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The Library of the Institute of Advanced Studies of World Religions: East Asian Holdings and Services

Lena Lee Yang

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I. Introduction

The Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions (IASWR) is a private, nonprofit, educational foundation, established in 1970 for the study and teaching of world religions. As the development of one of the various programs at the Institute, the Library was opened in 1972. Since the Library's operations are closely related to other activities of the Institute, a brief introduction of the programs is given here:

A. Informational services

The Institute maintains informational files at its Stony Brook Office on planned or unpublished research, published work, and institutional data particularly concerning Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, and other Asian religions and philosophies. Instead of publishing monographic bibliographies for these religions which would soon become outdated, the Institute compiles and periodically issues special bibliographies for the ascertained needs of scholars and libraries. At present, these are Buddhist Research Information (BRI), Buddhist Text Information (BTI), Sikh Religious Studies Information (SRST), and Hindu Text Information (HTI) (being planned).

The Institute also has files on various library classification schemes, curricula development, religious organizations, and related data for the study of world religions. This information will eventually be computerized by means of a newly designed tagging structure which will enable the Institute to respond quickly to requests for such information from scholars, educators, librarians, and others in the field of world religions.

B. Research and microform resources program

The Institute locates scarce religious materials in Asia and elsewhere, analyzes and descriptively catalogs them, preserves them on microfilm and microfiche, and makes microcopies available to scholars and libraries at nominal cost. It also uses microform technology to facilitate paleographic research in manuscript analysis and translation, and applies computer science to develop a variety of tools important to philological research.

C. Translation and publication program

The Institute endeavors to foster the establishment of priorities among scholars for selecting Asian religious texts for Western translation and the further development of translation methods which might use computer science. At present, the Institute is undertaking the English translation of certain Chinese, Sanskrit, and Tibetan Buddhist Texts.
In addition to microeditions and information services publications, the Institute cosponsors the publication of selected books to meet the special needs of scholars and teachers in world religions. For example, it publishes in cooperation with university presses and certain organizations the IASWR Series, which includes doctoral dissertations, text translations, and monographic studies on Asian religions, as well as separate translations and monographs.

II. Library.

A. Collections

The Library, is a non-circulating research library located at the State University of New York at Stony Brook in its Melville Memorial Library. It now contains over 50,500 volumes, nearly 590 periodical titles, and approximately 21,000 manuscripts and monographs in microform. These materials are in 15 Asian languages as well as in English, French, German, and other Western languages. 87% deal with Asian topics.

The Library acquires its collections through regular purchases, donations, exchanges, grants, and participation in the SFC program.

In developing its collections, the Library chose Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism as five major fields for religious studies. Since library resources for the study of Christianity and Judaism are well developed in this country, the Library now concentrates on developing resources for Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam.

The Library has the following major collections:

   The Library acquired this collection from Dr. Gard in 1972 as a basis for developing its research resources in Buddhism and related fields of religious, cultural, and historical study. Dr. Gard collected these materials during 1937-40, 1953-1959, and 1963-1971 while studying and teaching Buddhism in East Asian universities and traveling extensively elsewhere in South and Southeast Asia. About half of the collection is Buddhist material in some 15 Asian languages, and the rest, in Western languages, concerns Asian and Western history, art, and social science.

   Mr. Ngiam is a devout Buddhist and businessman formerly of Hong Kong who now lives in Houston, Texas. During the Cultural Revolution, he bought numerous books from Shanghai and Canton, which were sold by weight and not by volume. After he had acquired them, he selected out the Buddhist works to form the present collection. They are all stitch-bound in the traditional Chinese style. Some are popular works, but many are rare or out-of-print editions, mostly published by the Buddhist Bookstore in Shanghai, Nanking, and Peking. The Library acquired this collection in 1974.

   Dr. Sargent was an assistant professor of philosophy and comparative
literature at the University of Indiana. He studied Sanskrit, Chinese, and Japanese languages and philosophies in Chicago, Paris, Marburg, and Kyōto, and traveled widely in Europe as well as Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong. The IASWR Library acquired his collection after his death in 1975. It consists mostly of works in Chinese, Japanese, and western languages on traditional Chinese thought, literature, and history.


5. A microfilm copy of the British Museum Collection of Chinese manuscripts from Tun-huang. These materials were collected by Sir Aurel Stein during his second expedition (1906-1908) to the "Caves of the Thousand Buddhas" (Ch'ien Fo Tung 千佛洞) near Tun-huang in Kansu, China. They were deposited in the British Museum in London by January 1909, and subsequently cataloged by Lionel Giles as the British Museum collection. The Library acquired this set of microfilm in 1972.

Almost one-third of the Library's collections are East Asian language materials, most of which are in Chinese and Japanese. It has a limited collection of Korean materials, including an incomplete set of the Dongguk Koryŏ edition of the Chinese Tripitaka and some histories, philosophical monographs, and biographies in Korean.

The Library has numerous works in Asian and Western languages on Buddhist thought, history, art, and role in society, and for the comparative study of religions. Similar collections, although smaller, are being developed for other Asian religions.

The East Asian Buddhist collection can be grouped into three general categories, described as follows:

Buddhist Canonical Literature

The Library has approximately 5,050 volumes of Chinese and Japanese canonical literature, commentaries, and traditional and modern textual studies. These materials include several important editions and reprinted sets. (See Appendix A).

Buddhist Schools

The Library has nearly 900 volumes pertaining to certain East Asian Buddhist schools: T'ien-t'ai 天台 Tendai, Hua-yen 華嚴 Kegon, Ching-t' u 摩訶 Jōdo or Pure Land, Ch'an 禪 Zen, Fa-hsien 法相 Hosō, Wei-shih 惟識 Yuishiki, San-lun 三論 Sanron, etc.
Buddhist Art

Materials on the magnificence of Buddhist art should not be overlooked; the Library has over 300 books on this subject, including studies on Buddhist paintings, sculpture, and architecture, as well as works on the famous Tun-huang, Lung-men, and Yün-kang cave temples in China. Some books describe building structures and temple floor plans; others contain descriptions and photographs of woodcarved Buddhas in Japan, and ritual objects in China, Japan, and Korea.

In addition to the above mentioned materials on Buddhist canonical literature, schools, and art, the Library also has Chinese and Japanese histories of Buddhism in East Asia as well as in Central, South, and Southeast Asia. Reference works, monastic biographies, and the collected writings of Buddhist scholars and monks together comprise about 1,450 volumes. The Library also has some 1,370 volumes of materials on East Asian history and thought, including Confucianism, Mohism, the Legalists, and other minor Chinese traditional schools. It has nearly 150 Chinese and Japanese studies of philosophical Taoism (Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, others), Islam, and Christianity, and approximately 80 Japanese works on Shinto and Indian Buddhism.

The collection also includes popular Buddhist literature in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, totaling about 190 titles.

The Library has been collecting materials on Buddhism since 1972 (a recent purchase is the Cheng t'ung tao tsang, the Taoist canon in 61 volumes), and is now acquiring publications on lesser known religions and folk beliefs such as Chūgoku no sennin, and Chung kuo min chien hsin yang lun ch'i, by Murakami Yoshimi and Liu Chih Wan, respectively.

Of the some 590 periodical titles in the Library, there are 24 current titles in Chinese, published in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, and New York (see Appendix B), and 19 periodicals in Japanese, published by Japan.

B. Services

Although the IASWR Library is a non-circulating research library, its collections are available to students, teachers, scholars, and general readers. In addition to students and faculty of the State University of New York at Stony Brook, many visiting scholars, including medical doctors, from North America, Europe, and Asia have undertaken research in the IASWR Library. Tibetan and other Buddhist monks and nuns from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and Nepal have come to study scarce editions of Buddhist texts, cultural, doctrinal, and other aspects of Buddhism.

The Library exchanges books and periodicals with other libraries and institutions abroad. Its staff, in addition to helping visitors to the Library, answers requests for research or bibliographic information by mail. In accordance with copyright provisions, the Library offers a
duplicating service at nominal cost.


A catalog of the Chinese Books in the IASWR Library, now in preparation, was scheduled to be published by IASWR by the end of 1980.

III. Fact sheet

Name: The Library of the Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions
Address: 5001 Melville Memorial Library
SUNY at Stony Brook
Stony Brook, New York 11794
Tel. (516) 246-8366
Hours: Monday-Friday
9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Closed Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays
Access: Non-circulating research library
Xerocbing and microcopies are available within the copyright laws at a nominal cost
Librarians: Hannah G. Robinson
Lena Lee Yang

(This paper was presented to the panel entitled "Archival and Library Resources on East Asia in the Metropolitan New York Area," MAR-AAS Conference, Drew University, Madison NJ, October 25, 1980)
Appendix A  Buddhist Canonical Literature

Chung hua ta tsang ching.

Dai Nihon bukkyu zenshō.

Fo chiao ta tsang ching.
佛教大藏經/佛教書局. 編輯. 台北: 佛教書局, 民國67 (1978). 84 V.

Hsü tsang ching.
續藏經/香港影印續藏經委員會. 佛曆2511 (1967). 150 V.
Reprint of Nihon manji zokōyō.

Kaisetsu dai Nihon kōtei daizōkyō.

Kokuyaku dai daizōkyō.
国語大蔵経/國民文庫刊行會. 東京: 國民文庫刊行會, 大正6-10 (1917-1920). 30 V.

Kokuyaku issai kyō.
国語一切經/岩本嘉雄. 東京: 大東出版社. 昭和5-11 (1930-36). 958 V.

Koryō taejanggyǒng.
高麗大藏經/白性郎/發行者: 東京大學校.
檀記4290-4302 (1957-69).
Nanden daizōkyō.

Nihon daizōkyō.
日本大藏経/中野達叡/編/東京: 日本大蔵経編纂會, 大正3-11 (1914-20). 530 V.

P' in chieh ching she chiao k’an ta tsang ching.
頻伽精舍刊大蔵経附總目/頻伽精舍/編/上海: 頻伽精舍/民國 2 (1913) 115 V.

Ta ming san tsang sheng chiao nan tsang (Ming Southern Edition).
大明三藏聖教南藏(明南藏)/ incomplete.

Ta tsang ching.

Ta tsang ching.
大藏經/大正原版/台北: 新文豐出版公司. 影印. n.d. 55 V.
Reprint of Taishō edition.
Buddhist Canonical Literature

Taishō shinshū daizōkyō.

Wan chêng tsang ching.
正藏. 台北: 新文豐出版公司. 1978. 70 V.
Reprint of Manji edition from Japan.

Ying yin sung chi sha tsang ching.
影印宋碛砂藏經. 上海: 影印宋版藏經. 民国25 (1936). 593 V.
Appendix B

Current Chinese Periodicals

1. Bodhedrum 布達樹。台中，台灣：布達樹雜誌社。
2. Buddhism 佛學創作與文摘。New York：Green Buddhist Society。
3. Buddhism in Hong Kong 香港佛教。香港：香港佛教月刊社。
4. The China Buddhist Monthly 中國佛教。台北：中國佛教月刊社。
5. Ching Feng (Chinese ed.) 景風。香港：Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion and Culture。
6. Chung Chiao Shih Chieh 家教世界。台北：家教世界雜誌社。
7. Cool Purity: An exhibition of Buddhist art 清涼藝展特刊。台北：Institute for the Study of Buddhist Culture。
8. Everlasting Light 無盡燈。Penang：Malaysian Buddhist Association。
9. Fu Jen Philosophical Studies 哲學論集。Taipei：The Graduate School of Philosophy，Fu Jen Catholic University。
10. Hai Chao Yin Monthly 海潮音。台北：海潮音月刊社。
11. Journal of Buddhist Culture 佛教文化學報。台北：中華學術院佛教文化研究所。
12. The Journal of Taoist Culture 道教文化。台北：道教文化雜誌社。
13. Kwan Sze In 觀世音。台北：觀世音雜誌社。
14. The Life Magazine 生命雜誌。香港：生命雜誌社。
15. The Lion's Roar Magazine 獅子吼。台北：獅子吼月刊社。
16. Nanyang Buddhist 南洋佛教。新加坡：南洋佛教雜誌社。
17. Nei Ming 内明。香港：内明雜誌社。
18. Precious Raft 寶筏。台北：寶筏月刊社。
19. Torch of Wisdom 慧焰。台北：慧焰雜誌社。
20. Tsyr Ming Monthly 慈明。台中，台灣：慈明雜誌社。
21. Tzu Chi 慈濟。花蓮，台灣：佛教慈濟功德社。
22. Tzu Sheng 慈聲。台中：慈聲雜誌社。
23. Tz'u Yun 慈雲。台北：慈雲雜誌社。
24. Universal Door Monthly 普門。高雄，台灣：普門雜誌社。