

Einladung
zu einem Gastvortrag
von

Herrn
Prof. Dr. Seishi Karashima
(Soka University)

über das Thema

**Who Composed the Mahāyāna Scriptures?
The Mahāsāṃghikas and *Vaitulya* Scriptures**

In this talk, I demonstrate that the earlier composers of the so-called *Mahāyāna-sūtras* had named their texts *vevulla* / *vaitulya* / *vaipulya* (cf. Pāli *vedalla*), and only later these titles were changed to *mahāyāna-sūtra*. By investigating the earlier Chinese translations as well as the Chinese Buddhist catalogues, I also demonstrate the transition from *vevulla* (2nd century C.E.) to *vaitulya* (3rd century ~ 616 C.E.), and then to *vaipulya* (5th century onwards) and finally to *mahāyāna-sūtra* (5th century onwards).

The 大方等大集經 (**Mahāvaitulya-Mahāsannipāta*), which was compiled in 586 C.E, is apparently a collection of the *vaitulya-cum-mahāyāna*-scriptures. In this collection, there are passages that describe the various Buddhist schools, among which the description concerning the Mahāsāṃghikas is expressed in a positive way, while other schools are described negatively. We may assume that the composer of this *vaitulya*-scripture belonged to the school of the Mahāsāṃghikas.

I assume that members of the Mahāsāṃghikas composed new scriptures, often consisting of questions and answers and condemning the conservative thoughts on Buddhist doctrines, and called these newly-composed texts *vedulla* / *vaitulya*, in the meaning of their being “irregular” as Buddha’s scripture but “incomparable, peerless”. Later, they came to be called in a more positive way as *vaipulya* “full development, abundance, plenty, fullness.”

Much later still, they came to be called *mahāyāna-sūtras* as well. Those who composed, copied, read, recited, proclaimed these “new scriptures,” did not call themselves “Mahāyanists” at the beginning. They were after all members of the Mahāsāṃghikas and therefore, it is quite natural that the name Mahāyāna does not occur in early Indian inscriptions. Much later on, when the Mahāyāna scriptures and doctrine became much more popular, members of other schools acknowledged them and absorbed them as well.

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um
16:00 Uhr

Alsterterrasse 1, Raum 117

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