

The Experience of Building Time, Person, and Place Authority Databases for Chinese Buddhist Canons

Joey HUNG

Dharma Drum Buddhist College, Taiwan

Jenjou.Hung@gmail.com

Marking up digitized text with suitable tags is the first and the most important step in establishing a digital archive of historical texts. Good-quality markup not only strengthens the foundation of a digital archive project, but also provides researchers with more clues and materials for investigating various interesting or unanswered questions. The nature of Buddhist texts means that time, person and place markup is very commonly employed when tagging digital Buddhist texts.

To further improve the markup quality, we have begun building up an authority database for recording times, person- and place-names mentioned in Buddhist texts, and to give each such entity a unique identifier called an authority id. With this unique id, users are able to search for the same entity across different texts and different projects. In this presentation, we will share our experiences of building up an authority database, including the challenges we faced and the solutions we found. We also provide a few user-friendly methods for retrieving authority data from our database: we will demonstrate these methods and show how they can be integrated with other applications.