

Updates from the Zikhang Library at Merigar West

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You may remember our article, [An Inexhaustible Treasury of Knowledge](#) published in The Mirror in October 2015, on the treasure trove of books at Merigar West, and the project of the new online catalogue to improve their availability, both physically and online. So we are back once more to give you some good news on this project.

In summer 2017 the Catalogue of the Tibetan section of the Library was completed, including both the books in traditional Tibetan format (PECHA) and in Western format (DEB). Now, in 2018 the Tibetan journals and newspapers (DUS DEB) have also been included. Please have a look at the catalogue [here](#). The library name is SSI ZIKHANG LIBRARY, no password required. You can perform searches by title, name, subject etc, but also starting from the TBRC Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center Resource ID (now BDRC, Buddhist Digital Resource Center) and LCCN (Library of Congress Control Number). They are added to the records when available.

And please help us to improve! If you see any mistakes (and I'm sure there are several!) please write to m.pansa@shangshunginstitute.org so we can fix them. The librarian is also available for bibliographic research and scanning texts if needed.



Detail from a manuscript. Photo by Magda Zych



Margherita Pansa, the librarian

We are currently going ahead with the labelling of the Tibetan books in Western format, using different colours according to topic, and we are organizing a work-station to complete the photographic documentation of our more precious and rare texts. As you know, Changchub Dorje's text collection has been indexed and scanned over the years and this work was completed in 2015. The final version only requires some technical updates and a final check. We have also produced a preliminary documentation on the other manuscripts kept in the library, which we plan to complete soon.

Apart from this, we are always very happy to guide interested people to visit the library and get a glimpse of the Tibetan book world and culture, exhibiting the traditional Tibetan book format, the xylographic techniques used, and the different calligraphic styles found in printed books and manuscripts, as well as the Tibetan and Sanskrit ornamental scripts.



Calligraphy workshop in the library. Photo by Margherita Pansa

In addition we host courses and study groups, mainly on Tibetan Language, in our beautiful reading room on the ground floor of the library. The reading room is as usual open for readers, with a good collection of books in different languages on Buddhism, Tibet, India, Mongolia, China etc. We also have a nearly complete collection of Shang Shung Publications books in all languages. The catalogue is available locally, but you can make enquiries via email. And if you are staying in Merigar or you are a frequent visitor, many books are available on loan.

All of this has been done to grant access to the library to practitioners, scholars and Community members in general, thanks to the effort and indispensable support of the Shang Shung Foundation. You are very welcome to use our services! If you would like to offer your ideas, contributions or pertinent books to help us to grow, please contact us.

Margherita Pansa