The Stein Collection in the British Library

Having introduced the major collections of Dunhuang manuscripts in the National Library of China, Beijing (IDP News 6, November 1996), The Institute of Oriental Studies, St Petersburg (IDP News 2, January 1995), and the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris (IDP News 4, January 1996), as well as private and public collections in Japan (IDP News 10, Spring 1998) and manuscripts from Turfan in the Staatsbibliothek, Berlin (IDP News 3, July 1995), this issue concentrates on the last large collection, that at the British Library, as well as giving a report on three collections in Taipei (pp. 4-5). The next few editions of the newsletter will introduce smaller collections worldwide. A listing will be added to the IDP web pages bringing all this information together later this year.

Collection history

The British Library's Stein collections have a complicated history resulting from the economics of exploration and the division of artefacts collected by Stein on his first three Central Asian expeditions to Chinese Turkestan. Financial support offered by the Trustees of the British Museum and by the Government of India was acknowledged in a division of his finds made largely on the basis of language, style and type. All the material was first sent back to London for division between the British Museum (various departments) and the Government of India. The latter materials were divided between the National Museum in Delhi (3D materials, wall-paintings and some graphic works), and the India Office Library (textual materials, mainly in Sanskrit and Tibetan). The division, particularly of textual material, was further complicated by the fact that many documents had inscriptions in different languages on recto and verso.

When the British Library was founded in 1973, textual material from the Stein collection mainly in Chinese but including documents in Tibetan, Sanskrit, Kharosthi script, Khotanese, Uighur and Turkic was transferred from the British Museum’s Department of Oriental Manuscripts and Printed Books.
Collection Description

Chinese
c. 14,000 scrolls and fragments from Dunhuang, Cave 17 (2nd & 3rd expeditions)
c. 1000+ fragments on paper from other sites including Chinese on Tibetan c.500
c. 3000 woodslips, fragments and shavings
Tangut c. 4000 fragments on paper
Khotanese
c. 50 scrolls
c. 1600 paper fragments
c. 100 woodslips
Tibetan
c. 1400 fragments on papers
c. 2300 woodslips
Kuichean c.300
Sogdian c. 50
Uighur c.100
Eastern Turkic/Runic Turkic c. 9
Sanskrit/Prakrit, inc. Brahmi & Kharosthi scripts c. 1500
Mongolian c. 26

These are approximate categories only. Some of the manuscripts contain more than one language and some are indecipherable. There are manuscripts on birchbark, leather and other materials. The Stein Collection also includes a few paintings on silk and paper, and various artefacts such as sutra wrappers, paper cuts, and paste brushes.

The British Library Prints and Drawings Department has a collection of 11,000 prints, negatives and lantern slides taken by Stein in India, Pakistan, Chinese Central Asia, Iran, Iraq and Jordan from 1890s to 1938.

Main Publications

The following is a list of the major catalogues of the material published to date as well as work in progress. Most of the material is also available on microfilm and on the International Dunhuang Project Database. The latter includes full colour images. Work will start this year on the Tibetan woodslips (mainly unpublished) and the Tangut material.

Kottonese Texts, 7 vols., Cambridge 1945-85.

The British Library et al., Dunhuang manuscripts in British Collections (Chinese Texts other than Buddhist scriptures), 15 vols., Chengdu, 1990-.
Browns, T., A Translation of the Kharosti Documents From Chinese Turkistan (James G. Ford Fund, v.xx), London 1940.


One of Islam Akhun’s forged books in a made-up script.


**Forgeries**

The British Library collection also includes one group of documents (see example above) purchased by George Macartney in Kashgar in the 1880s and 1890s which are forgeries in a made-up language, produced by Islam Akhun (left) and his associates and sold to both the British and Russian consuls at this time. In 1900 Stein spoke to Islam Akhun and managed to get him to admit to the deception.

In addition, it is believed by many scholars that some of the 600 or so scrolls bought by Stein on his 3rd expedition in the town of Dunhuang and also at Ganzhou to the east are also forgeries. These are currently being examined.

*This is a shortened and amended version of the entry for the British Library, Oriental and India Office Collections appearing in the just published Handbook of Stein Collections in the UK (ed. H. Wang, the British Museum Occasional Papers, London 1999). For details on ordering see 'Publications' on p. 6 of this newsletter.*
Introduction

The planning department of the National Library, formerly known as the National Central Library, was founded in Nanking in 1933. During the Sino-Japanese War it had to move west to Chongqing and was formally established there in 1940. It moved back to Nanking after the war and from the end of 1948 to the beginning of 1949 its rich and valuable collections followed the Nationalist government to Taiwan. In 1955 it was formally re-established in Taipei. The new building was completed in 1986 on South Zhongshan Road, Taipei.

The most important and valued collection is of Chinese rare books, comprising about 125,000 volumes. As for Dunhuang manuscripts, the Library has a collection of 144 items. These comprise 155 separate scrolls, and are catalogued under the Library’s Special Collections. This paper offers an introduction to this collection and relevant discussion, its provenance, characteristics, arrangement and preservation in the Library.

Provenance

Many of the Dunhuang scrolls were acquired from Ye Changchuo and came from Li Shengduo’s collection. Ye Changchuo (1881-1968) was from Fanyu in Guangdong Province. During the Japanese War he took part in the search for ancient books and, apart from being responsible for purchasing antiquarian books from Hong Kong, he was also in charge of the important matter of the transport of valuable items from Shanghai to Hong Kong. In a manuscript about his collection he writes: ‘Dunhuang fragmentary scrolls were acquired by Liu [Yanshen], Li [Shengduo], and He [Zhenji]. Mr He died first and, apart from those manuscripts given to his friends during his lifetime, I have heard that his collection went to Li. The Li and Liu collections comprise many scrolls of known sutras but there are also some fragmentary texts which are difficult to identify. Mr Li and Mr Liu have both died in recent years and their collections were divided and dispersed. A couple of hundred items were purchased by the National Central Library following my recommendation. I have heard that about a hundred sutra scrolls from Mr Liu’s collection went to Zhang Zizhou, a relative of his. Mr Li’s collection was also divided and sold, and it is now not possible to reconstitute it.’

Apart from these, there are also those purchased from Ye Changchuo’s own collection. As for the scrolls purchased from Li Shengduo’s daughter, because neither Li’s seals, colophons or any other distinguishing features are to be found on them, they are problematic. But because these scrolls show seals and colophons of Xu Chengr ao and Yuan Kewen, then they can be verified.

The contemporary records and reports of purchases show that the manuscripts acquired in its early years by the Library were most probably purchased from Shanghai, Hong Kong, Beijing, Nanjing and other places following the Sino-Japanese War. Once in Taiwan, the Library also bought some items from Zhang Boqian among which were Tang dynasty Dunhuang scrolls.

Characteristics

The manuscripts date from the Six Dynasties to the Five Dynasties period, with the majority from the Tang. Apart from four Buddhist Tibetan scrolls and three copies of the Daojing, all the rest are Chinese Buddhist texts. One has printed Buddha images but the remainder are all manuscripts. There are 26 with colophons; among them are seven which are clearly dated and 20 which name the scribe, the maker or the donor. Three contain seals of the original collector, two contain Empress Wu Zetian characters and three have phonetic notation at the end. There are only 13 scrolls with texts which are not included in various versions of the Tripitaka, and one which is not in the Daoist Canon.

In his preface to ‘Dunhuang Scrolls in the National Central Library’, Wu Qiyu says that perhaps there are some scholars who believe that ‘the collections in Taipei consist of many frequently seen Buddhist texts, and outstanding examples are few, but all are forgeries’, but then adds an explanation. After the Japanese War, the Library received ancient Japanese manuscripts and several of them mistakenly found their way into the Dunhuang collection. Apart from the question of whether Li Shengduo collection contained fakes, certain scholars therefore believed the forgers did not make the actual manuscript themselves but simply added false colophons or inscriptions. This can be seen from a comparison of the collection with those in Paris and London.

Ordering

A Catalogue of the Rare Books in the National Central Library was published in 1957 by Zhonghua Publishers in Taipei in which the Dunhuang scrolls were included under ‘Buddhist texts’. There were revised and expanded editions in 1967 and 1986. In addition, in 1968 Professor Pan Zhonggui published ‘Titles of Dunhuang Scrolls in the National Central Library’. In 1973 my colleague, Li Qingzhu, wrote ‘Guoli Zhongzheng tushuguan suozang Dunhuang juanzi jiao dui lujuan ji’, and distributed the typescript among his colleagues and friends. In it he noted the paper colour, margins and guidelines, number of panels, whether beginning and end are complete, incipit, size, differences and similarities with other texts in the collection and in the Taisei and, finally, a concordance to the Taisei and other Dunhuang manuscripts, so greatly aiding the work of scholars. In 1975, Pan Zhonggui made a collection of all the titles and it was published in Dunhuangshuo.

The Library started to microfilm the collection in the early 1970s thus making it possible for scholars to read them, and also thereby avoiding overuse of the originals so extending the manuscripts’ life. By 1976, Taiwan Shimen Library Co. published a complete facsimile of the collection. In six volumes, Guoli Zhongzheng tushuguan zang Dunhuang juanzi, can be called a pioneering work.

Conservation

The Library has naturally been very cautious when it comes to the preservation of its rare books. This was seen after the move
to the new library building in 1986 when all the existing facilities for book storage and security were modernized. The rare books storage area is now equipped with heat and humidity controls, keeping the temperature below 20°C and the humidity between 50-60%. Because ultra-violet light makes it easier to see the faded colour and yellow dye on the paper of these collections, and also to distinguish changes in the brittleness of the paper, such lighting has been installed in appropriate areas.

Apart from this, specialist restoration expertise has been developed with responsibility for ancient documents with insect and other damage and fragile paper and such manuscripts are backed with a sheet of lining paper. But when it comes to the Dunhuang scrolls, because they are so old their paper has special characteristics. It is also hand-made, and therefore we have to pay even more attention to find suitable paste and backing paper. We must not act rashly or hastily. At present, the preservation environment is relatively good and even though it is not possible at present for these documents to undergo restoration their condition is not deteriorating.

Conclusion
The Dunhuang scrolls are primary research material for all aspects of the history and literature of ancient China. From the viewpoint of the Library it does not matter where they come from or whether they are genuine or forged, because for this group of manuscripts their preservation is the highest priority. The Library welcomes visits from colleagues with knowledge in this field and hopes to build co-operation to accelerate research into the preservation of Dunhuang materials.

Dunhuang Manuscripts at Academia Sinica, Taipei
Tu Cheng-sheng

Academia Sinica was founded in 1928 and soon after established a Dunhuang document research team devoted to the collection of Dunhuang material with an eye to facilitate historical and textual studies. Over the next several years the library acquired 49 Dunhuang scrolls. Among them Daboniepanjing (one juan) and Fuhuayiji (one juan) were from Wu Baohui's collection as shown by his seal. Another scroll, Suqidiage dazai zuozhun shenhou (one juan) has a colophon by the original collectors, namely Xu Chengqiao (on two pages) and Wu Boqian (one page).

The Dunhuang materials have recently been placed under the care of the Rare Books Department in Fu Ssu-nien Library. The department's excellent storage conditions and specialist restorers will ensure the long-term future of the manuscripts. In 1988 the 'Project for Rare Books on CD' was initiated so as to protect the Library's most valuable material for the future while, at the same time, providing readers with a convenient and speedy accessed surrogate. The Dunhuang scrolls have now been digitised and stored on CD. Although the manuscripts are not yet listed in the Rare Books Catalogue, the library has recently mounted a web page through which users can access the Online Public Access Catalogue (home page (http://www.sinica.edu.tw), click 'Academia Sinica Services: Library'). By typing 'Dunhuang Scrolls' under 'Subject' the user obtains a list of the Dunhuang holdings in the Fu Ssu-nien Library collection. Readers who need to consult the originals or obtain reproductions for research purposes, must apply for permission to get copies from the CD. It is hoped that a separate web page will be devoted to these materials and it will then be possible for scholars worldwide to apply for authorisation to access a complete text image of the manuscripts via Internet.

Professor Tu Cheng-sheng is Director of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, Taipei.

Note: There are also two Dunhuang scrolls in the History Museum in Taipei: a Daboniepanjing (Malapanaivanavasuta) and a Lotus sutra. They have been studied by Lin Ronghua (Taipei Guoli Lishi Bowuguan cang Dunhuang juanzi ba in Huagang faxue xuexiao 12 (Mar. 1980), pp. 269-70).

(Details from Cheng A-tsai whose paper in the forthcoming volumes on Dunhuang forgeries provides an overview of the Taipei collections.)
Conservation des manuscrits de Dunhuang et d’Asie centrale

sous la direction de Monique Cohen
Conference papers from the second IDP conference organised by the Bibliothèque nationale de France and held at Paris and
Chantilly, 7-9 February 1996.
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Handbook to Stein Collections in the UK

Helen Wang (ed.)
(British Museum Occasional Paper No. 129)

This handbook aims to serve as a finding list for the collections of objects, manuscripts and archives of correspondence that are associated with Sir Aurel Stein’s (1862-1943) visits to India, China, Iran, Iraq and Jordan between the 1890s and 1938. In the UK, the collections are now scattered in various organisations in London, Oxford and Cambridge.
The entries have been written by the curators, librarians and archivists who work directly on the Stein collections, and the information is arranged in terms of collection history, collection description, publications, accessibility and contact details.
A4, 66 pp., GB£ 7.50, p&p in UK: GB£ 1.90; overseas surface mail add 15% of order value, Multiple orders and airmail rates available on request.
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Sir Aurel Stein Bibliography

Istvan Erdeley (ed.) with contributions by László Bardt and Miklós Erdy
(Arcadia Bibliographica Vironorum Euritorum, Fasciculus 17)
Eurolingua/Eurasiatic Linguistic Association,
Bloomington, Indiana 1999
64 pp., US$ 26 (pb).
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We are glad to inform you about the end of the transitional period caused by the death of our Finnish distributor of Manuscripta Orientalia and financial collapse in Russia. It was not an easy time for us and we are happy that we were able to fulfill all our obligations.
We would like to thank you for your support and inform you that we are planning to publish in the nearest future the electronic version of our journal supplying it with dozens of new color illustrations related to the articles.
Please, visit our web-site at:
http://orient.thesa.ru

Central Asia Resource News

The February issue can be located via NEWS at:
http://home.ISTAR.ca/~jmenzies

Han from a Dunhuang printed almanac
(British Library: Or 8210/P6).

Merit, Opulence and the Buddhist Network of Wealth

This is an interdisciplinary, cooperative project sponsored by Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois and the Dunhuang Research Academy. The goals of the project, made possible with a generous grant from the Henry Luce Foundation, are two fold. The international research team will address 10th century art and culture examining the ways in which merit-making activities in temples impacted on the material culture of western China. The dramatic structural shift in the arts industries during the 10th century occurred when demands on workshops from lay patrons prompted a professionalization of craft production. Fieldwork will be conducted this summer at Dunhuang and in three regions of Sichuan. Secondly, caves will also be documented in new, 3D computer models developed with the Dunhuang Research Institute. These models will be accompanied by a database of information on caves crucial to the project.
For further information contact:
Asst Professor Sarah E. Fraser
s-fraser2@nwu.edu
Site URL: http://court.it-services.nwu.edu/dunhuang/Merit/

Virtual Dunhuang Art Cave

A site developed by the Artificial Intelligence Institute of Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China and the Fraunhofer Institute for Computer Graphics, Rostock & Darmstadt, Germany.
The site provides a virtual walk through the Dunhuang caves with some historical context on the caves and the area. Although not yet completed it is possible to get guest access contact: sybille@rostock.igd.fhg.de
Site URL: http://www.egd.igd.fhg.de/~dunhuang/welcomeE.html
Conferences

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Russian Academy of Sciences
Orientalists’ Society

Orientalist Information Centre
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would like to invite you to take part in the
International Workshop
Mongolian and Tibetan Historical Sources:
Computer Approaches
14-16 July 1999, Moscow, Russia

Items under discussion:
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Email: postmaster@orient.ru or ivram@glasnet.ru
Fax: +7 95 9257788

Lists of participants and presentations will be placed on the Eurasian Oriental Server (EOAS): http://www.orient.ru

Dimitry D.Vasiliev
Vice-president
Orientalists’ Society of the RAS
Tel: 7 95 9285764
Email: dmivaa@glas.apc.org

The International Association of Buddhist Studies (IABS)

XXIIth Conference
23-28 August, 1999, Lausanne, Switzerland
For details contact:
XXIIth IABS Conference
Dept. of Oriental Languages and Cultures
University of Lausanne
B.E.S.H. 2
CH-1015 LAUSANNE
Switzerland
Fax: +41 21 692 3045
Email: iabs99@orient.unil.ch
WWW: http://www.unil.ch/orient

DUNHUANG 2000
The International Academic Conference on the Centenary of the Discovery of the Dunhuang Manuscript Cave (No. 17)
21-25 June, 2000, Beijing, China
To be held at Capital Normal University.
For details contact:
Hao Chunwen
Dept. of History
Capital Normal University
BEIJING 100089
The People’s Republic of China
Tel: +86 10 6890 3561
Fax: +86 10 6890 2315
Email: Haochunwen@ibhw.com.cn or Haozw@mailhost.cnu.edu.cn

2000 International Conference on Dunhuang Studies
August, 2000, Dunhuang, China
The conference is scheduled to last six days, the first four days for papers and discussion and the last two days to include visits to the Mogao caves, Yulin caves, West Qianfodong, Yumen Pass and the Han dynasty Great Wall. Spaces are limited to 170 delegates. Participants will be expected to pay a registration fee (which includes local travel for the cave visits), travel to and from Dunhuang, accommodation and other expenses. Further details will be sent with the second announcement in August.
For details contact:
Mr Zhang Xiantang
Assistant Secretary General
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Mogaoku, DUNHUANG 736200
The People’s Republic of China
Tel: +86 937 886 9027
Fax: +86 937 886 9028
Email: dhbhlxz@public.blz.gs.cn

Permanent International Altaistic Conference (PIAC)

42nd Meeting
22-27 August 1999, Prague,Czech Republic
Language and Culture Maintenance in the Altaic World
For details contact:
Secretary General, PIAC
Goodbody Hall
Indiana University
Bloomington
Indiana 47405, USA
Fax: +1 812 855 7500
Email: sinord@indiana.edu

Project News

Dunhuang 2000 Project

Professor Katsumura Tetsuya and Takata Tokio

Dunhuang 2000

People

Colin Chinnery and Susan Whitfield
presented a joint paper in January 1999 at the joint meeting of the Pacific Neighbourhood Consortium (PNC), Electronic Buddhist Text Initiative (EBTI) and Electronic Cultural Atlantic Initiative (ECAI) held at Academia Sinica, Taiwan.

Susan Whitfield went to Kyoto in February at the invitation of Kyoto University Institute for Research in Humanities (Jinbunke) to talk with Professors Katsumura Tetsuya and Takata Tokio on the International Dunhuang Project and Chinese characters on the web as part of the Institute’s project, ‘Chinese characters on the Internet’, funded by a grant-in-aid of the Japanese Ministry of Education.

Thanks are owing to my hosts for such an enjoyable and interesting visit and we look forward to future collaboration.

Sponsors

During her visit to Taiwan, Susan Whitfield visited the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange, being hosted by the President Li Yih-Yuan, Vice President James Chiang and Secretary Mrs Yu Shufen. She also met with Harold C. C. Han, President of the Himalaya Foundation. The Himalaya Foundation has also generously provided funds through a joint grant with the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation.

The Project relies on external funds and we remain extremely grateful to all our sponsors. If you would like information on how you can help IDP then please contact us at the address overleaf.
St Petersburg Conference

The 4th conference on the ‘Preservation of Dunhuang and Central Asian Material’ will be hosted by the Institute of Oriental Studies at St. Petersburg. Details are currently being finalised and further information will shortly be sent out. It is scheduled for Wednesday 8 to Saturday 11 September, 1999 and sessions will be split into three workshops and general presentations.

Specialist Workshops
Informal workshops involving practical work and informal presentations. The three sessions will take place concurrently. Co-ordinators are:
- Paper: Mark Barnard (London) and Anne-Grethe Rischel (Denmark)
- Textiles: Barbara Schröter (Berlin)
- Wall-Paintings and sculptures: Mr. Gabsch (Berlin) & Kira E. Samosyuk (St. Petersburg)
- Computer Programmes for cataloguing and digitisation of manuscripts: Erim Rezvan (St. Petersburg)

General presentations
Lectures on conservation and science of interest to all participants.

Call for Berlin papers

During the ‘Third International Conference on the Preservation of Dunhuang and Central Asian Collections’, held in Berlin last year it was decided to publish the papers as soon as possible. We should like to take this opportunity to thank all participants who have already sent us their manuscripts. We also ask those, who have not yet sent us anything, to do so as soon as possible. Send papers to:
- Dr. Hartmut-Otto Freistel
  - Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin
  - Preussischer Kulturbesitz
  - Potsdamer Strasse 33
  - D-10785 Berlin
  - Tel: +49 30 266 2415
  - Fax: +49 30 264 5955

French papers published

Papers from the ‘Second International Conference on the Preservation of Dunhuang and Central Asian Material’ held in Paris have now been published (see Publications, p. 6)

Donation

The Cultural Section of the Chinese Embassy in London made a generous donation of GB£500 towards the project work. It will be used to digitise a group of Dunhuang manuscripts.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their interest and support.

Launch of Bookbinding Web Site

Colin Chinnery of IDP has prepared a web site on the history of Chinese bookbinding as shown by the Dunhuang manuscripts. It offers a full survey of all the different types of binding, from whirlwind to pothi, illustrated with both diagrams and photographs of examples. It is directly accessible from the IDP web site front page (http://idp.bl.uk).

This is the first of many specialist web sites that IDP will be mounting over the next few years.

Sponsor a Sutra

The International Dunhuang Project (IDP) ‘Sponsor a Sutra’ scheme allows you to help in the digitisation of the Dunhuang manuscripts held at the British Library for as little as GB£50. Just like donors of old, you can arrange for the copying of a sutra and add your name and a message at the end. The difference with donors of the past is that instead of paying a scribe to copy the sutra by hand, you will pay for the sutra to be photographed and digitised. The digitised image with your name and message will be added to the IDP interactive web database (http://idp.bl.uk) where it will appear whenever anyone worldwide accesses the sutra.

Several people have already very generously sponsored sutras. You can view these on the database. For example, search under ‘Specific Search: Ms. No’ for any of the following:
- Or.8210/8
- Or.8210/S.4289
- Or.8210/S.5642

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Note: You can only sponsor manuscripts that are not already sponsored and you must sponsor the whole text. In some cases this is only a few lines, in other one sutra takes up the entire scroll which may be over 20 metres long. There is a scale of charges depending on how many images will need to be scanned starting at GB£50 for the first page and GB£25 for each extra page thereafter. You can also sponsor a group of texts, e.g. all copies of a text in the collection. The cost of sponsorship in this case will be estimated separately.

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