

The Peit'ang Library

Jiashuo Zhang

The collection of books known as the “Pei-t'ang Library,” came from different sources. During the Sino-Japanese War, the library was being catalogued by Father Verhaeren. Now these books are preserved in the Rare Books Section of Peking Library and part of them are in good condition.

However the Peking Library have no copy of the Verhaeren Catalogue listed available in the Rare Books Section for consultation. Then a reader must rely on his own knowledge of specific books to seek the books he wants and this is inconvenient. J. S. Cummins once suggested some rough rules to help people find the Pei-t'ang Library books. If his surmise is correct it would be possible even without the use of the Verhaeren Catalogue to single out the old Pei-t'ang holdings from the general collection of European rare books. Digitalization can help scholars testify this surmise and more scholars even laymen then can have contact with the Pei-t'ang Library books. This will shed light on relevant Chinese studies especially the missionary studies in modern China.