BUDDHIST LITERACY IN EARLY MODERN NORTHERN VIETNAM

A Multidisciplinary Symposium

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Presentation Abstracts

Presented by Rutgers: The State University of New Jersey & the Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation

With support from: the Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation, the Rutgers China Research Project, Center for Chinese Studies, The School of Arts & Sciences, Center for Global Advancement & International Affairs (GAIA), and the Departments of Asian Languages & Cultures, History, and Religion. For more information, please email John Phan at john.phan@rutgers.edu.
Buddhist Literacy in Early Modern Northern Vietnam

Presented by Rutgers: The State University of New Jersey & The Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation
22 September – 24 September, 2016

Recent work from a number of quarters has scrutinized the notion of “East Asia,” as a cosmopolitan zone unified by shared script, literary language, and educational traditions. Vietnam’s inclusion in modern mappings of “Southeast Asia” has often obscured its critical membership in an East Asian cultural zone, a fact that has limited potentially fruitful comparative work with Korea, China, and Japan. One of the most important features of East Asian cultural construction was the role of Buddhism in the dissemination of script, cosmopolitan language, and literate knowledge—a phenomenon particularly important to second millennium Korea, Japan, and Vietnam, each of which suffered crises in literacy at different points, due to invasion or internecine war. While comparison of Buddhist literacy in Korea and Japan has enjoyed a relatively robust tradition (especially with recent work on shared glossing techniques such as *kunten*), comparison with Vietnam has been limited by areal and disciplinary boundaries that are more artifacts of academic history, than substantive contours defining the cultures in question.

Our symposium seeks to break down these artificial barriers by examining a set of religious texts now housed at Thắng Ngôt and Phổ Nhạn, two syncretic Buddhist temples located 15 km southwest of Hanoi, in northern Vietnam. The collection was gathered from the surrounding region by the current abbot beginning in 1997, and represents a diverse library of primarily secular xylographic and epigraphic texts, composed over the latter half of the 2nd millennium, and written in both Literary Chinese and vernacular Vietnamese “Chữ Nôm” (an extinct character script used to represent vernacular Vietnamese, until its replacement by the Latin alphabet in the early 20th century). As one contributor points out, these texts are remarkable for their pedestrian character, providing a uniquely mundane portrait of literacy in early modern northern Vietnam. These texts were recently digitized through the groundbreaking efforts of the *Vietnamese Nom Preservation Foundation* (VNPF), making the entire collection accessible to scholarly examination for the first time.

Catalyzed by the VNPF’s work, our project seeks to break new ground by staging a multidisciplinary investigation into the phenomenon of literacy, and its dissemination through the Buddhist institution. The enclosed abstracts seek to explore the nature of print culture as maintained and conducted by early modern Buddhist temples, its relationship to the court, and its philological practices and traditions, as well as its relationship to folk and non-literate traditions of religious practice. Additionally, our symposium includes a special panel on issues of digitizing the Buddhist canon—work that is foundational to all cutting edge research into premodern East Asian textual culture. These inquiries illuminate not only a sorely understudied aspect of Vietnamese history and culture, but also promise fruitful comparison with Japan, Korea, and China, on issues of Buddhism and literacy, classical education, and the rise of the vernacular.
## BUDDHIST LITERACY IN EARLY MODERN NORTHERN VIETNAM SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

### FRIDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER

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<td>9:45-11:45am</td>
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<td>SHIMODA Masahiro &amp; NAGASAKI Kiyonori</td>
<td>SAT Daizōkyō Database (Tokyo Univ.)</td>
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<td>A. Charles MULLER</td>
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<td>4:00-4:20pm</td>
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<td><strong>Panel 3: Intersections of folk practice and literate Buddhism in the contemporary religiosity of the space</strong></td>
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<td>Stefania TRAVAGNIN</td>
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1 Abstracts are numbered and provided in alphabetical order. The small number in parentheses to the right of each speaker name above, corresponds to the order in which their abstract appears.
SATURDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER

10-10:30am | Coffee & pastries

10:30-12:30pm

**Panel 4: Historical contexts of literacy and the transmission of Buddhist literate knowledge**

**Discussant: Bradley Davis (Eastern Connecticut State University)**

| (2) | Liam KELLEY | University of Hawaii, Mānoa |
| (12) | Wynn WILCOX | Western Conn. State University |
| (1) | Nhung TRAN & Kathlene BALDANZA | University of Toronto |
| | | Pennsylvania State University |

12:30-1:15pm

**Roundtable: Buddhist Literacy in Premodern East Asia**

*With John Whitman (Cornell University), Brian Steininger (Princeton University), and Bradley Davis (Eastern Connecticut State University)*

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**LOCATION**

All symposium presentations will take place at the Scholarly Communication Center (SCC) Lecture Hall, on the 4th Floor of Alexander Library. Alexander Library is located at 169 College Avenue (New Brunswick).

**To RSVP**

If you are interested in attending, please fill out the RSVP form at the following link: [http://bit.ly/rutgers-buddhistlit-vn](http://bit.ly/rutgers-buddhistlit-vn)

Attendance is free of charge.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

If you have any further questions about the event, please contact John Phan at: john.phan@rutgers.edu
PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS

1. Kate BALDANZA (Penn State) & Nhung Tuyet TRAN (University of Toronto)

**Working Title:**  Reading and Book Culture in Vietnam: the View from Thằng Nghiêm and Phổ Nhạn Temples

**Abstract:** Buddhist pagodas have long served centres of book culture and printing in Vietnam, as in other areas of East and Southeast Asia, but the materials printed there have long been excluded in the literature on book history and reading culture. In this paper, we situate the collections of the books from Thằng Nghiêm and Pho Nhan temples within the history of the local production of religious texts and their proliferation along the inter-regional and international trade routes. In this paper, we describe the book market and reading cultures of Vietnam since the 18th century in order to place the temple collections in a broader context and show the different strands of the print world represented in the temple collections. We raise questions about the relationship between publishers and readers, the differences between for-profit and not-for-profit printing, and the role of manuscripts versus printed texts.

2. Liam KELLEY (University of Hawaii at Manoa)

**Working Title:**  The Significance of Insignificant Libraries: The Thằng Nghiêm and Phổ Nhạn Temple Libraries as Examples of Late Imperial East Asian Common (Buddhist) Knowledge

**Abstract:** In examining the holdings of the Thằng Nghiêm and Phổ Nhạn temple libraries what becomes immediately evident is that there is nothing particularly special about their collections. They do not, for instance, possess rare or unknown works. They are also not very extensive. Nonetheless, the limited number, and eclectic mixture, of texts that they do possess can help us gain a sense of what “Buddhist knowledge” was constructed from at the local level in late imperial Vietnam. In this paper, the author will seek to present an overview of how we can place these small libraries and the Buddhist knowledge that they represent in the larger world of East Asian Buddhism and common knowledge. By demonstrating how “insignificant” these libraries are, the point of this paper will be to also demonstrate how “significant” these libraries are for providing a window onto an ordinary (Buddhist) world in late imperial Vietnam.

3. KOSUKEGAWA Teiji (Toyama University)

**Working Title:** On the significance of the glosses in Vietnamese classical Chinese texts
Abstract: In various regions of Sinosphere, the phenomenon of glossing classical Chinese texts is attested over a long period of time. The glosses consist of symbols or characters directly added to the original classical Chinese text to assist in comprehending and reading it in the local language. There is a commonality and particularity in this glossing phenomenon, reflecting the relationship between the language which is to be read (i.e., classical Chinese) and the language to be read in (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese). In this talk, I will focus on the glossing phenomenon in classical Chinese texts in the Digital collection of the Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation (including Han-Nôm texts), and compare them with attestations of the glossing phenomenon in other regions and language of Sinosphere. My objective is to highlight the significance of the Vietnamese glossed classical Chinese texts.

4. A. Charles Muller (Tokyo University)

Working Title: Digital Dictionary of Buddhism and CJKV-E Dictionary

Abstract: The Digital Dictionary of Buddhism [DDB] is a large-scale compilation of Chinese logograph-based terms, texts, temple, schools, persons, etc. found in Buddhist canonical sources. I began to compile this dictionary in 1986 in graduate school as a traditional book/paper dictionary, but converted into Web format in 1995, shortly after the creation of the WWW. The first set of data uploaded to the Web contained 3,200 entries, all written by myself. Soon after this, collaborators began to join the project, aiding in both the development of content and technical sophistication. Over time, the dictionary was converted into an XML format influenced by TEI. In 2000, the project was joined by Michael Beddow, who created the programming infrastructure, XSLT output, search engine, and web security that is in place up to present, and has continued to maintain and update the system according to new developments in web technology. Over time, the DDB has come to be embraced by the academic field of Buddhist studies to the extent that hundreds of scholars contribute interactively on an ongoing regular basis, providing both substantial new entries and minor corrections. In April of 2016, the DDB reached the number of 65,536 entries (the largest of any known Buddhological reference work, to my knowledge). It is subscribed to by over 50 universities, is used in the teaching of courses on Buddhism, and is regularly cited in scholarly research articles and monographs. DDB entries have been contributed by more than 100 scholars, many of them acknowledged as leading experts in their sub-areas of Buddhist Studies. The project has achieved a high level of sustainability and growth through a finely-balanced policy of limited free access for casual users and contribution or fee-based access for professional scholars and translators. The DDB is also implemented in an interoperative manner with the online SAT Taishō Text Database, wherein when one opens up a text from the online Taishō canon and selects a portion of text with one’s mouse, the words in the DDB contained in that text will be displayed in the right-hand window with short definitions and links into the DDB entries.
themselves. The DDB is also integrated into Jean Soulat's Smarthanzi Chinese lookup and parsing tool, which is available both as a web application and as a standalone Windows application.

The Chinese-Japanese-Korean-Vietnamese/English Dictionary [CJKV-E] originated as part of the DDB project, but the two were separated out from each other as the need for two types of treatment of materials became apparent. The underlying XML infrastructure, search engine, maintenance, and editorial system is basically the same as that of the DDB. But the CJKV-E differs in content, seeking to provide comprehensive orthographic information on each individual ideograph, with the fullest coverage possible. Also, the coverage of compound words is focused primarily on the classical texts from the East Asian Confucian and Daoist traditions, along with premodern East Asian history and secular literature. The coverage of the CJKV-E currently exceeds 50,000 entries. The CJKV-E is distinguished from other online Chinese character dictionaries, in that it is the only online lexicon of its type that is (1) not merely a computerized aggregation, and (2) not merely a reproduction of an older print dictionary. It is being actively developed in an ongoing manner by scholars in conjunction with the reading of classical texts. This presentation will focus on (1) the applicability of an XML (TEI-based) data framework for compiling and maintaining the dictionaries, and (2) the strategies used in the process of attaining crowd-sourced sustainability.

5. Ngô Trung Việt (Van Lang University)

**Working Title:** The Preservation of Hán-Nôm Heritage using Information Technology

**Abstract:** Semantosyllabic chữ Hán-Nôm was the main script used in Vietnam from the Xth Century until the romanized chữ quốc ngữ replaced chữ Hán Nôm as the national script in the 1920’s (of course there were also other scripts for ethnic scripts in Vietnam such as Tai, Cham). Almost a century passed since then and chữ Hán-Nôm was almost totally forgotten, as its scholars were wasted, and its documents destroyed. As time goes on, remedies become more and more unrealistic and costly. But with information technology advances, now there is a new way for chữ Hán-Nôm coming back with young generations.

This paper lays out a comprehensive view in five stages for preserving chữ Hán-Nôm with information technology (IT), in Vietnam and in the world.

1. First stage: preserving Hán Nôm characters by including them into international standards so that they could be encoded and then displayed on computers and Internet.
2. Second stage: preserving old Hán-Nôm texts in databases based on Hán-Nôm characters encoded in Unicode.
3. Third stage: preserving Hán Nôm collections of libraries by digitalizing them and opening the digitalized collection for people in the internet.
4. Fourth stage: preserving Hán Nôm heritage in living people by teaching Hán Nôm script to people via the internet.
5. Fifth stage: preserving Hán Nôm heritage by promoting Han Nôm researches with new methods based on information technology.

The above five-stage preservation will provide a general appreciation of chữ Hán-Nôm in the public as well as expert circle. They are helpful in the protection of chữ Hán-Nôm in libraries, archives, historical sites, documents and relics, but also of training teachers, professors, experts and scholars in chữ Hán- Nôm capable of conducting meaningful research in source documents.

These five stages preservation for chữ Hán Nôm have been realized by the Vietnamese Nôm Preservation Foundation and some Vietnamese institutions in many years in collaboration with some experts from Vietnam and the world.

6. NGUYỄN THỊ HIỀN (Vietnam National Institute of Culture & Art Studies)

Working Title: Interreligious Dialogue: A Study of the Integration of Buddhism and Folk Beliefs of the Vietnamese (A Case Study of Thắng Nghiem Buddhist Temple)

Abstract: This paper will explore the values of the interreligious dialogue between Buddhism and folk belief in Vietnam. Buddhism came to Vietnam around the 3rd century BC and through its development it integrated with the folk belief of the Viet people, especially in the Buddhist temples in the Northern part of Vietnam. The integration is illustrated in for example the architecture of the pagodas, and in the inscriptions in the altars saying “The first, is Buddha, the second is the Mother Goddess.” Furthermore, it is seen in the worshipping of wholly figures, rituals, festivals, offerings and in the Buddhist teaching. This integration contributes to the characteristics of the Vietnamese Buddhism. It is a characteristic that shares similarities with Buddhism in China and Japan. Drawing on field work conducted at Thang Nghiem Buddhist temple, the paper will examine how esoteric practices of tantra in this temple interweaves by examining three local practices of the worshipping of the Mother Goddess, the worshipping of the historical hero of Tran Hung Dao, and the folk belief in ghosts. The paper uses a story about a female spirit on the Dai Banyan tree at Thang Nghiem temple who controls ghosts to demonstrate the local practice at the temple. Furthermore, it demonstrates how the tantra Buddhist practice integrates the folk beliefs in ghosts (and the exorcising and healing patients). The worship of the Mother Goddesses and Tran Hung Dao historical figure and other esoteric practices reflect the beliefs of the Viet people at Buddhist temples.
Working Title: Print Culture and the Spread of Buddhist Texts in Early Modern Vietnam: A Case Study of the Woodblock Collection in Khê Hồi Temple

Abstract: This paper conducts a case study of the woodblock print culture in Khê Hồi Buddhist Temple in Thường Tín district, Hà Tây province (now in Hanoi), situated within the same region as the Thắng Nghiem and Phổ Nhân temples. After providing a brief history of the temple and the Buddhist schools that influenced it, we will then provide a description and analysis of its collection of more than 700 woodblock texts, largely unknown before its discovery by the authors in 2001. Next, this paper will examine the spread of books printed from Khê Hồi woodblocks to the surrounding region, through an examination of several public and private Sino-Nôm collections, including the modern collections of Buddhist temples near to Khê Hồi—such as Thắng Nghiem and Phổ Nhân. Through an analysis of the history of the Khê Hồi woodblocks and the spread of books printed from them, this paper argues that in terms of woodblock print culture, there possibly existed three groups of Buddhist temples in early modern northern Vietnam: 1) temples that were centers of woodblock printing with a wide range of circulation to other temples, such as the temples of Bố Đà, Vĩnh Nghiem, Quỳnh Lâm, Bà Đà, etc.; 2) temples that possessed a number of woodblocks with a much smaller range of dissemination (Khê Hồi belongs to this group); and 3) temples that produced no woodblocks themselves, but possessed Sino-Nôm texts from other temples or from handwritten manuscripts produced by monks. The Thắng Nghiem and Phổ Nhân temples belong to this third group. These three groups of temples may be regarded as the basic elements comprising an institutional network, disseminating Buddhist publications in premodern Vietnam.

Key words: print culture, woodblock, Khê Hồi Buddhist temple, Buddhist text

Tóm tắt: Bài viết này thực hiện một nghiên cứu về văn hóa in án văn khắc ở chùa Khê Hồi tại Thường Tín, Hà Tây (nay thuộc địa phận Hà Nội). Sau khi mở tả lịch sử chùa, các dòng phái Phật giáo ảnh hưởng tới chùa Khê Hồi, bài viết tiếp tục mở tả và phân tích các văn khắc của chùa hiện còn (hơn 700 tấm, nhiều bộ sách), bộ văn này được biết đến từ năm 2001 trong kệ sách của chùa. Tiếp theo, bài viết xem xét mục
đỗ lưu hành của sách in từ các bộ ván ấy bằng cách: (1) Đối chiếu bản in đáp ván khác đối với sách Phật giáo trong thư viện Viễn Hán Nôm, thư viện Quốc gia Việt Nam, một số bộ sử dụng kinh sách Phật giáo tự nhân; (2) khảo sát các chùa gần chùa Khê Hội xem có lưu giữ sách in từ ván của Khê Hội hay không.

Thông qua phân tích về lịch sử khác ván là lưu hành ván khắc của chùa Khê Hội, bài viết cho rằng, xét trong quan hệ với văn hóa in ấn, ở miền Bắc Việt Nam có 3 nhóm chùa: (1) chùa là trung tâm in ván khắc, như chùa Bồ Đá, Vĩnh Nghĩa, Quỳnh Lâm, Nguyện Ước; (2) chùa có in ván khắc nhưng sách lưu hành không phổ biến, chùa Khê Hội thuộc loại này; và (3) chùa không khắc ván, nếu có sách Hán Nôm thì là di xin từ nơi khác về, hoặc do tăng nhận tự sao chép, như chùa Thượng Nghĩa, Phật Nhân. Ba nhóm chùa kể trên hóa quyền và dẫn xen thành mạng lưới truyền bá ảnh phẩm Phật học trong lịch sử trung đại Việt Nam.

Từ khóa: văn hóa in ấn, văn khắc, chùa Khê Hội, văn bản Phật giáo

8. SHIMODA Masahiro (University of Tokyo) and NAGASAKI Kiyonori (International Institute for Digital Humanities/DHII)

Working Title: A Digital Ecosystem for Buddhist Studies: An Attempt by the SAT Project

Abstract: Recently, digital tools and methods have spread extensively in the field of humanities. The situation requires digitization of humanities resources such as texts, images, and so on in order to facilitate research environments. Especially, recent Web technologies have realized wider collaboration among researchers globally. The SAT project, which has been developing since 1994, has not only been providing databases of Buddhist scriptures and related materials but has since 2005 also worked toward the collaborative digitization on the Web to form a digital ecosystem for Buddhist studies. The retrieval of information is made more convenient by linking with digital resources on other Web databases, while at the same time maintaining the independence of each project. Recently SAT has been engaging in the digitization of Buddhist images of image section of Taishō Tripitaka. It will be published on Web soon using IIIF (International Image Interoperability Framework) and open annotation.

9. TRẦN Trọng Dương (Vietnam Institute for Sino-Nôm Research at VASS)

Working Title: A Mandala of Literacy in Premodern Vietnam: Study on Buddhist Temple

Mandala tri tảo kiến văn ở Việt Nam thời tiên hiển đại: nghiên cứu trường hợp ngôi chùa Phật giáo
Abstract: Based on an analysis of historical materials written in Literary Chinese and vernacular Vietnamese (Chữ Nôm), this article examines the contexts of Buddhist knowledge and Buddhist literary practices in premodern Vietnam. How was literacy created and practiced in Vietnamese traditional culture? What role did Buddhist temples play in medieval networks of literacy? In order answer to these questions, this article first presents the following key concepts: literacy (tri tạo kiến văn), literary practice (thực hành tri tạo kiến văn), factors of literary practice (tham thể thực hành tri tạo kiến văn), and mandala of literacy (mạng lưới tri tạo kiến văn).

This article examines the Buddhist temple from both historical and cultural contexts. I argue that Buddhist monks, in negotiation with factors of literary practice, played an important role in a mandala of literary practice. They taught Classical Chinese (and Chinese characters), as well as vernacular Vietnamese (Chữ Nôm), translated Buddhist canon into Vietnamese, composed new works, made handwritten books, carved woodblocks, and published woodblock texts. Meanwhile, the Buddhist temple in traditional culture was a marvelous place not only for self-cultivation, but also to educate Buddhist novices and lay people, and to expand Buddhist orders. The Buddhist temple was a multifunctional space, existing as a hall of reverence, a place of Buddhist worship, and a temple to the forefathers, as well as a center of translation, a Buddhist school, print shop, publisher, archive, library and bookshop. There were, furthermore, a complex networks (or mandalas) of Buddhist temples in traditional Vietnamese society, since virtually every village contained a Buddhist temple. Thus, the literary practices of a temple directly affected the cultural life of the community of the village in which it was located, such as religious belief, village economy, and especially village education.

This article demonstrates that there are four basic connections in the mandala of literacy: 1) the internal connection between a high-ranking bonze or superior monk and his disciples in each temple; 2) the connection between a Buddhist temple and cultural institutions of the village; 3) the connection between a given temple and other temples (perhaps of the same denomination and perhaps of different denominations); 4) the connection between a given temple and other villages, districts, or even other countries. It is these four connections which comprise a complicated mandala of Buddhist literacy in Vietnamese traditional culture.

Keywords: literacy, literary practice, factors of literacy practice, mandala of literacy, Buddhism.

Tóm Tát: Bài viết này là một nỗ lực thử tìm về bối cảnh tri thức Phật giáo và quá trình tri tạo kiến văn Phật giáo ở Việt Nam thời tiền hiện đại. Nó hiện hữu ra sao trong đời sống văn hóa truyền thống, cụ thể là trong đời sống của một ngôi chùa? Với tư cách là một kênh truyền tải, giáo dục và hoàng đường tri thức Phật giáo, ngôi chùa chiếm vị trí như thế nào trong mạng lưới tri thức và tài sản xuất trí thức ở Việt Nam thời tiền hiện đại? Để giải đáp những câu hỏi trên, bài viết...
Those are texts of different provenance, different use, and printed in different ages.

Abstract: Thang Nghiém Temple hosts a rich library with almost two hundred texts. Those are texts of different provenance, different use, and printed in different ages.
Despite their variety, these texts all share one feature: they arrived at the temple library from the surrounding community, mostly as gifts and in certain cases even returns. Those texts represent the religious (rather than just Buddhist) and liturgical heritage of the community, and embody an identity marker of the community itself. We can interpret the community surrounding the Thang Nghiem temple through the analysis of the temple library and, vice versa, we can understand better the textual contents of the library through more knowledge of the lay community living near the temple.

A study of a temple library can address a few major questions: (1) the making of the library, which means the process of creation of this literary heritage. How and when was it made? Who (within the community) was involved in this process? And why has the community made this Library? How does the library embody the link between the monastic community and the surrounding society? (2) The preservation of the library is another crucial theme: the library is important for the surrounding community but also for the monastic community and the temple, and once completed it then takes on its own ontology. (3) The contents of the library can also been analysed, and this study involves the classifications of the texts included in the library and the unveiling of the religious and liturgical heritage of the community who preserve, read and use those texts. (4) Finally, the ontology of the library becomes parallel to the discourse of the ontology of the text per se.

This paper will focus on the last two issues, and thus offer a critical classification of the texts preserved in the library in order to understand the meaning of the book as well as the religious and liturgical heritage that is represented by those texts. In doing so, this paper can also suggest some preliminary considerations on the meaning that the library has for the surrounding Vietnamese community. Finally, my arguments will be articulated in full respect to history and features of Buddhism in Vietnam, so to shed more light on the specific microhistory of the Thang Nghiem community.

This paper will rely on previous scholarship on communities (like Benedict Anderson's work) textual communities (such as theories and methods developed by Brian Stock and Anne M. Blackburn), gift and exchange (see Chris Gregory and Marcel Mauss), but also attempts to formulate new analytical concepts for the study of temple libraries and precisely for the study of this specific case study in Vietnam.

11. Jeff Wallman (Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center)

**Working Title:** From the Ground Up: An Overview of Building a Digital Library of Buddhist Texts

**Abstract:** The modern digital library is an environment in which digital texts and a great deal of information about those texts exist side-by-side. Metadata is now so rich that it can be modeled as “digital objects” in and of itself - data that can be queried, sorted, and connected just like digital texts. Transforming digital texts and metadata into digital objects and then exposing relationships that exist between
them provides completely new ways of understanding the original works. With the adoption of the Resource Description Framework (RDF), digital libraries now have the capacity to offer a diverse set of schemas to capture and express specialized knowledge about collections, and can make this knowledge completely available in the form of user interfaces and linked data. This paper will provide a quick tour of the layers of a digital library from schema, database organization, digital asset management, to the user discovery platform including search, faceted result lists and linked data.

12. Wynn Wilcox (Western Connecticut State University)

**Working Title:** The Localization of Mahayana Sutras in Northern Vietnam, ca. 1800-1922

**Abstract:** This paper is a comparative analysis of the prefaces and other commentarial information contained in sutras that were reprinted in Hanoi from the early nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries. These sutras are preserved in the VNPF’s Thang Nghiem collection. They include include the *Avatamsaka/Flower Garland Sutra* (Hanoi, 1922), *Lotus Sutra* (Hanoi, late 19th or early 20th C.), *Platform Sutra* (Hanoi, no date; likely mid-19th century), *Dharmatrāta-Dhyāna-Sūtra* (Nam Định, 1908) and the *Diamond Sutra* (Hanoi, 1887). The paper will explore the role of nationalism and of regional identity in northern Vietnam in how the prefaces to these texts frame and transform their meaning.