

## Einladung zu einem Gastvortrag

von

Herrn  
**Dr. Christopher V. Jones**  
(University of Oxford)

über das Thema

### Reevaluating the Buddha-Nature Idea in India

The *tathāgatagarbha* literature of the Indian Mahāyāna is unconventional for a number of reasons. At their most radical, texts of this tradition declare that the *tathāgatagarbha* – sometimes called the ever-present ‘Buddha-Nature’ (*buddhadhātu*) – constitutes the true self (*ātman*) of any sentient being, in apparent contravention of Buddhist commitment to the doctrine of *anātman*. At their least problematic – when the language of selfhood is not used – they posit still that all sentient beings at all times possess the qualities of a fully awakened Buddha, which jars with the position that every constituent aspect of a sentient being is necessarily impermanent.

This paper will review recent developments in the study of the Indian *tathāgatagarbha* corpus of texts. Whereas much scholarship has marginalized those texts that couch the *tathāgatagarbha* as a doctrine of the self, recent research suggests that those works that explore this idea in such terms likely reflect an earlier form of ‘Buddha-nature’ thought than those which do not. With reference to relevant Indian *sūtra* and commentarial literature, this paper will review the relationship between the *tathāgatagarbha* and the language of selfhood, and present a reevaluation of how key works of this literature – including the *Mahāparinirvāṇamahāsūtra*, *Śrīmālādevīsīṃhanādasūtra* and *Tathāgatagarbhasūtra* – should be considered to relate to one another. Aside from exploring a relative chronology of Indian *tathāgatagarbha* works, I will suggest that the history of the *tathāgatagarbha* idea in Indian literature is one of successive revisions and reformulations, away from what may have originally been a radical attempt at promoting a Buddhist doctrine of a permanent, unchanging self.

am

**08.11.2017**

um

**16:00 Uhr**

**ESA-OST, Raum 120**

Prof. Dr. Dorji Wangchuk (Director)  
Khyentse Center for Tibetan Buddhist Textual Scholarship (KC-TBTS)  
Abteilung für Kultur und Geschichte Indiens und Tibets, AAI, Universität Hamburg  
Alsterterrasse 1, D-20354 Hamburg