# WEB REVIEW: *Online Resources for the Study of Chinese Religion and Philosophy*

by Martha A. Adkins

The three primary religious/philosophical traditions of China are Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. Confucianism and Daoism are indigenous to China (6th-5th centuries BCE and 3rd century BCE, respectively), while Buddhism was introduced to China from India in the first century CE.[1]

The resources featured in this review cover a wide range of topics within the larger subject of Chinese religion and philosophy, and are organized as follows: Texts, Translations, and Tools (primary texts); Art, Artefacts, and Iconography; Focus on Traditions; and Bibliographies. The sites evaluated here are all open access. However, some contain features that are only available to users who create an account.

## Texts, Translations, and Tools
### Chinese Text Project

The Chinese Text Project (CTP) provides searchable ancient Chinese texts in the original and English translation. The CTP was created and is curated by Dr. Donald Sturgeon, a postdoctoral fellow at the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies and lecturer in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, Harvard University. Dr. Sturgeon's work centers around the digital humanities applied to the languages and literature of pre-modern China.

Users can browse texts by religious tradition (e.g., Confucianism), type (e.g., Histories), or time period (e.g., Pre-Qin and Han, and Post-Han). Features include an integrated dictionary, which provides a detailed critical apparatus. Users can follow links to see quoted text in context, search the site for all occurrences of a term, or see lists of equivalent usages. Users can choose to display all the passages and texts that contain parallel language. Concordance and index data for passages is available by the reference number used in secondary notations. When commentaries on texts are available, the CTP includes links to corresponding passages. The Published Resources Database includes bibliographies of scholarship and publications associated with each text or class of texts.

When available, the Scanned Source Texts feature allows users to view a scanned image of the text on which the transliterated text is based. This feature includes information about corrections made to manuscripts found to be in error by scholars, and is great for students interested in reception history.

Users who create a CTP account can add their own metadata to keep track of individual passages or sections of texts, or contribute to a collaborative project to create public metadata for CTP texts. The site includes a discussion forum where topics can be linked to a character, word, passage, or secondary published resource, and a wiki, where users can contribute to editing and correcting of manuscripts.

## Art, Artefacts, and Iconography
### The International Dunhuang Project: The Silk Road Online

The International Dunhuang Project is a database of over 490,000 high-resolution images of manuscripts and other material evidence of the Silk Road, along with historical information about the Silk Road and the discovery of its historical documentation. The IDP was formed in 1993 in an effort to solve preservation and access issues with the historical documents related to the Silk Road. The IDP is directed from the British Library, is made up of twenty-two collaborating institutions, and has centers in China, Russia, Japan, Germany, France, and Korea. In the late 1990s,

---

[1] Ninian Smart, ed., *Atlas of the World's Religions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 70-75. Dorothy Perkins, *Encyclopedia of China: The Essential Reference to China, Its History and Culture* (New York: Roundtable Press, 1999).

---

Martha A. Adkins is Assistant Professor and Reference Librarian at the Copley Library, University of San Diego.

the IDP began digitizing the collections at these institutions with the goal of making them available to scholars and researchers worldwide.

Collections are organized geographically and contain detailed information about provenance, related collections, detailed contents of each collection, and an extensive bibliography. An Education section includes information for students and educators, with project ideas and background information, projects of researchers, and links to other resources for further study. The Conservation section details efforts to preserve the different types of materials collected (paper, textiles, objects, and wall paintings), research projects, resources for further study, and links to external sites for conservation project and standards information.

Scholars at the college, graduate, or faculty researcher level will find a great deal of information here and will appreciate the depth of this site. The site can be browsed from a left sidebar menu with drop-down options. The site can be searched using Google Custom Search, and there is a separate database search feature that includes Advanced, Catalogue, and Bibliography options.

## Focus on Traditions

### BuddhistStudies.net

BuddhistStudies.net is a project directed by Dr. Gregory Adam Scott, currently a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow in the Department of Asian Studies of the University of Edinburgh. The site includes The Digital Catalogue of Chinese Buddhism, which catalogs thousands of Chinese-language Buddhist publications from 1860 to 1949, searchable by Title, Involved Person or Group, Book Series, Place of Publication, Producer, or browsed as a whole by submitting a null search.

The Online Index of Chinese Buddhism (OICB) is an archive of links to external resources for the study of Buddhism, though it appears to have last been updated in 2011, when it was moved to BuddhistStudies.net. While users may find several broken links, many resources here deserve special note, including the Thesaurus Literaturae Buddhicae (TLB), a collection of Buddhist literature originating from the Norwegian Institute of Paleography and Historical Philology, with texts available in multiple languages in a side-by-side comparison view; the Digital Dictionary of Buddhism, an extensive collection of Chinese ideographs (limited open access); and a number of English and original-language bibliographies and digitized reference sources.

### Database of Modern Chinese Buddhism

The Database of Modern Chinese Buddhism (DMCB) is a wiki hosted by the Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts in New Taipei City, Taiwan. Four contributors are named: Erik Hammerstrom, a member of the faculty of Pacific Lutheran University; Gregory Adam Scott, who is also responsible for the BuddhistStudies.net site (see above); Marcus Bingenheimer, a member of the faculty of Temple University; and Simon Wiles, a doctoral student at Stanford University.

The DMCB is organized into nine portals which link to articles: biographies, information on Buddhist institutions (including temples, schools, and associations), periodicals, ideologies (including sacred texts, schools of thought, and controversies), geography, chronology, scholarship (with links to conferences), bibliographies, and digitized primary sources.

Users familiar with Wikipedia will have little trouble navigating the DMCB. The left sidebar navigation includes links to detailed navigation tips, recent changes and updates, linking to a random page, and a search box. While the wiki is not complete and several articles remain unwritten, it is extensive in its coverage and will be useful especially to those users seeking more nuanced information about modern Chinese Buddhism, such as organizations and scholarly publications.

### The Center for Daoist Studies

*Editor Note: The Center for Daoist Studies site went down for a complete redesign shortly after this review was compiled. Dr. Louis Komjathy, founding co-director of the Center, was unable to provide an estimated date for the launch of the redesigned site. The site may not be accessible when you read this review.*

The Center for Daoist Studies site largely contains information about the research and work of the Center. The Center for Daoist Studies is the education and research branch of the Daoist Foundation, a non-profit organization. The directors of the Center are Louis Komjathy, member of the Theology and Religious Studies faculty of the University of San Diego, author of multiple texts on Daoism, and ordained in the Huashan lineage of Quanzhen Daoism; and Kate Townsend, an ordained Daoist priest of the Huashan lineage who has studied with Daoist teachers in North America and in China.

Students and scholars of Daoism will find the Critical Terms, Basic and Advanced Resources, and Weblinks sections most useful. The Critical Terms list defines, in detail and with citations, terms most useful for the study of Daoism. The Resources lists present English-language materials in the Basic list and more advanced resources, some in Chinese, on the Advanced list. Of interest on the Basic Resources list are the introductions and histories of Daoism, the Daoism FAQ sheets, and translations of primary texts. Of interest on the Advanced Resources list are the bibliographies, lists of Daoist organizations and teachers, lists of original language and translated Daoist texts online, and collections of images. The Weblinks section of the site provides links to external sites, categorized as either Academic or Adherent, and within these categories by western or Asian languages.

Other notable features of the site include the Profession section, which describes the paths one might take to pursue a profession in Daoist studies, and lists professional associations, journals, and prominent publishers; and the Projects section, which details some of the ongoing projects of the Center for Daoist Studies.

## Daoist Studies: Collection of Daoist Texts and Research Guide

The Collection of Daoist Texts and Research Guide are two of the most valuable components of the Daoist Studies website, which aims to be a portal to a wide variety of information for students, scholars, researchers, and practitioners of Daoism. It is not clear that any entity or organization is behind the larger website, though much of the content is authored by James Miller, Professor of Chinese Studies at Queen's University in Canada, and Livia Kohn, a retired scholar of Daoism (Boston University) and author of the Research Guide.

The Collection of Daoist Texts features scanned images of well over 1,500 texts, including the Ming Taoist canon (*Zhengtong daozang*) without critical apparatus. These texts are in Chinese and are indexed on the site in Chinese. Authors' names appear transliterated. The Research Guide is essentially a bibliography for research in Daoism, divided into six sections: The Canon, Canonical Supplements, Concordances, Dictionaries, Analytical Surveys, and Bibliographies. Many entries are accompanied by brief annotations, which will be helpful to novice scholars of Daoism.

## The Golden Elixir

The Golden Elixir is a collection of resources on Daoism (also commonly spelled "Taoism" in the West, and on this site), including the catalogue of Golden Elixir Press, the publisher of the site. The meat of The Golden Elixir is found in sections on Taoism and Taoist Alchemy, where users are first provided with brief introductory articles and then invited to explore further articles authored by Professor Fabrizio Pregadio (University of Erlangen-Nuremberg and the International Consortium for Research in the Humanities) or culled from entries by several authors in *The Encyclopedia of Taoism* (Routledge, 2008), edited by Pregadio.

The Golden Elixir provides a wealth of information on Taoism for the user willing to spend time clicking through to the main articles, and then to the lists of articles. It is unfortunate that top-level menus give no indication of the depth of information provided on the site.

## Bibliographies
## The Website of Barend J. ter Haar

This site from Oxford Professor of Chinese Studies Barend J. ter Haar contains several bibliographies that should be of special interest to anyone studying Chinese religion or philosophy. Bibliographies, found under Research Aids from the left sidebar, includes information on using the Internet for scholarly research as well as information on avoiding plagiarism. Bibliographies are organized by subject and source type. The annotated bibliographies that will

be of special interest to students of Chinese religion and philosophy are the Bibliography for the study of Yao religion, which includes introductory remarks about the study of this tradition in addition to source materials, dictionaries and linguistic work, and extensive bibliographies on history and society; Shamanism in China, which includes general works on shamanism, remarks about research into contemporary shamanism, history, and the shamanic roots of Daoism; and a bibliography on Religious Culture in 20th-Century China (most recently updated in September 2013), arranged primarily by time period and secondarily by subject, and including a section on Christianity and Islam in China.

## Bibliography of Western Language Publications on Chinese Popular Religion (1995-present)

This bibliography, divided into nine sections by source type, is the work of Philip Clart, Professor of Chinese Studies in the Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Leipzig. The page is up to date and contains resources on a great variety of topics in several languages. Some entries link to full text and others to publishers' websites, though most are standard bibliographic entries.

## Essential Readings on Chinese Philosophy

This bibliography, compiled by Dr. Bryan W. Van Norden, Professor of Philosophy at Vassar College, is divided into ten topical sections and an eleventh section devoted to online resources (though there are a few broken links). Many of the entries include brief but helpful annotations by Dr. Van Norden. All sources are in English.