

## **Image Database for Cultural Sites of Asia**

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### **The Huntington Archive of Buddhist and Related Art**

Sufficient access to quality visual materials is one of the greatest challenges faced by scholars studying the material cultures of Asia. Images of Asian art are often unpublished, incomplete, non-existent, or scattered throughout numerous publications, making access to the materials difficult at best. Moreover, increased modernization in many Asian countries has resulted in the loss, destruction, or alteration of historically important material remains. As a result, existing photographic and video documentation, whether in personal or public collections, has become increasingly important over the past two decades.

This presentation will discuss the need for photographic documentation of Asia art and culture and the preservation of already existing visual resources. Issues of collection value will be addressed, particularly as they relate to The John C. and Susan L. Huntington Photographic Archive of Buddhist and Related Art — photographic documentation collection housed at The Ohio State University's Department of History of Art, USA.

The Huntington Archive contains nearly 300,000 original color slides and black and white photographs of art and architecture throughout Asia. The countries covered in the collection include India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, China, Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, and Myanmar (Burma) with works ranging from approximately 2500 B.C.E. up to and including contemporary religious activities in various parts of Asia. The Archive documents the art and architecture of these countries in situ, as well as works of art found in most of the museums located throughout Asia, Europe, and the United States. This broad, yet detailed, collection contains material that is predominantly Buddhist, but also includes a great deal of Hindu and some Jain and Mughal material.