading groups and outreach. Regarding the latter, the temple began to organise outreach programmes in 2012: namely, establishing relationships with other religious groups in Austria (i.e., touching base with a number of local churches) as well as facilitating local school visits to the temple (see Figure 12). Furthermore, Miàoyì, reportedly at the direct behest of Xīngyún (Interview with Miàoyì on July 12, 2021), organised and facilitated various concerts and art exhibitions at the temple in an attempt to attract the local population. Lín Yùjiāo said that Miàoyì “used music and art as a medium to guide all living beings to understand Buddhism” (Interview with Lín Yùjiāo on March 10, 2022). In December 2013, Miàoyì transferred to the Héhuá Temple (*Héhuási*) in Amsterdam (Zeedijk 106–118), The Netherlands, where she currently serves as the head nun. She was replaced in January 2014 by Juéyàn who served as abbess until December 2017. Under Juéyàn, the Vienna temple had a particular focus on literature and music. During her period as head nun, the group participated in the Vienna International Book Fair every year in an effort to promote Buddhism through culture and advertise the temple in Vienna. She also established the Vienna Buddha's Voice Choir (*Wéiyěna fú zhī shēng héchàng tuán*) who performed at the *Musikverein* in the summer of 2014. Similarly, she also established the Vienna Fóguāng Youth Philharmonic Orchestra (*Wéiyěna Fóguāng qīngnián ài yuètuán*), which toured Southeast Asia for three consecutive years after its establishment in 2014. Juéyàn stepped down as abbess in December 2017 and moved to Lisbon where she is currently heading Portugal's Fóguāngshān branch, the Associação Internacional Buddha's Light de Lisboa (*Pútáoyá Fóguāngshān*) in Lisbon (Rua Centieira 35). She was replaced by Juéróng who had been in Vienna since 2007. She has remained the head nun of the Vienna temple to this day, particularly focusing on strengthening the temple's connections to other Fóguāngshān temples in Europe. To this end, she has

³⁸ The temple was formally established five years earlier, in 2012, with the Ground-breaking Purification Ceremony held in 2006.

taken on the responsibility of convening the major European Fógūāngshān conferences every year. Specific to the context of Vienna, Juéróng helped to organise both the Fógūāngshān Seminar for Disciples Home and Abroad (*Fógūāngshān hǎinèiwài túzhòng jiǎngxíhuì*) in 2014—an annual event in which the Fógūāngshān monastics (i.e., effectively nuns) in Europe convene to discuss various matters—and, more recently, the European Buddha’s Light Youth Conference (*Ōuzhōu fógūāng qīngnián liányì huì*) in 2018, an annual event that targets the youth community in Fógūāngshān.³⁹

This period also witnessed changes pertaining to the non-head nuns. Miàoxiáng left Vienna shortly after the official opening of the temple in order to travel between various Fógūāngshān missions in Europe before becoming abbess of Fo-Guang-Shan Tempel Berlin. Her final achievement before leaving was establishing ties with the *Wiener Volkshochschulen (VHS)*, Vienna’s adult education centres. This led to *Fo Guang Shan Tempel Wien* putting on courses at *VHS* in Chinese calligraphy and painting.

Moreover, Rúqún moved to Fógūāngshān Fǎhuá Temple in 2017 and was replaced by Zhīyí in 2018. Zhīyí is among the youngest Fógūāngshān nuns in Europe. Upon her arrival she took on a teaching role at *Fo Guang Shan Tempel Wien* and also frequently visits the Czech Republic to aid with the Fógūāngshān mission there. The latter role is still very much in its early stages, but the hope is to eventually establish a new temple in Prague. Zhīyí currently visits to establish contacts and occasionally give lessons and conduct dharma ceremonies.

Jiǎ Yíng stepped down as president of BLIA Vienna in 2014 and was replaced by Qiū Yùwén who was subsequently replaced by Lín Yùjiāo in 2019. After stepping down, both Jiǎ and Qiū became “senior advisors” (*gāojiǐ gùwèn*) (Interview with Lín Yùjiāo on June 17, 2022): an unofficial position that essentially constitutes providing advice pertaining to the running of the temple. They both still hold this position today.

Over the years, Lín Yùjiāo has adopted more and more responsibility at *Fo Guang Shan Tempel Wien*. She describes her role thus:

My main tasks at the temple are to help promote the mission of BLIA Vienna: to encourage the study of Buddhist studies, to support cultural and educational undertakings, to organise social services, to develop Buddhist education, to

39 This event took the form of a small retreat that took place over the course of five days at the temple in Vienna from December 28, 2018, to January 1, 2019. Participants would discuss Buddhist teachings, attend ceremonies, but also participate in more recreational activities such as baking.

promote international Dharma promotion [...] and to co-ordinate the distribution and co-ordination of the human and material resources of each branch in BLIA Vienna (Interview with Lín Yùjiāo on November 19, 2021).

There has also been a somewhat recent effort to gain additional public visibility. June 25, 2019, saw the public gifting (see Figure 13) of the *Encyclopaedia of Buddhist Arts*, a twenty-volume compendium of Buddhist art that was initiated by Xīngyún, to the Library of Klosterneuburg Abbey (Hanzmann 2019). Thus far, Fóguāngshān has gifted this collection to the following Austrian institutions: the universities of Graz, Innsbruck, and Vienna, the University of Applied Arts Vienna, the Austrian National Library, and the Libraries of Klosterneuburg Abbey and Göttweig Abbey. Furthermore, the Universities of Graz, Innsbruck, and Vienna have also received as a donation the complete works of Xīngyún in 365 volumes.

7. The Challenges of COVID-19 and the Current State of the Temple, 2020–Present

Unsurprisingly, the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic also massively affected Austro-Fóguāngshān. On March 16, 2020, the temple closed its doors to all visitors as Vienna went into its first lockdown. Since then, the Fóguāngshān community has erred on the side of caution. Indeed, it was only in May 2022 that the temple properly reopened its doors. In response to the pandemic, the group began organising online events. Reading classes, dharma services, and lectures all took place on ZOOM:

We followed the rules that the government announced. For our activities, we turn them into online (via ZOOM) to have people keep the connection with the temple, and because of that, our devotees have more opportunities to join the activities held by Fóguāngshān worldwide (Interview with Zhīyí on May 26, 2022).

These activities organised by the global Fóguāngshān community that are for the most part held in both Mandarin and English but sometimes only in Mandarin are of particular note. In 2020, a Google Drive was created and distributed among all Fóguāngshān adherents across the world. Practitioners were encouraged to participate in chanting a Medicine Buddha mantra (*Yàoshī guàndīng zhēnyán*). This was used as a way for practitioners to visualise how much merit was being accumulated towards the healing of the sick.

Moreover, dharma talks were given on ZOOM by Fógūāngshān nuns and monks from across the world. Lín Yùjiāo said of this period:

It was obviously very difficult for us not to be able to meet in the temple, but at the same time, the pandemic, I think, brought the Fógūāngshān global community together. Thanks to technology, we were not only able to stay connected but we were also able to spread the Buddha's light using the internet (Interview with Lín Yùjiāo on November 19, 2021).

With the lifting of regulations in Vienna, the temple slowly started to organise physical meetings again. As of today, almost all pre-COVID-19 activity has been brought back. Looking towards the future, it is clear that *Fo Guang Shan Tempel Wien* has strong ambitions for continued growth. Zhīyí has spoken of trying to attract local businesses to the temple as well as turning the temple into more of a public venue that specialises in vegetarian food and meditation:

At present, vegetarianism and meditation are very popular among Westerners, so I hope to take this opportunity to attract local business people. I hope that they will use this space as a venue for meetings. The temple can provide them with healthy vegetarianism and meditation courses (Interview with Zhīyí on May 26, 2022).⁴⁰

The temple also wishes to continue to strengthen its ties with the local community and the group is keen to organise collaborative events:

We are always looking for new ways of shining the Buddha's light. I hope that we will be able to reach even more people in Vienna. For example, we have recently developed a good relationship with the Shaolin Temple in Vienna.⁴¹ I hope that we can work together (Interview with Lín Yùjiāo on June 17, 2022).

This desire for continued growth and the expansion of missionary activities is what currently characterises Austro-Fógūāngshān's future plans.

⁴⁰目前素食與禪修非常為西方人所喜愛，所以也希望藉此接引企業界人士，希望他們來此租借場地開會，道場可為他們提供健康素食及禪修課程。

⁴¹ Namely, *Shaolin Tempel Österreich* (ZVR no.: 370805731).

8. Concluding Remarks or Notes on Challenges and Prospects

Contrary to the Austrian branches of Cíjì, whose existence has largely been unknown even within the ethnic Chinese community, and Zhōngtáishān, whose visibility has been short-lived, Fóguāngshān managed to find its fixed place in the mainstream Austro-Buddhist perception. As a member organisation of the Austrian Buddhist Religious Society (since October 1999), some wider publicity (however limited) is generated via the Society's print and online outreach venues, such as the *ÖBR-Magazin* (see Zoepnek and Kronika 2013; Krejci 2021: 16).⁴² It is, in fact, primarily due to the *ÖBR* context that Fóguāngshān is known outside the group's immediate (chiefly ethnic Chinese) networks.

Specifically, by building the temple in Vienna and thus becoming a major destination of Euro-Fóguāngshān, the Austrian group secured longer-term stability. Strong organisational ties to other European temples and especially the Taiwanese headquarters are vital for its very existence due to the smaller size of its lay community. Despite a gradually rising membership, the clientele of *Fo Guang Shan Tempel Wien* is still predominantly recruited from the ethnic Chinese community. Previous attempts on raising the public profile and attracting individuals from outside the diasporic context produced relatively meagre results.

At least four reasons can be named for the overall challenging situation Fóguāngshān faces in Austria. First, Fóguāngshān has a huge non-ethnic competition across the entire Buddhist spectrum. Second, the only scarcely diversified membership in addition to the distinctively Chinese aesthetical and linguistic context of Fóguāngshān renders its accessibility rather difficult for outsiders. As does, thirdly, the particular type and formal setting of Fóguāngshān Buddhism. Fourth, whereas Fóguāngshān is surely the major ethnic Chinese Buddhist provider, there has been some competition within the Chinese diasporic community as well. Previously, this involved Vienna-based Wéiyěnnà Cǐēn Fó táng with up to one hundred practitioners prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, and Cíjì, which comprised several dozen committed individuals during its heyday. In addition, Austria (and especially Vienna) is home to a relatively sizeable Yíguàndào community scattered across various branches. Although not a Buddhist movement per se, Yíguàndào's syncretic identity is saliently informed by Buddhist notions, practices, and material culture. Hence, especially in recent years (before the pandemic), Yíguàndào

⁴² Notably, in the first issues until mid-2013, Fóguāngshān was presented as "Taiwanese Buddhism," being subsequently replaced with "Mahayana Buddhism."

groups engaged more actively in addressing a non-ethnic public by organising, among others, meditation courses.

Adding to these is, on the one hand, the overall composition of the Chinese religious panorama in Austria. An increasingly important portion consists of Christian churches. Yet, the largest part of the Austro-Chinese religious cosmos belongs to the domain of home-based popular spirituality, whose (predominantly mainland) “practitioners” usually draw sharp lines vis-à-vis any form of institutionalised religiosity, be it Christianity or Buddhism. On the other hand, Fógūāngshān’s scope of activity, which has never reached beyond Vienna. Admittedly, Vienna is the centre of the Austro-Chinese diaspora; however, even there Fógūāngshān’s offline action radius is negligible. Accordingly, its optimistic plans for expansion notwithstanding, Austro-Fógūāngshān’s actual prospects for continued growth, especially involving non-Chinese, will remain challenging. Having said that, as long as *Fo Guang Shan Tempel Wien* succeeds in adequately managing the status quo—that is, primarily addressing existing community life and fostering harmony within (thus also promoting itself amid the diasporic context as a socio-cultural meeting place), while occasionally committing to public relations—it will retain its general visibility as the chief broker of Chinese Buddhism in Austria.

Appendix



Figure 1: Ullambana Dharma Service led by Mǎnlún (left) and Rúqún (right) conducted at Mollardgasse 40/21 (March 3, 2007).



Figure 2: Xīngyún before the start of the Groundbreaking Purification Ceremony for the Vienna temple (November 8, 2004).



Figure 3: Xīngyún conducting the Groundbreaking Purification Ceremony (November 8, 2004).



Figure 4: Xīngyún conducting the Groundbreaking Purification Ceremony (November 8, 2004).



Figure 5: Exterior of *Fo Guang Shan Tempel Wien* at Sechshauserstraße 50 (August 9, 2022).



Figure 6: Reception area with stairs leading to the first floor. A picture of Fóguāngshān Monastery (*Fóguāngshānsi*) in Gāoxióng is at the centre (July 6, 2022).



Figure 7: “Little Drop Shop”: library, café, and shop. The calligraphy on the walls were penned by Xīngyún (July 6, 2022).



Figure 8: The altar in the Jade Buddha Hall (July 6, 2022).



Figure 9: Meditation Hall during a guided meditation session led by Juéyàn (July 6, 2022).



Figure 10: One Thousand Buddha prayer offering (*xīnchūn lǐ qiān fófǎ huì*) led by Zhīyí. The temple conducts this ceremony as part of their Chinese New Year celebrations (February 5, 2019).



Figure 11: Chanting of sūtras led by (left to right) Zhīyí, Rúqún, and Juéróng at the 2022 Ullambana Dharma Service conducted in the Jade Buddha Hall (July 30, 2022).



Figure 12: Primary school class led by (left to right) Thomas Fiedler (an Austrian member helping out with school visits) and Yùjiāo being held in the Jade Buddha Hall (April 2, 2019).



Figure 13: Presentation of the *Encyclopaedia of Buddhist Arts* to the Library of Klosterneuburg Abbey. Front row, left to right: Augustinian canon Anton Höslinger (b. 1970), Juéróng, Lín Yùjiāo, and Zhīyí. Photo taken by Walter Hanzmann (June 25, 2019).

List of Abbreviations

BLIA	Buddha's Light International Association (<i>Guójì fóguāng huì</i>)
ÖBR	Austrian Buddhist Religious Society (<i>Österreichische Buddhistische Religionsgesellschaft</i>)
VHS	Wiener Volkshochschulen (Vienna Adult Education Centres)
ZVR	Zentrales Vereinsregister (Central Register of Associations)

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Glossary

Chén Liánjūn	陳連軍
Hóng Zīyuán	洪梓源
Jiǎ Yíng	賈瑩
Lǐ Guóshēn	李國深 [=Xīngyún]
Lín Yùjiāo	林玉嬌
Lǚ Shànghuán	呂尚寰
Juéyàn	覺彥
Juéróng	覺容
Mǎnlún	滿綸
Mǎnqiān	滿謙
Miàoxiáng	妙祥
Miàoyì	妙益
Qiū Yùwén	邱鈺雯
Rúqún	如群
Shèngyán	聖嚴
Tàixū	太虛
Wéijué	惟覺
Xīngyún	星雲
Yáng Qíngwén	楊晴雯 (=Juéróng)
Zhāng Zhìwěi	張志偉
Zhèng Xiùwén	鄭琇文 (=Zhīyí)
Zhèngyán	證嚴
Zhīyí	知怡
Zhū Jùnyǔ	朱俊宇
<i>Āmítuó jīng</i>	阿彌陀經
Bólín Fóguāngshān	柏林佛光山
<i>chá chán</i>	茶禪
Chán	禪
<i>chóngyáng jié</i>	重陽節
<i>chūnjié</i>	春節
Cǐjì	慈濟
<i>dīshuǐ fāng</i>	滴水坊
Dìzàng	地藏
<i>dòngtǔsǎ jìng diǎnlǐ</i>	動土灑淨典禮
Fǎgǔshān	法鼓山
<i>fǎshēn</i>	法身
<i>fǎshī</i>	法師

<i>fódàn jié yùfó fǎhuì</i>	佛誕節浴佛法會
<i>fó fǎ dúshū</i>	佛法讀書
<i>fóguāng jìngtǔ</i>	佛光淨土
<i>Fóguāngshān</i>	佛光山
<i>Fóguāngshān fǎhuá chánì</i>	佛光山法華禪寺
<i>Fóguāngshān hǎinèiwài túzhòng</i>	佛光山海內外徒眾講習會
<i>jiāngxíhuì</i>	
<i>Fóguāngshān ōuzhōu zǒng zhùchí</i>	佛光山歐洲總住持
<i>Fóguāngshān xīlǎisì</i>	佛光山西來寺
<i>Fóguāngshān zōngwù wěiyuánhùi wěiyuán</i>	佛光山宗務委員會委員
<i>Fóguāngshānsì</i>	佛光山寺
<i>Fójiào Cìjì Gōngdé Huì</i>	佛教慈濟功德會
<i>fótáng</i>	佛堂
<i>fótuó dànchéng jìniàn rì</i>	佛陀誕辰紀念日
<i>gāoji gùwèn</i>	高級顧問
<i>Gāoxióng</i>	高雄
<i>guāngmíng dēngfǎhuì</i>	光明燈法會
<i>Guānyīn</i>	觀音
<i>Guān Yǔ</i>	關羽
<i>guīyī diǎnlǐ</i>	皈依典禮
<i>Guójì fóguāng huì</i>	國際佛光會
<i>Héhuásì</i>	荷華寺
<i>huìmìng</i>	慧命
<i>jiǎngzuò</i>	講座
<i>Jizō</i>	地藏
<i>Línjǐ</i>	臨濟
<i>mítuó fǎhuì</i>	彌陀法會
<i>Nánjīng</i>	南京
<i>Ōuzhōu fóguāng qīngnián liányì huì</i>	歐洲佛光青年聯誼會
<i>Pútáoyá Fóguāngshān</i>	葡萄牙佛光山
<i>qīng míng fǎhuì</i>	清明法會
<i>rénjiān fójiào</i>	人間佛教
<i>rénjiān jìngtǔ</i>	人間淨土
<i>sānbǎo</i>	三寶
<i>sānshēn</i>	三身
<i>sēngjiā</i>	僧伽
<i>Shàolín</i>	少林
<i>Shīdēng gōngdé jīng</i>	施燈功德經
<i>Shìjiè fójiào měishù túshuō dà cídiǎn</i>	世界佛教美術圖說大辭典
<i>Tàiběi zhù àodìlì dàibiǎo</i>	台北駐奧地利代表

<i>tàijí</i>	太極
Wéi Tuó	韋馱
Wéiyěna Cíēn Fótáng	維也納慈恩佛堂
Wéiyěna Fóguāng qīngnián ài yuètuán	維也納佛光青年愛樂團
Wéiyěna fú zhī shēng héchàng tuán	維也納佛之聲合唱團
<i>xiàodào yuè fǎhuì</i>	孝道月法會
<i>xí chán</i>	習禪
<i>xīnchūn lǐ qiān fófǎ huì</i>	新春禮千佛法會
<i>yàoshī fǎhuì</i>	藥師法會
<i>Yàoshī guàndǐng zhēnyán</i>	藥師灌頂真言
Yíguàndào	一貫道
<i>yīnyuè jiàoshì</i>	音樂教室
<i>yùfú bǎodiàn</i>	玉佛寶殿
Zhōngtáishān	中台山