

The Study and Creation of Buddhist Resources in Taiwan and the Integration of the International Buddhist Archives

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With the support of Taiwan Digital Archives Expansion Project, Taiwan e-Learning & Digital Archives Program (TELDAP) and Buddhist Digital Archives Group, Dharma Drum Buddhist College (DDBC), there are now various Buddhist digital archive projects established and working towards the goal of the Integration of International Buddhist Archives. In this presentation, the following TELDAP/DDBC Buddhist projects will be introduced:

1. Digital Database of Buddhist Tripitaka Catalogues (<http://jinglu.cbeta.org/>)

The purpose of this website is to provide search and retrieval functions across multi-lingual Buddhist Tripitaka catalogs. The site employs the standards for hypertext and metadata, such as XML/TEI markup, to build a knowledge management system of Buddhist text catalogues. Its database already contains Buddhist Tripitaka catalogues in Chinese, Tibetan, Pali, Manchu, and Western languages (translated from Chinese). At the present time, building on the foundation of the database and leveraging GIS technology, the project team is establishing a "Concordance Tool for the Chinese Buddhist Canon" - a retrieval platform which presents Buddhist Tripitaka literature and vocabulary in a three-dimensional spatio-temporal format.

2. Buddhist Lexicographical Resources

(<http://sites.google.com/site/buddhistreferencetools/Home>)

The goal of this project is to construct a large-scale digital database of Buddhist vocabularies and books. In addition to using Information Technology to sort and integrate related digital literature, the project aims to establish free tools and platforms for academic services. Its website will provide resources for downloading digital collections of Buddhist literature, search and retrieval tools, a Comparative Edition Database, and research platform services.

3. The Chinese Buddhist Tripitaka Electronic Text Collection, Taipei Edition

(<http://taipei.ddbc.edu.tw/>)

This project is aimed at constructing the largest digital archive of Chinese Buddhist content in existence, and at facilitating knowledge sharing and knowledge creation. Digitizing the Jiaxing Tripiṅka(嘉興藏) collection is the main task of this project. The Jiaxing Tripiṅka is collection of rich Buddhist resources from the Ming and Qing periods, and as a result of this digitization, most of what is not contained in the Tripiṅka (大正藏) and the Zokuzōkyō (卍續藏) may now be found in our database.

Although we are blessed now with a wide range of projects that have constructed valuable data repositories, these data-sources tend to function as isolated monoliths, and the lack of connections between them limits their value to end-users. For this reason, a group of scholars around the world has convened to promote ideas connected with “Integrated/International Buddhist Archives” (IBA), the goal being to integrate existing digital Buddhist resources and to provide a framework to support future work.

In this way, the projects introduced above are aimed at the development of an IBA platform that can enable the convenient searching of Buddhist resources scattered around the information world, and at offering scholars undertaking digitization work in Buddhist studies a space in which to exchange ideas and share their experiences of digitization.

The development of Buddhist archives which serve scholars across the world is an important cultural achievement created in Taiwan for the Information Age.