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On Buddhist Text Information (B.T.I.) Of the Institute for Advanced Studies Of World Religions (IASWR), New York

by R. A. Gard

The Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions (IASWR, New York) started a periodical *Buddhist Text Information (BTI)*, in November 1974, as a bibliographic information service for which the author is responsible as *BTI* Editor. It is issued four times a year (March, June, September, December) and numbered consecutively from Number 1, with a Cumulative Index published annually in December. In addition to describing texts and their published editions, translations, studies, indices, etc., the *BTI* devotes special attention to research planned, in progress, or completed according to information received through circulated Author Entry Forms. In each *BTI* Number the data are arranged by basic texts with romanized titles listed in A-Z order and a brief identification. Under each text title, the bibliographic entries are listed chronologically according to the date of publication or the Author Entry Form received; they are numbered consecutively for each issue. Each *BTI* Number has a Title Index in which the underlined numbers of entries refer to work planned, in progress, or completed but not yet published. Where applicable, Asian words are transliterated, with diacritics, according to the systems used by The Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.).

The bibliographic nature of the data in *BTI* Numbers is indicated by a letter code added to the entry number: a = abridgement/abstract, b = bibliography/catalog/list, c = concordance, d = dissertation/thesis, e = edition, f = facsimile, g = glossary, i = index, m = manuscript, p = pictorial data/illustrations, r = revised/corrected/added entry, s = study, modern commentary, t = translation, v = vocabulary, x = extracts/selections, incomplete work. An asterisk * applied to a letter code indicates that the item is available in microform or xerographic copy at cost from the IASWR Library, within the provisions of the copyright law if applicable.

The *BTI* Cumulative Index consists of two parts: Title Index of basic texts, and Name Index of authors, editors, translators, and com-

mentators with dates and variant names given when known. To aid cross-reference study, entries are coded in italics and symbols: *bw* = basic work description, *tc* = traditional commentary description, *cw* = commented work description, *tt* = traditional translation [of *bw*, *tc*, *cw*] description, *mw* = modern work: edition, translation, study, etc., *re* = related entry: edition, etc. by others to which may be added if needed: [e] = editor, [r] = reviewer, [t] = translator; = derived from: original name, = became: transliterated/translated/reconstructed name, / = alternative date/variant name. The Cumulative Index also employs the letter code used in *BTI* Numbers.

In each Number an attempt is made to include Buddhist texts in Pali, Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese, and Japanese or other Asian languages. The selection policy is to list a text on which someone reportedly is working (editing, translating, studying, etc.) add whatever information is available about its other Asian language versions or translations and relevant Western and Asian publications, and then describe the author's current work in his own words. The *BTI* Numbers and Cumulative Indexes are typed by an IBM Correction Selectric II; Chinese, Japanese, and Korean characters are handwritten on the typed copy; Tibetan script for titles is xerographically copied from published catalogues and strip-pasted on the typed copy; other Asian words are romanized only. Alternative dates and variant names are given whenever known. The final copy is photoprinted. Typographical errors are corrected when discovered and additional or updates information is given when available in subsequent *BTI* issues.

By periodically listing both published and in-progress work information about Buddhist texts, it is hoped that *Buddhist Text Information* will help supplement the data contained in published bibliographies and facilitate an exchange of information between scholars about their Buddhist textual studies. For the latter purpose, names and addresses are given for current research entries. Thus, a scholar planning to work on a particular Buddhist text may directly contact another who is reportedly working on the same text to ascertain whether their research will duplicate or complement each other. At times, the *BTI* Editor is asked by correspondents in Asia (particularly India, Japan, Sri Lanka), Europe, and North America if someone is working on a Buddhist text not yet reported in the *BTI*. In such cases, a brief query on the matter is inserted in a Number and the desired information, if and when received, is forwarded to the inquiring scholar.

Admittedly, textual studies are only a small and very specialized part of the whole of Buddhist studies, as categorized above in nine fields. Currently, much more research and publications are being undertaken in Buddhist introductory, doctrinal, institutional-social, and cultural subjects, evidently less in historical, biographical, and literary subjects

and, comparatively little, but much needed, in reference and general work. Available published Buddhist bibliographies are now inadequate: they are unavoidably incomplete, issued too infrequently, and are becoming outdated. Furthermore, how can Buddhist students, beginners or advanced scholars, in North America, Asia, and Europe know sufficiently about each others' work published or in progress?

Buddhist materials, or fields of Buddhist studies, may be divided into nine or more categories: I. Reference Works (bibliographies, encyclopaedias, directories, etc.), II. General Works (collected writings, commemorative volumes, series, periodicals, audiovisual aids, etc.), III. Introductions (methodologies, introductions, surveys, comparative studies, etc.), IV. Histories (studies of Buddhist periods, areas, countries, and topics such as events, councils, schisms, etc., as well as Buddhist values, welfare activities, education, etc., in various societies), V. Biographies and the Buddha ideal (studies of Buddhist monastics, teachers, lay personages, and of idealized figures, pantheons, etc.), VI. Literatures and Texts (studies of Buddhist folklore, essays, poetry, stories, etc., and of texts and commentaries, both canonical and extracanonical), VII. Principles and Practices (studies of Buddhist concepts, doctrines, ceremonies, customs, meditation, etc.), VIII. Organization, Movements, Schools/Sects (studies of Buddhist institutions, organizational developments, Sangha and monastic life, lay groups and religious life, etc.), IX. Cultural Arts (studies of Buddhist aesthetics and symbolism, architecture, dance, drama, handicrafts, music, the pictorial arts, and sculpture (for ceremonial arts see above, VII; for literature see above, VI).

Within these nine bibliographic categories or fields of Buddhist studies, textual studies (part VI. Literatures and Texts) are of primary importance for most of the other fields, and it is particularly helpful for prospective editors, translators, and commentators to know what has been published, or is being undertaken or even planned, by others on a particular Buddhist text before they begin work on it. Through appropriate bibliographic information, individual time and effort can be conserved and, if desired, cooperation can be achieved in Buddhist textual studies.

In these circumstances, should The Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions start another bibliographic service complementary to *Buddhist Text Information*? Tentatively, it might be called *Buddhist Studies Survey* (BSS) and list periodically reports and inquiries about Buddhist research in the nine fields mentioned above. If so, it would necessarily exclude references to work already published; otherwise, to revive the *Bibliographie Bouddhique* (Paris, 1930-1961), which covered Janvier 1918 to Mai 1954, would require very substantial funding and staff organization.

Responses from readers of the *Journal of the International Asso-*

ciation of Buddhist Studies concerning the desirability, scope, format, and potential circulation-subscription of a *Buddhist Studies Survey* would be greatly appreciated. (Similarly, author entries and subscriptions to *Buddhist Text Information* are always welcome.) Please send your comments to: Dr. Richard A. Gard, Director of Institute Services, The Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions, Melville Memorial Library, State University of New York at Stony Brook, New York 11794, U.S.A.