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*Sören Edgren, "I. V. Gillis and the Spencer Collection", *The Gest Library Journal* 6, no. 2 (1993): 4-29, accessed January 14, 2017,  
[https://library.princeton.edu/eastasian/EALJ/edgren\\_sren.EALJ.v06.n02.p004.pdf](https://library.princeton.edu/eastasian/EALJ/edgren_sren.EALJ.v06.n02.p004.pdf)*



1. I. V. Gillis in his Peking garden, ca. late 1920s. Collection of the Gest Oriental Library, Princeton University.

# I. V. Gillis and the Spencer Collection

SÖREN EDGREN

Irvin V. Gillis was born in 1875 in New England, we are told, and died in Peking in 1948.<sup>1</sup> He is best known for having collaborated with Guion M. Gest in creating the Gest Oriental Library now at Princeton University. Gillis was already in Peking early in the century serving as naval attaché at the United States legation, and his infatuation with things Chinese apparently determined that he would stay and live his life in China. By the 1920s he was well established among the expatriate community in Peking and had bought a house in his Chinese wife's name. His knowledge of the language as well as local customs and geography encouraged the legation to take advantage of his services, which resulted in his meeting many visiting Americans, including G. M. Gest. The coincidence of a serious eye illness suffered by Gest and Gillis's interest in Chinese books instigated a decade-long cooperation in building the Gest Library. Gillis began by introducing Gest to traditional medical texts and Chinese medicaments that ameliorated his eye condition. Gest was reportedly so grateful that he established an account in the American Bank in Peking for Gillis to acquire Chinese rare books, which soon expanded beyond the narrow scope of works on medicine. Gillis established an office for the purpose in his home and retained several employees; from then on he was actively engaged in acquiring, cataloguing, rebinding, and delivering Chinese books to Gest and later to other clients. From the start, the Gest Library was housed at McGill University in Montreal, and by the time that Berthold Laufer visited the library in 1929, only three years after its opening, it already contained 2,054 works in 50,640 volumes.<sup>2</sup> By 1931 there were approximately 75,000 volumes, but the Great Depression caused Gest to rather abruptly

discontinue his funding of the enterprise. During the ensuing years a new home was sought for the collection, and by 1937 the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, assisted by the Rockefeller Foundation, was able to acquire the Gest collection. The management of the collection was turned over to the Princeton University Library, and a final lot of 27,000 volumes that had been held in Peking was shipped to Princeton. Despite his disappointment over Gest's failure to provide sufficient payment, Gillis continued his idiosyncratic researches and maintained a lively correspondence with Nancy Lee Swann, then curator of the Gest Oriental Library.

The Spencer Collection in the New York Public Library is devoted entirely to illustrated books and manuscripts, and also contains related examples of fine printing, binding, and graphic arts. In the words of its founding donor, William Augustus Spencer, its scope should be "the finest illustrated books that can be procured, of any country and in any language and of any period." Spencer's gift, described in detail in his will, came to the library earlier than expected after he died prematurely with the sinking of the *Titanic* in 1912. It included a generous endowment, which has supported the growth of the collection ever since. Although renowned for its impressive holdings of Japanese illustrated books and manuscripts, the Spencer Collection also contains Chinese materials, which are virtually unknown.

Karl Kup (né Kùp) was born in Berlin in 1903 and came to the United States in 1927.<sup>3</sup> He was an art historian with a special interest in graphic arts and book design; from 1928 to 1934 he served in the educational and art departments of the Oxford University Press. In 1934 he was asked to succeed Philip Hofer as adviser (i.e., curator) of the Spencer Collection, and his thirty-four-year association with the collection had a profound influence on its development. Retiring in 1968, he continued to live in New York until his death in 1981. During his tenure at the New York Public Library Kup frequently traveled abroad to buy books, including no less than seven trips around the world, and the collection grew from a few hundred books in 1934 to more than eight thousand items in 1968. The first Chinese and Japanese books were acquired for the collection in 1940 as the result of a trip to China and Japan that year. The "Oriental Trip for Spencer Collection: 1940" is well documented by a diary in the form of an engagement calendar and some related correspondence from before and after the four-month journey. The entire itinerary (July 22 to November 27, 1940) was: New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Yokohama, Tokyo, Kyoto, Keijo [Seoul], Mukden

[Shenyang], Peking, Tientsin, Shanghai, Vancouver, Seattle, Chicago, New York. Kup's principal contact for buying books in Japan was Mr. Sorimachi Shigeo, owner of the distinguished Tokyo antiquarian book firm Kōbunsō, to whom he had written in April outlining plans for building a representative collection of Chinese and Japanese book illustration for the Spencer Collection. Sorimachi had been introduced to Kup by Shio Sakanishi of the Library of Congress, and their relationship, which was to evolve for nearly three decades, resulted in the acquisition of hundreds of valuable early Japanese books and manuscripts by the Spencer Collection. In China his principal contact was with I.V. Gillis in Peking, and he acknowledged in a letter to Mr. Lydenberg, director of the New York Public Library, that "most of the Chinese purchases were made through him [Gillis]." Political conditions in China and the death of Gillis after the Second World War prevented a continuation of their relationship, and, indeed, the Chinese collection was never to develop.

Kup was in Peking for one month, from September 11 to October 12, and he had the good fortune to be introduced to Gillis by John C. Ferguson only five days after his arrival. Although Kup examined "fine Ming books" at Ferguson's house, including some brought there by dealers, it appears that no books were purchased directly from Ferguson. Incidentally, Kup was introduced to Ferguson by Arthur Hummel of the Library of Congress. After visits to Peking bookshops in the Lung-fu-ssu and Liu-li-ch'ang districts, September 23-26, he made the following note regarding his methodology. "All selections made were sent to Dr. Ferguson and to Captain Gillis for re-examination of dates and authenticity before final purchase; Gillis will do some kind of preparatory cataloguing."

In his letter to Lydenberg referred to above, Kup offered a biographical sketch of Gillis as well as his own assessment of the man. Here are some of his characterizations. "For years the purchasing agent for both the Gest Library at Princeton, and the McGill University." "A former navy man, married to a Manchu princess, he devotes all of his time to Chinese bibliography. He is a marvel at research, a flop at aesthetic appreciation. He ordered the books sent to his house, I studied the illustrations, and he checked the bibliographical points." "When, one day, I was able to purchase a small private collection (of the late Miss Punnett of Peking) he offered to help, proceeded to dissect each title and took it upon him to add the books to his shipments. He would be the ideal 'agent' or 'go-between' for us in time." "Hipped on titles and

position (through long association with the Chinese caste system) he asked me in a letter the following," whereupon Kup quotes from Gillis's letter.

There is nothing of importance to add to my last letter, except that I would mention a point regarding my possible relations with The New York Public Library. I would appreciate if possible and agreeable to your authorities in control, that I be designated Honorary Advisor on Oriental Books. It might be useful to have this designation under certain circumstances out here.

Despite the perceived idiosyncrasies, it was obvious that Karl Kup regarded Gillis as reliable and businesslike and, indeed, someone to be counted on for future cooperation.

In the Spencer Collection are sixty-six Chinese items listed as books,<sup>4</sup> including a fragmentary Sung woodblock,<sup>5</sup> a misidentified Japanese edition of a Chinese illustrated medical book,<sup>6</sup> two books purchased in Hong Kong in 1964, and five Chinese editions, some of which were purchased from Mr. Sorimachi on the 1940 trip. The remaining fifty-seven items all appear to have been acquired by Kup in China in 1940. Of those clearly traceable, twelve came from E. A. Punnett & Co., Peking,<sup>7</sup> fifteen from the Peking Union Book Store,<sup>8</sup> and eighteen definitely from I. V. Gillis; most, if not all, of the remaining twelve titles seem to have come from Gillis.<sup>9</sup> The chief source of identification for the provenance of the books has been the existence of pencil notations written inside the folding paperboard cases of many of them, apparently added by Kup after the arrival of the books in New York. The notes have been compared with itemized lists of books acquired from the Punnett Gallery (FRB \$1,050 for thirteen titles, selected September 28 and purchased October 4); the Peking Union Book Store (FRB \$857.50 for twelve items, including postage and insurance, selected October 9 and purchased October 10); and I. V. Gillis (FRB \$3,148 was received for twenty-three items, listed without specific titles, on a "statement of account" dated October 10).<sup>10</sup> An additional sum of FRB \$202.50 for Gillis is mentioned on October 11, and on October 23 Kup sent Gillis US \$40 for books, freight, and insurance. It is likely that some of the books for which Gillis received payment were selected by Kup from Peking bookshops, referred to above, and for which Gillis received only a commission. Some small cost also would have gone to petty repairs and the ordering of new folding cloth cases for most of the books, matters about which Gillis was most meticulous, as can be seen from the books in the Gest

Collection. In fact, a note by Kup on October 1 states that "Gillis will repair and bind the Punnett books." It is altogether possible that a thorough investigation of the Kup diaries and other documents and correspondence related to the Spencer Collection would result in a more detailed picture of circumstances surrounding the acquisition of the Chinese books.

The following descriptions of the fifty-seven works acquired by Kup in Peking in the autumn of 1940 will be kept simple, but it is hoped that the information will be ample enough to satisfy prospective users. Call numbers for the Chinese books in the Spencer Collection include the publication date assigned to each item, and to facilitate access, these dates are included in parentheses after each title. Descriptions in Chinese characters for each group of titles are in the appendix.

#### BOOKS FROM THE PUNNETT GALLERY

*Yü-chih keng chih t'u* (Spencer 1696). Illustrated by Chiao Ping-chen. 1696 (Peking). 1 folding vol. 46 woodcuts (hand-colored) of "tilling & weaving," that is, agriculture and sericulture.<sup>11</sup>

*T'ang-shih hua-p'u* (Spencer ca. 1800). Illustrated by various artists. Ca. 1621. 14 vols. Lacks 1 of 8 original parts. Woodcuts illustrating T'ang poems. (Same edition as below, but later impression.)

*T'u-hui tsung-i* (Spencer 1607). Compiled by Yang Erh-tseng; illustrated by Ts'ai Ju-tso. After 1607. 4 vols. Popular painting manual of the late Ming period.

*T'ang-shih hua-p'u* (Spencer 1621). Illustrated by various artists. Ca. 1621. 8 vols. Lacks 1 of 8 original parts. Woodcuts illustrating T'ang poems. (See illustration 2.)

*Sheng-yü hsiang-chieh* (Spencer 1681). Compiled by Liang Yen-nien. 1887. 10 vols. Moral maxims with illustrations and explanations. Reprint of the K'ang-hsi period edition.

*Hung-lou meng t'u-yung* (Spencer 1879). Illustrated by Kai Ch'i (1774-1829). 1879 (Hangchow). 4 vols. Woodcuts of the characters in the fictional *Red Chamber Dream*.<sup>12</sup>

*Pai-mei hsin-yung t'u-chuan* (Spencer 1805). By Yen Hsi-yüan. 1805. 4 vols. Illustrated biographies of 100 Chinese women.

*Lieh-hsien chuan* (Spencer 1833). By Hung Tzu-ch'eng. 1833. 4 vols. Illustrated biographies of 56 "immortals."

*Hsien-fo ch'i-tsung* (Spencer 1602). By Hung Tzu-ch'eng. After 1602. 8 vols. Illustrated biographies of Taoists and Buddhists.

*Chieh-tzu yüan hua-chuan*, 1–4 (Spencer 1679–1818). By Wang Kai et al. 18th–19th cent. 17 vols. Mediocre editions of all four parts (part 4 is spurious) of the *Mustard Seed Garden Painting Manual*.

*Chieh-tzu yüan hua-chuan*, 1–2 (Spencer 1679–1818). By Wang Kai et al. Ca. 18th cent. 9 vols. Good editions of the first two parts of the *Mustard Seed Garden Painting Manual*.

*Shih-chu chai shu-hua p'u* (Spencer 1763). By Hu Cheng-yen. 18th–19th cent. 16 vols. The *Tên Bamboo Studio Painting and Calligraphy Handbook*, with polychrome woodcuts.

*Fo-shuo kuan-wu-liang-shou-fo ching* (Spencer 1655). 1655 (Hangchow). 1 vol. Illustrated Buddhist sutra.

#### BOOKS FROM THE PEKING UNION BOOK STORE

*Jen Wei-ch'ang ssu-chung: Lieh-hsien chiu-p'ai* (Spencer 1852). 1854. 1 vol.; *Yü yueh hsien-hsien chuan* (Spencer 1857). 1857. 2 vols.; *Kao-shih chuan* (Spencer 1858). 1877. 2 vols.; *Chien-hsia chuan* (Spencer 1879). 1879. 3 vols. Illustrated by Jen Hsiung (1820–1857), excepting some illustrations in the final part that were done after his death. Excellent woodcuts of human figures.

*Ch'in-huai pa-yen t'u-yung* (Spencer 1893). By Chang Ching-ch'i. 1892 (Canton). 1 vol. Illustrated tales of female entertainers in the Nanking area.

*Hung-hsüeh yin-yüan t'u-chi* (Spencer 1879). By Lin-ch'ing. (1791–1846). 1847 (Yangchow). 8 vols. Autobiographical work illustrating the life and travels of a Ch'ing official.

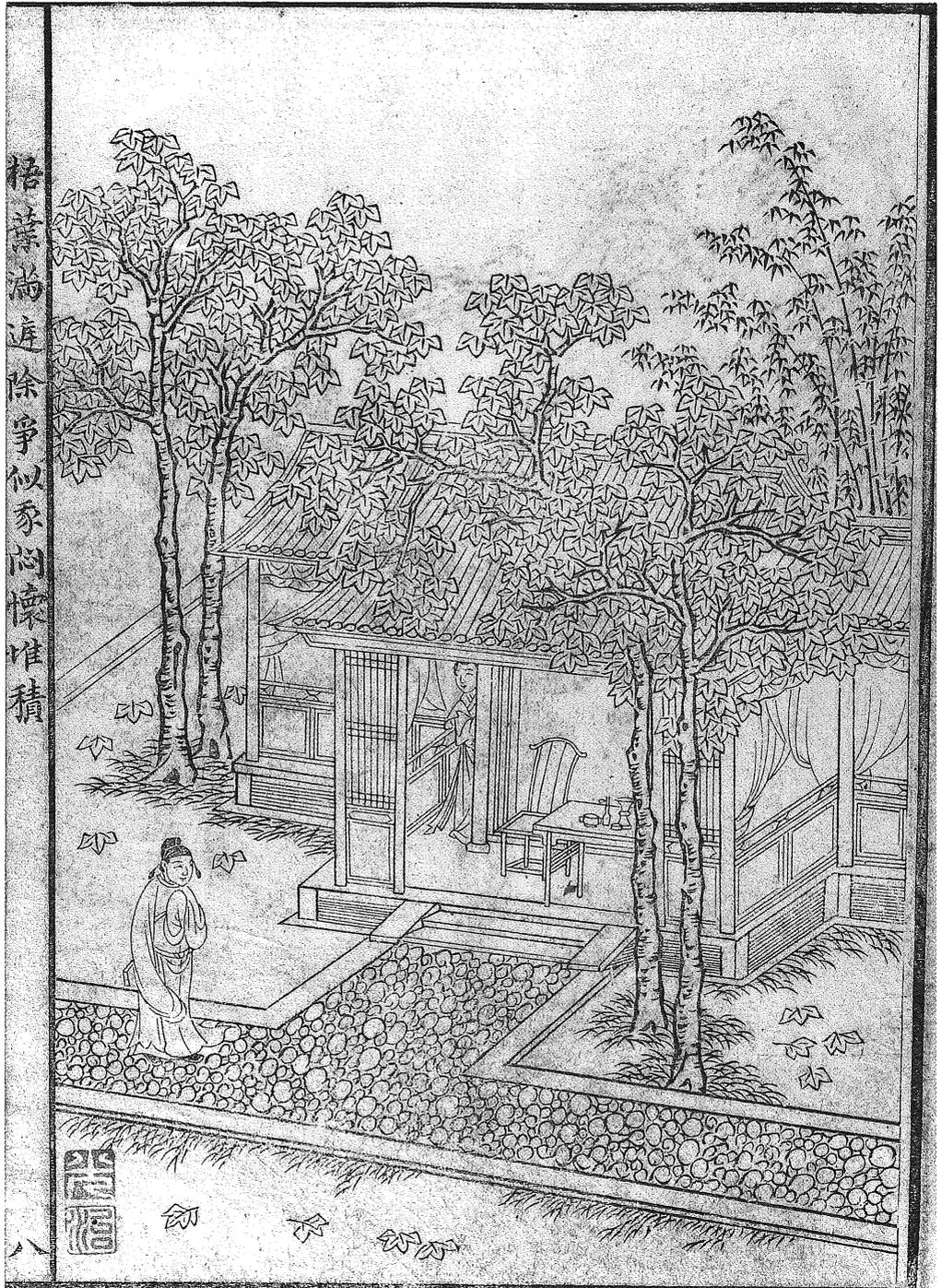
*Hung-lou meng t'u-yung* (Spencer 1879). Illustrated by Kai Ch'i (1774–1829). 1879 (Hangchow). 4 vols. Woodcuts of the characters in the fictional *Red Chamber Dream*.

*Fo-shuo pi-mi san-mei ta-chiao-wang ching, chüan 2* (Spencer ca. 1850). 1301 (Soochow). 1 folding vol. *Chüan 2* only of the Chinese translation of the Sanskrit *Guhya-samaya-mahatantraraga-sutra*, preceded by a fine four-panel woodcut. From the *Ch'i-sha* (also pronounced *Chi-sha*) Tripitaka.<sup>13</sup> (See illustration 4.)

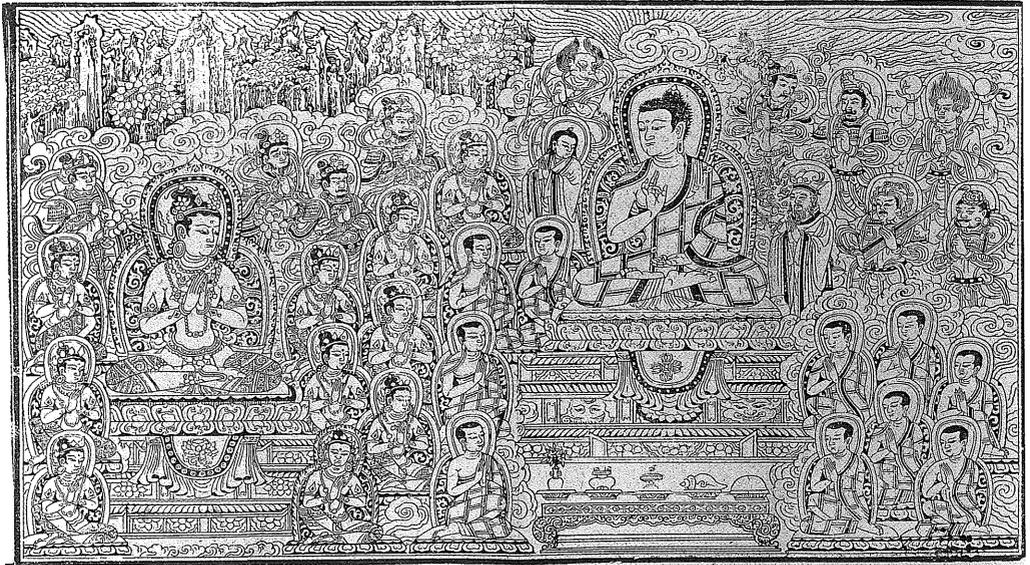
*Wu-chün ming-hsien t'u-chuan tsan* (Spencer 1829). By Ku Yüan. 1829. 10 vols. Portraits and biographies of resident scholars of the Soochow area.



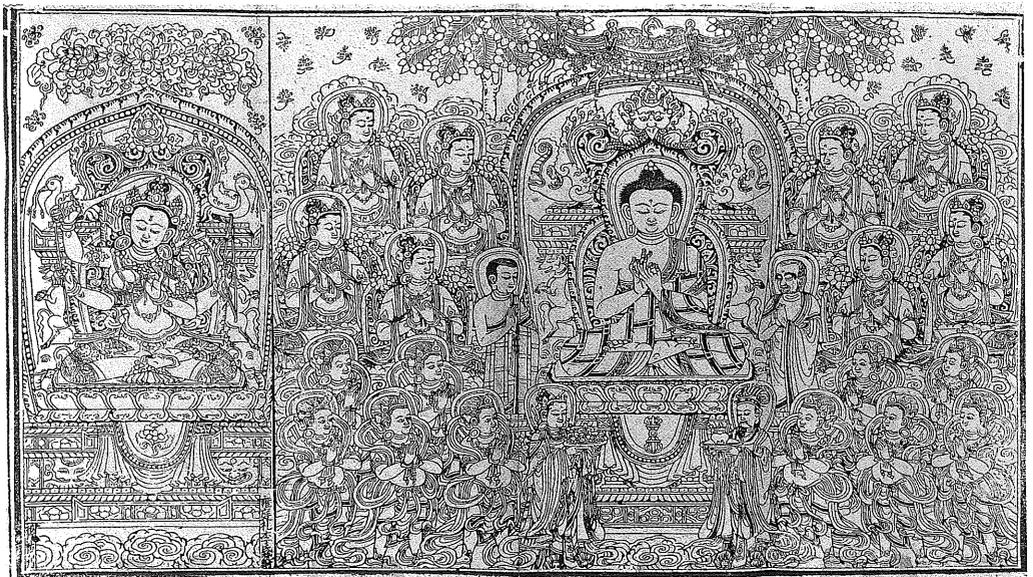
2. Illustration from *T'ang-shih hua-p'u* (ca. 1621). From the Spencer Collection, the New York Public Library; Astor, Lenox, and Tilden foundations.



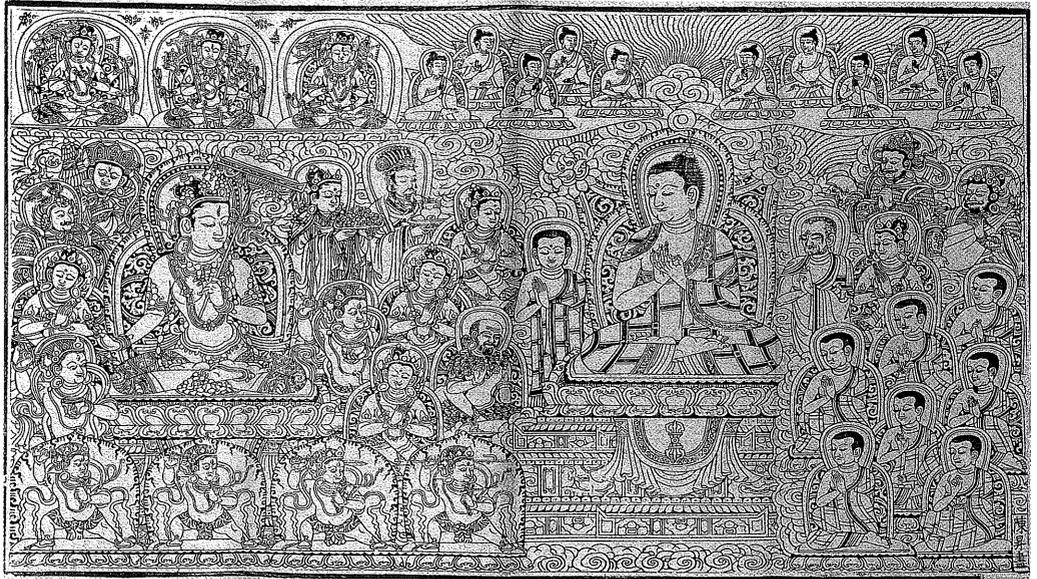
3. Illustration from *P'i-p'a chi* (ca. 1625). From the Spencer Collection, the New York Public Library; Astor, Lenox, and Tilden foundations.



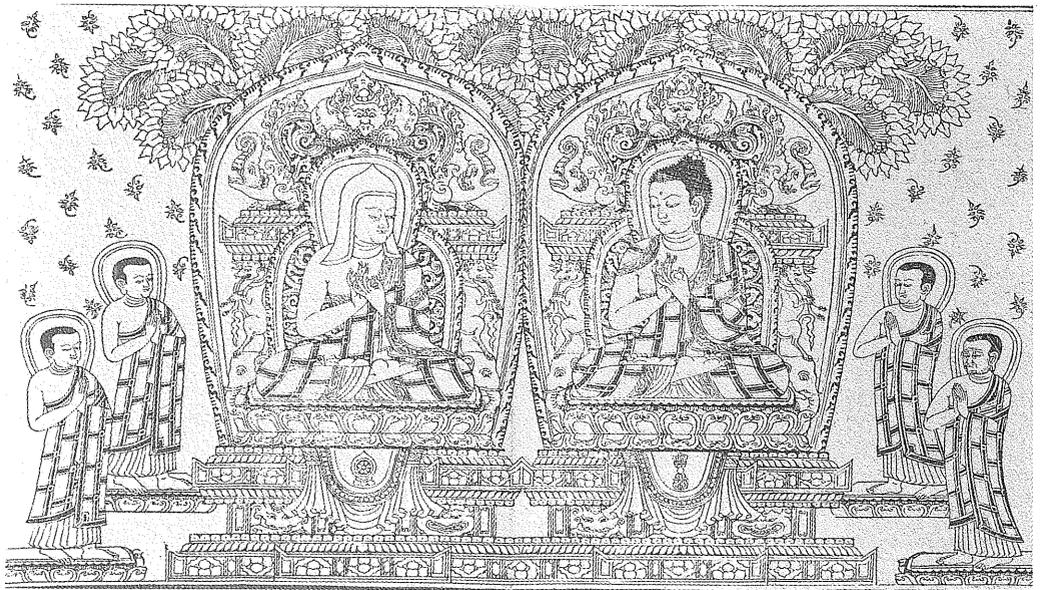
4. Frontispiece of *Fo-shuo pi-mi san-mei ta-chiao-wang ching, chüan 2* (1301). From the Spencer Collection, the New York Public Library; Astor, Lenox, and Tilden foundations.



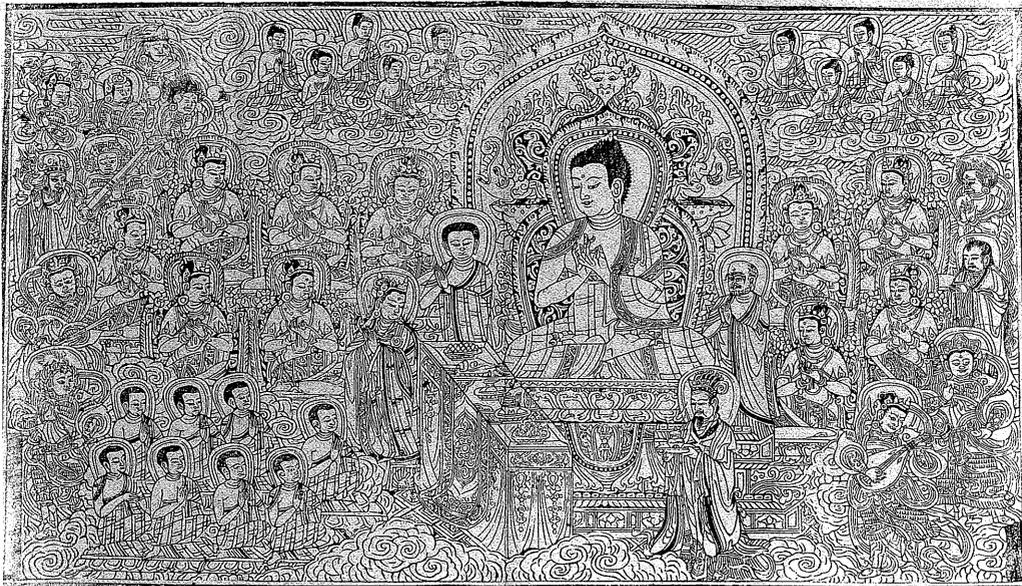
5. Frontispiece of *A-ch'a-mo p'u-sa ching, chüan 1* (ca. 1301). From the Spencer Collection, the New York Public Library; Astor, Lenox, and Tilden foundations.



6. Frontispiece of *A-ch'a-mo p'u-sa ching, chüan 2* (ca. 1301). From the Spencer Collection, the New York Public Library; Astor, Lenox, and Tilden foundations.



7. Frontispiece of *A-ch'a-mo p'u-sa ching, chüan 3* (ca. 1301). From the Spencer Collection, the New York Public Library; Astor, Lenox, and Tilden foundations.



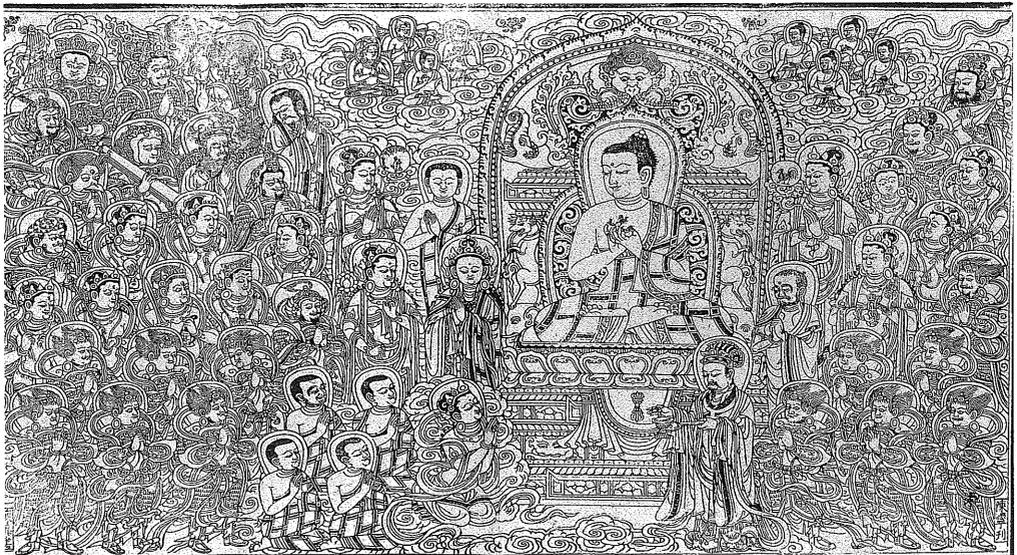
8. Frontispiece of *A-ch'a-mo p'u-sa ching, chüan 4* (ca. 1301). From the Spencer Collection, the New York Public Library; Astor, Lenox, and Tilden foundations.



9. Frontispiece of *A-ch'a-mo p'u-sa ching, chüan 5* (ca. 1301). From the Spencer Collection, the New York Public Library; Astor, Lenox, and Tilden foundations.



10. Frontispiece of *A-ch'a-mo p'u-sa ching*, *chüan* 6 (ca. 1301). From the Spencer Collection, the New York Public Library; Astor, Lenox, and Tilden foundations.



11. Frontispiece of *A-ch'a-mo p'u-sa ching*, *chüan* 7 (ca. 1301). From the Spencer Collection, the New York Public Library; Astor, Lenox, and Tilden foundations.



12. Illustration from *Mu-tan t'ing huan-hun chi* (1617). From the Spencer Collection, the New York Public Library; Astor, Lenox, and Tilden foundations.

*P'an-shan-chih* (Spencer 1756). Edited by Chiang P'u (1708–1761) et al. 1755 (Peking). 10 vols. Description of a mountain range near Peking and containing fine woodcuts.

*Yü-ming t'ang huan-hun chi* (Spencer 1785). By T'ang Hsien-tsu (1550–1616). 1785. 6 vols. Illustrated edition of the drama *Peony Pavilion*.

*Yang chia-fu yen-i* (Spencer 1606). 1606. 8 vols. Fictional work based on the exploits of a certain General Yang.

*Chüeh-shih ching t'u-shuo* (Spencer 1851). 1851. 4 vols. Tales of morally upright deeds with woodcut illustrations.

*Ta fo-ting-hsin t'o-lo-ni ching* (Spencer ca. 1800). 15th cent. 1 folding vol. An illustrated sutra of *Kuan-yin* worship, of the sort circulating in northern China in the early 15th century.<sup>14</sup>

*Hsing-ming kuei-chih* (Spencer 1615). 1615. 4 vols. Illustrated work on meditation and other Taoist practices.

#### BOOKS FROM I. V. GILLIS

*P'i-p'a chi* (Spencer 1498). By Kao Ming. Ca. 1625 (Wu-hsing). 4 vols. The *Tale of the Lute* in a finely illustrated edition, with black and red printing in the text, published by Ling Meng-ch'u (1588–1644).<sup>15</sup> (See illustration 3.)

*Nan-wu a-mi-t'o-fo ching* (Spencer ca. 1600). 15th–16th cent. 1 scroll vol. A rare and unusual Ming sutra containing large Amida portraits. Originally a folding volume, rebound as a scroll.

*Kuan-yin ta-shih hsien-hsiang ling-ying chi* (Spencer ca. 1600). By Hu Ying-lin (1551–1602). 17th cent. 1 folding vol. An album of 51 woodcut illustrations, some hand-colored, of *Kuan-yin* images plus one of a European.

*Tz'u-pei lan-p'en mu-lien ch'an-fa tao-ch'ang* (Spencer 1625). 1584 (printed 1625). 3 folding vols. Illustrated Buddhist text, privately published.

*Lung-t'u kung-an* (Spencer ca. 1700). 1776. 6 vols. Detective fiction based on Sung-dynasty cases. Preceded by ten woodcuts.

*Ssu-i fan-t'ien so-wen ching* (Spencer 1736). 1735. 1 vol. Translation from Sanskrit of a Buddhist sutra.

*Fo-shuo fo-ming ching* (Spencer 1736–1795). 1795 (Peking). 12 folding vols. Buddhist sutra translated from the Sanskrit.

*Shih-chu chai shu-hua p'u* (Spencer ca. 1750). By Hu Cheng-yen. 18th–19th

cent. 8 vols. *The Ten Bamboo Studio Painting and Calligraphy Handbook*, with polychrome woodcuts.

*Lieh-nü chuan* (Spencer 1779). By Liu Hsiang (77–6 B.C.). 1779. 16 vols. *Biographies of Eminent Women* with portraits purportedly designed by the Ming artist Ch'iu Ying (d. ca. 1552). This edition is considered to have been printed partially from original woodblocks of the Wan-li period (1573–1620).<sup>16</sup>

*Ching-t'u ch'uan-teng kwei-yüan ching* (Spencer 1784). 1784 (Peking). 2 vols. Buddhist sutra published in Peking.

*Fan ch'a t'u*, 1–4 (Spencer 1826). By Chang Pao. 1819–1826 (Canton). 4 vols. Autobiographical descriptions of journeys to scenic places. Illustrated and published by the author. In four parts.

*Shen-yin chien-ku lu* (Spencer 1834). 1834. 10 vols. An anthology of selections from famous plays and stories with accompanying woodcut illustrations.

*A-ch'a-mo p'u-sa ching* (Spencer ca. 1850). Ca. 1301 (Soochow). 7 folding vols. Complete in 7 *chüan*, each of which is preceded by a different four-panel woodcut. From the *Ch'i-sha* Tripitaka.<sup>17</sup> (See illustrations 5–11.)

*Ming chuang-yüan t'u-k'ao* (Spencer 1857). By Ku Ting-ch'en (1473–1540). 1856. 4 vols. Portraits and biographical notes on 76 Ming scholars who placed highest in the imperial examinations.

*Sheng-hsien hsiang-tsan* (Spencer 1879). 1878 (Ch'ü-fu). 4 vols. Portraits of sages and philosophers with eulogies.

*Sheng-men li yüeh chih* (Spencer 1888). 1887 (Ch'ü-fu). 4 vols. Two works, *Sheng-men yüeh-chih* (Confucian ritual music) and *Sheng-men li-chih* (Confucian rites), each in 2 volumes, published together.

*Ho-fei hsiang-kuo ch'i-shih tz'u-shou t'u* (Spencer 1891). 1892 (Tientsin). 6 vols. Lithographic illustrations of festivities surrounding the seventieth-birthday celebrations for Li Hung-chang (1823–1901) in volume one, with related texts and documents contained in the remaining volumes.

*Shih-pa lo-han t'u* (Spencer 1895). Illustrated by Ting Lien-feng. 1895. 1 vol. Portraits of the 18 Arhats of Buddhism, in the style of the Ming artist Ch'en Hung-shou (1599–1652).

#### BOOKS OF UNIDENTIFIED ORIGIN (PROBABLY MOSTLY FROM GILLIS)

*Pao-ch'ieh-yin t'o-lo-ni ching* (Spencer 975). Translated by Amoghavajra (705–774). Ca. 1930. 1 scroll. Small printed Buddhist charm preceded by a

simple woodcut, dated 975. The scrolls were discovered when the Lei-feng Pagoda near Hangchow collapsed in 1924. This appears to be from a woodblock facsimile edition made shortly thereafter.<sup>18</sup>

*Hsü Chen-chün yü-hsia chi* (Spencer 1433). By Hsü Hsün. Ca. 1488. 1 vol. Taoist divination texts with simple illustrations.<sup>19</sup>

*Hsin-k'an Han Chu-ko wu-hou pi-yän ch'in-shu* (Spencer 1588). By Ho Tung. 1588 (Nanking). 12 vols. An illustrated book of fortune-telling and divination practices purporting to derive from the prescient powers of Chu-ko Liang (A.D. 181–234).

*Hsin-k'o ch'üan-hsiang san-pao t'ai-chien hsi-yang chi* (Spencer 1597). By Lo Mao-teng. 1597 (Nanking). 20 vols. An illustrated work of late Ming fiction.

*Mu-tan t'ing huan-hun chi* (Spencer 1598). By T'ang Hsien-tsu (1550–1616). 1617. 2 vols. Illustrated edition of T'ang's famous dramatic work *Peony Pavilion*. With forty excellent woodcuts by members of the Huang lineage of Hui-chou blockcarvers. (See illustration 12.)

*Jen-ching yang-ch'iu* (Spencer 1600). Compiled by Wang T'ing-na. 1600 (She-hsien). 12 vols. Lacking *chüan* 22. Profusely illustrated biographies of ancient worthies, also engraved by the Huang blockcarvers of Hui-chou.<sup>20</sup>

*Hsien-fo ch'i-tsung* (Spencer 1600). By Hung Tzu-ch'eng. After 1600. 6 vols. Illustrated biographies of Taoists and Buddhists.

*Han-tan chi* (Spencer 1601). By T'ang Hsien-tsu (1550–1616). After 1601 (later impression). 4 vols. This edition probably was published as part of a collection of four of T'ang's plays. Four of 28 original woodcut illustrations are lacking.

*Hsin-chüan hai-nei ch'i-kuan* (Spencer 1610). By Yang Erh-tseng; illustrated by Ch'en I-kuan. 1709 (Hangchow). 10 vols. Illustrated guidebook to scenic and historic places in China.

*Hsin-chüan p'i-p'ing ch'u-hsiang Han Hsiang-tzu* (Spencer 1623). By Yang Erh-tseng. Ca. 1623 (Nanking). 6 vols. A popular illustrated work of late Ming fiction.

*Hsin-chüan wu-fu wan-shou tan-shu* (Spencer 1624). By Kung Chü-chung. Supplemented by Cheng Chih-ch'iao. Ca. 1624 (Nanking). 4 vols. A popular book containing miscellaneous formulas for attaining good fortune and long life. Lacking *chüan* 4 and 5 (of 6).

*Hsin-ting san-li t'u* (Spencer 1676). By Nieh Ch'ung-i. Ca. 1676. 4 vols. Illustrations to accompany the three texts *Chou-li*, *I-li*, and *Li-chi*. Based on a Sung edition of 1175, which is still extant.

The relative value of the books contained in each lot can be determined in various ways by different readers. In purely economic terms the Punnett books may have offered the least value, especially if we take the example of the *Hung-lou meng t'u-yung*, which Punnett priced at FRB \$45 and which the Peking Union Book Store sold for FRB \$8.50. This fact was not lost on the manager of the Punnett Gallery who made the following statement in a cover letter addressed to Kup and attached to the invoice for FRB \$1,105 on October 3.

After checking over the books you picked out, I found it is true that some are too high in price while others are too low in price as you mentioned. This is because Miss Punnett's way of doing business was to always add a certain percentage of profit no matter whether she purchased the goods cheaply or expensively. That is why the prices of the books are not quite in proportion. Anyhow all these prices were marked years ago and I am sure they are very reasonable. Nevertheless we will be glad to give you a 5% discount.

Furthermore, the Punnett books were Kup's first purchase in China and he had no basis for comparison.

Although a few bibliographical data are still tentative,<sup>21</sup> it is believed that the descriptions of the fifty-seven works will rectify some discrepancies in the original Spencer Collection cataloguing notes, but, more important, it is hoped that calling attention to this collection will make the books available to those previously unaware of their existence.

#### NOTES

1. The principal source of biographical information for I.V. Gillis is an eight-page typescript entitled "'Captain I.V. Gillis, Founder of the Gest Oriental Library' (A Chapter from the Unpublished Memoirs of Mr. Thomas Sze)" in the Gest Collection. It begins in 1920 with Sze joining "the International Lodge, Peking, a Massachusetts constitution masonic lodge," of which Gillis was a member, and it ends with his visiting Peking after the war and seeing Gillis at the British legation (where he had been allowed to live throughout the war because of a heart condition) and finding him in delicate

health, both physically and mentally, and finally reporting that he died on September 1, 1948. Gillis's birth date is deduced from a letter to Nancy Lee Swann (in the Gest Collection) dated February 28, 1946, in which he states that he is seventy-one years old. Elsewhere at about the same time he mentions having spent a total of thirty-five years in China and over thirty years collecting Chinese books (all of which were either sold or destroyed by the Japanese during the occupation of Peking). The Sze memoir was also used as the source of his biography by Hu Shih, in "The Gest Oriental Library at Princeton University" (*Princeton University Library Chronicle*, vol. 15, Spring 1954), and by D. E. Perushek, "The Gest Chinese Research Library" (*Princeton University Library Chronicle*, vol. 43, Spring 1987). Another source of Gillis's biography, at least useful for comparison and corroboration, and presumably based on an interview, is an article from the English-language journal *Peking: News and Views of China* (August 1931), a copy of which is preserved in the Gest Collection. The four-page article begins with a full page of photographs headed "Chinese Culture Safeguarded" and is entitled "Gest-McGill-Gillis: Three Notable Forces Create Most Comprehensive Chinese Research Library Outside China — How They Did It." Among minor discrepancies are suggestions that Gillis and Gest had first met as passengers on a Pacific steamship, that the Ch'en Pao-ch'en collection of books in the Gest Collection was offered to Gest through the Chinese consul in his home city of San Francisco, that the Gest Collection contained 115,514 Chinese books in 1931, and that the *Ch'i-sha* Tripitaka edition of sutras was unearthed in a re-

mote part of China. Besides consulting copies of miscellaneous correspondence in the Gest Collection, I have particularly benefited from access to the Kup papers among the records of the Spencer Collection in the New York Public Library Archives, and I wish to thank Robert Sink, archivist and records manager, for assistance. I am also grateful to Robert Rainwater, curator of the Spencer Collection, who encouraged my work, and to Margaret Glover, librarian in the Print Room, who graciously attended to my many requests for books, photographs, and other information.

2. Laufer's usually insightful comments are contained in a pamphlet of eight pages entitled "The Gest Chinese Research Library at McGill University" and published in Montreal around 1929. Among other remarks, he pointed out that "next in number of volumes to the Chinese Division of the Library of Congress the important collection of Chinese literature made by Mr. Guion M. Gest of New York is the most outstanding and most comprehensive and at the same time outranks others in number of rare books in America. It is justly characterized as a research library."
3. Kup's birthplace and original nationality appear open to question. The *New York Times* obituary of July 7, 1981, states that he was born in Berlin; however, New York Public Library records give his birthplace as Haarlem, the Netherlands, and it is known that Kup in later years presented himself as Dutch. It is clear from early correspondence and even from his own bookplate that his name originally was Kùp and that he changed the spelling to Kup sometime after coming to the United States. He is said to have stud-

- ied in Berlin and Paris before leaving Europe, and personal circumstances, such as having spent time in Holland, or having become a naturalized u.s. citizen in 1934, or even feelings about Germany between the wars, may have led him to change his identity.
4. In addition there are eighteen items listed as Chinese manuscripts, consisting of mostly mediocre paintings and picture albums, plus an interesting two-volume set of Buddhist texts written in gold on indigo paper and dated 1640.
  5. This extraordinary artifact is described in Edgren, *Chinese Rare Books in American Collections* (New York: China Institute, 1984), pp. 58–59.
  6. The *Shinkan kōtei meidō kyūkei* was printed with wooden movable type and published in Japan between 1608 and 1620. See Kawase Kazuma, *Kokatsuji-ban no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Antiquarian Booksellers Association of Japan, 1967), p. 757.
  7. The late Miss Edith Punnett had galleries in the Wagons-Lits Hotel, where Kup was staying in Peking, and at 39 Legation Street. Shortly after arriving, Kup learned that her remaining stock of about fifty titles of Chinese illustrated books was to be sold in toto for \$4,000 (local currency) and that Mrs. John Stewart Happer, then in Peking, was in charge of the sale. After careful inspection of the books he made lists of “first choice” and “second choice,” and in the end he selected thirteen titles for \$1,050 as his first purchase in China. One of the Punnett books (*Hung-lou meng t'u-yung*) was identical to one purchased from the Peking Union Book Store, and, since there is only one copy in the Spencer Collection, one may have been disposed of at some point, so we credit Punnett as the
  - source of only twelve of the existing fifty-seven items acquired in Peking.
  8. The Peking Union Book Store was the enterprise of Mr. K. T. Koo, who had been introduced to Kup by L. C. Goodrich of Columbia University. His address was 12 Yang-feng chia-tao (7th Postal District), apparently near or in the legation quarter. Koo seems to have been employed in the secretarial department of the National Library of Peking. Immediately after the war he was still in business, and 1947 stationery lists him as representative of the Library of Congress, and the libraries of Columbia University and the University of Chicago.
  9. Considering the scrupulousness with which Kup and Gillis carried out their business dealings, it is more than likely that detailed lists or invoices for all the books acquired from Gillis exist somewhere among the Kup papers. Until they are found, my reconstructed list may serve as a provisional one.
  10. The Chinese local currency dollars used in Peking at the time are referred to as FRB. I am grateful to F. W. Mote for pointing out that FRB is an abbreviation of “Federal and Reserve Bank” of North China (deriving from Chung-kuo lien-ho chun-pei yin-hang, the issuing body of the notes). The rate of exchange was approximately fifteen FRB dollars to one u.s. dollar. Most of Kup’s purchases were paid for in local currency.
  11. See Edgren, *Chinese Rare Books*, pp. 120–121, for a full description of this edition.
  12. The same edition of this work is listed with the books from the Peking Union Book Store, and it is not really known which of the two copies has been retained in the collection.
  13. This single volume, together with the

seven-*chüan A-ch'a-mo p'u-sa ching* (see note 17 below), contains all eight of the fine frontispiece woodcuts found in the *Ch'i-sha* Tripitaka. See Edgren, *Chinese Rare Books*, pp. 80–81, for an introduction to the Tripitaka edition as well as a description of a related volume in the collection of the Indianapolis Museum of Art (formerly in the collection of Jean-Pierre Dubosc). In fact, Dubosc once owned all three of the volumes (*chüan* 1, 3, and 4), which together with this one make up the complete *Pi-mi san-mei ta-chiao-wang ching*. They were acquired in Peking in the late 1930s. Interestingly enough, Kup had intended to meet Dubosc, who was attached to the French legation, and had with him an introduction from Alan Priest of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Dubosc had also been recommended to Kup by Laurence Sickman. Kup's diary entry merely indicates that they did not meet, and one might assume that Dubosc was away from Peking. Since Dubosc's copy of *chüan* 1 bears a colophon dated 1301, we may safely ascribe the Spencer Collection volume to the same year. The Spencer volume is among those bearing ex libris seal imprints of Li Shu-ch'ang (1837–1897) and Yang Shou-ching (1839–1915). The dating of "ca. 1850" probably comes from Gillis, who expressed a similar opinion about parts of the entire *Ch'i-sha* Tripitaka, which he had acquired for the Gest Collection. In fact, K. T. Koo's memo on the invoice, "Yuan sutra — Pu Ning Ssu, Hangchow," was much closer to the truth. Although production of the Tripitaka began in the vicinity of Soochow in the late Sung period, it may have been completed in the early Yüan at Hangchow, where the woodcuts were executed.

For reference, other *Ch'i-sha* volumes with the same woodcut frontispiece are in the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, and in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. I am addressing questions about the printing of this edition and the significance of the particular style of the woodcuts in ongoing research on the Sung and Yüan editions of the Buddhist canon, and it would not be appropriate to try to deal with them here. Nevertheless, there are unanswered questions about the Yang Shou-ching provenance (the National Library of Peking has some volumes that also have a *Sung-p'o t'u-shu-kuan* seal imprint together with that of Yang's), about the appearance of odd volumes from the Tripitaka with early impressions of fine woodcuts (primarily acquired by foreigners in Peking in the 1930s), and about the presence of frontispiece woodcuts in each of the volumes of the latter group, which is inconsistent with traditional Chinese sutra publication practice. Regarding the last point we have two nearly complete sets of the Tripitaka to use for comparison: one discovered around 1930 divided between two Buddhist temples in Sian and now in the Shensi Provincial Library (a reduced size photolithographic reprint was made in Shanghai during the following six years), and the one acquired in Peking (Ta-pei ssu?) by Gillis for the Gest Collection in the late 1920s. Since the paper of the frontispieces is invariably different from that of the text portions of the volumes, it is not impossible that a cache of woodcuts was found with the Peking set and the best of these were mounted for separate sale. I am presently comparing the titles and *chüan* numbers of the errant volumes with their counterparts in the Gest set and

will report on any correlation with missing or modern manuscript replacement volumes in another article.

14. This sort of *dharani-sutra*, with its simple narrative illustrations filling the upper one-third of each page and continuous text on the lower two-thirds, is an important manifestation of popular religion in the early Ming. Of those I have seen with dates and places of publication, the majority are from the Peking area and were printed in the early fifteenth century. A similar variant edition of this work is illustrated in Frances Wood, *Chinese Illustration* (London: British Library, 1985), p. 19. Another copy of the same (ex Jean-Pierre Dubosc) is held by the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco.
15. This book is alone among the books identified as having been acquired from Gillis in October 1940, in that inside the folding case it gives the date as June 1941, probably meaning that it arrived at the library at that time. In a letter dated October 25, 1940, addressed to Kup in Shanghai, Gillis states: "I bought the work that you inspected and that had one booklet lacking, it having been sent to Tientsin. This booklet came back and made the work then complete. Although there were a few slight defects, you had examined this work yourself and said that you wished to procure it if complete, so I bought it at the cost of local currency \$250. This will be set down in your account when I send you a statement of the shipping charges." I believe that the *P'i-p'a chi* is being referred to and that it was sent to New York after the original shipment. Incidentally, two specimen pages from the Spencer copy of *P'i-p'a chi* were published by P'an Ch'eng-pi and Ku T'ing-lung in *Ming-tai pan-pen t'u-lu ch'u-pien* (Shanghai: K'ai-ming shu-tien, 1941), *chüan* 10, pp. 10–11. For more information about the edition see Edgren, *Chinese Rare Books*, p. 110.
16. See Sören Edgren, "The *Ching-ying hsiao-sheng* and Traditional Illustrated Biographies of Women," *Gest Library Journal*, vol. 5, no. 2 (Winter 1992), p. 162.
17. As mentioned in note 13 above, it is highly irregular to find a different frontispiece before each *chüan* of a work like this from a Tripitaka edition. Indeed, all of the eight different "superior" frontispiece woodcuts from the *Ch'i-sha* Tripitaka known to me are represented in the two Spencer Collection titles. Sherman Lee and Wai-kam Ho, *Chinese Art under the Mongols: The Yüan Dynasty* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 1968), facing pls. 278 and 279, also note: "These Gest examples in the exhibition, dated from 1306 to 1315, are not exactly in the same artistic quality and craftsmanship as the earlier examples (1301) from the Dubosc collection." These seven volumes do not contain any seal imprints of Yang Shou-ching or Li Shu-ch'ang. Heather Karmay, *Early Sino-Tibetan Art* (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1975), p. 51, describes the eight frontispiece illustrations (numbered 1–8) from the photolithographic reprint edition of the Shensi set of the *Ch'i-sha* Tripitaka (Shanghai, 1931–1935) in the order in which they appear. In describing these seven illustrations I refer to her numbers. The woodcut before *chüan* 2 of *Pi-mi san-mei ta-chiao-wang ching* (see note 13) corresponds to Karmay's no. 7. The following seven woodcuts (borderline measurements for each woodblock are indicated) precede each of the seven *chüan* of the *A-ch'a-mo p'u-sa ching*. *Chüan* 1:

- 244 x 442 mm.; Karmay no. 6; donor of funds for printing: Li family of Yung-chou; blockcarver: Sun Yu. Other examples of this illustration are in the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Indianapolis Museum of Art (former Dubosc collection), and the Denver Art Museum. *Chüan* 2: 241 x 436 mm.; Karmay no. 3; illustrator: Ch'en Sheng. Other examples are in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Ryūkoku University in Japan. *Chüan* 3: 249 x 441 mm.; Karmay no. 5. Another example is in the former Dubosc collection (see Karmay, pl. 30). *Chüan* 4: 248 x 436 mm.; Karmay no. 4; the name of Yang Te-ch'un in the lower right-hand corner and the text "printed by the Yang family, north of Chung-an Bridge, Hangchow" in the lower left-hand corner are obliterated by black "mo-ting" marks. Another example (containing the two lines of text) is in the Gest Collection. *Chüan* 5: 245 x 444 mm.; Karmay no. 1; illustrator: Ch'en Sheng; blockcarver: Yuan Wang. Another example is in a private collection in Japan. *Chüan* 6: 247 x 440 mm.; Karmay no. 2. Other examples are in the former Dubosc collection (see Karmay, pl. 29), the Gest Collection, the British Library, and the Bibliothèque Nationale. *Chüan* 7: 239 x 442 mm.; Karmay no. 8; blockcarver: Ch'en Ning; illustrator: Ch'en Sheng. Other examples are in the Bibliothèque Nationale, the former Dubosc collection, and Ryūkoku University.
18. Kup's diary records that on September 30, 1940, he visited Mrs. Nellie Hussey in Peking and "purchased a so-called 'Sung' sutra of 700 AD [*sic!*] for \$70. FRB, after having been offered the same scroll by Ferguson for \$350.00." Elsewhere the price is mentioned as \$75. It is possible that this may refer to the Lei-feng Pagoda sutra.
19. The title of this work is derived from the preface and therefore is tentative. The contents are possibly incomplete or misordered: the center column is uniformly damaged and restored with blank paper, so that the *chüan* and folio numbers are missing. As a product of the popular religion of the time, this work mixes together Taoist and Buddhist elements. The traditional dates for Hsü Hsün, author of the *Yü-hsia chi*, are A.D. 240–374!
20. Gillis's letter of October 25 (see note 15 above) possibly refers to this work thus: "The '\$2,400' work is also now in my safe awaiting your instructions. A few days after you left the owner recovered it from the book-store (Han Wen Chai). They brought it back and told the owner that it had been sent to Tientsin for examination by a prospective purchaser and sent back as not desired. (You were the prospective purchaser, of course.) The owner has now gone back to the price he originally set upon it when it was offered to me some months ago. As there has been so much 'advertising' and hanky-panky about this item I doubt very much if the price can be cut, although my son says that he thinks that it could have possibly been obtained for a couple of hundred dollars less probably if there had not been so much dickering, as the owner is now fully aware of its value. If you wish me to buy this book you can let me know at your convenience, but not with too much delay. A one-word cable—Gillis, Peking ACCEPT (OR REJECT) is all that is necessary, and a decision one way or the other would be appreciated, so that I may return this promptly to the owner if you do not want it. I will pay for it myself and you can reimburse me." On November 1, two days before his departure from Shanghai, Kup apparently sent

\$1,250 to Gillis: \$250 for one book (probably the *P'i-p'a chi*; see note 15) and \$1,000 for the "famous Ferguson \$2,400. book." The quote, at least, offers further insight into the working relationship between Gillis and Kup.

21. The RLG Chinese Rare Books Project, based at Princeton, is currently cataloguing and inputting records for Chi-

nese rare books held by the New York Public Library. Altogether thirty-six titles in the Spencer Collection fall within the scope of the project and will be on RLIN (Research Libraries Information Network) before autumn 1993. They may be consulted for definitive and more detailed bibliographical descriptions.

APPENDIX

BOOKS FROM THE PUNNETT GALLERY

御製耕織圖 清焦秉貞繪 清康熙三十五年內府刻本  
 唐詩畫譜 明萬曆天啓刻本  
 圖繪宗彝八卷 明楊爾曾輯 明蔡汝佐繪 明末刻本  
 唐詩畫譜 明萬曆天啓刻本  
 聖諭像解二十卷 清梁延年編 清光緒十三年寶善堂刻本  
 紅樓夢圖詠 清改琦繪 清光緒五年刻本  
 百美新詠圖傳 清顏希源撰 清嘉慶十年集腋軒刻本  
 列仙傳 明洪自誠輯 清道光十三年在茲堂刻本  
 仙佛奇踪八卷 明洪自誠輯 明末刻本  
 芥子園畫傳初集二集三集四集 清王槩等輯 清刻本  
 芥子園畫傳初集二集 清王槩等輯 清刻本  
 十竹齋書畫譜 明胡正言輯 清刻本  
 佛說觀無量壽佛經圖頌 清刻本

BOOKS FROM THE PEKING UNION BOOKSTORE

任渭長四種 列仙酒牌一卷 於越先賢傳二卷 高士傳三卷 劍俠傳一卷  
 清任熊繪 清咸豐四年至光緒五年刻本  
 秦淮八艷圖詠 清張景祁撰 清光緒十八年越華講館刻本  
 鴻雪因緣圖記 清麟慶撰 清道光二十七年刻本  
 紅樓夢圖詠 清改琦繪 清光緒五年刻本  
 佛說秘密三昧大教王經卷二 宋施護等譯 元大德五年刻磧砂藏本  
 吳郡名賢圖傳贊二十卷 清顧沅輯 清道光九年刻本  
 盤山志十六卷 清蔣溥等纂 清乾隆二十年內府刻本

玉茗堂還魂記二卷 明湯顯祖撰 清乾隆五十年冰絲館刻本  
 楊家府演義八卷 明秦淮墨客校正 明萬曆三十四年刻本  
 覺世經圖說 清咸豐元年春暉書屋刻本  
 大佛頂心陀羅尼經 明初刻本  
 性命圭旨 明萬曆四十三年刻本

BOOKS FROM I. V. GILLIS

琵琶記四卷 元高明撰 明天啓凌氏刻朱墨套印本  
 南無阿彌陀佛經 明刻本  
 觀音大士現象靈應記 明胡應麟輯 明末清初刻本  
 慈悲蘭盆目連懺法道場三卷 明萬曆十二年刻天啓五年印本  
 龍圖公案十卷 清乾隆四十一年種書堂刻本  
 思益梵天所問經四卷 清雍正十三年刻本  
 佛說佛名經十二卷 元魏菩提流支譯 清乾隆六十年衍法寺刻本  
 十竹齋書畫譜 明胡正言輯 清刻本  
 列女傳十六卷 漢劉向撰 明仇英繪 明萬曆刻清乾隆四十四年鮑氏知不足齋印本  
 淨土傳燈歸元鏡二卷 清乾隆四十九年龍王廟刻本  
 泛槎圖附續集三集四集 清張寶繪 清嘉慶二十四年至道光六年自刻本  
 審音鑑古錄 清道光十四年刻本  
 阿差末菩薩經七卷 西晉竺法護譯 元大德刻磧砂藏本  
 明狀元圖考 明顧鼎臣撰 清咸豐六年刻本  
 聖賢像贊 清光緒四年會文堂刻本  
 聖門禮樂誌 清光緒十三年硯寬亭刻本  
 合肥相國七十賜壽圖 清光緒十八年石印本  
 十八羅漢圖 清丁蓮峰著并繪 清光緒二十一年自刻本

BOOKS OF UNIDENTIFIED ORIGIN (PROBABLY MOSTLY FROM GILLIS)

寶篋印他陀羅尼經 唐不空譯 民國覆宋開寶八年刻本  
 許真君玉匣記 晉許遜撰 明刻本  
 新刊漢諸葛武侯秘演禽書十二卷 明何動輯 明萬曆十六年葉貴刻本  
 新刻全像三寶太監西洋記二十卷 明羅懋登撰 明萬曆二十五年三山道人刻本  
 牡丹亭還魂記二卷 明湯顯祖編 明萬曆四十五年刻本  
 人鏡陽秋二十二卷 明汪廷訥編 明萬曆二十八年環翠堂刻本  
 偃佛奇踪六卷 明洪自誠輯 明末刻本

邯鄲記二卷 明湯顯祖撰 明臧懋循訂 明末刻本  
新鐫海內奇觀十卷 明楊爾曾輯 明陳一貫繪 明萬曆三十八年夷白堂刻本  
新鐫批評出相韓湘子三十回 明楊爾曾撰 明天啓九如堂刻本  
新鐫五福萬壽丹書六卷 明龔居中纂 明鄭之僑補 明天啓周如刻泉刻本  
新定三禮圖二十卷 宋聶崇義撰 清康熙通志堂刻本

GLOSSARY

Kōbunsō 弘文莊

Ming 明

Liu-li-ch'ang 琉璃廠

Sorimachi Shigeo 反町茂雄

Lung-fu-ssu 隆福寺