

Einladung
zu einem Gastvortrag
von

Frau
Dr. Channa Li

(IKGA, Wien)

über das Thema

**A Schismatic, an Evil Perpetrator, or an Aide of Śākyamuni Buddha:
Insoluble Doctrinal Conflicts in the Development of Devadatta's Narrative and the
Mahāyāna Reformation**

As scholars agree, this portrait of Devadatta as a stupid, rebellious, but impotent evildoer is *per se* the end product of a long history of development, during which more and more lurid stories were added to impute various crimes to him. In this presentation, I attempt to investigate how Buddhist traditions extend Devadatta's image from initially being a schismatic to being an innately evil person. I will demonstrate that Devadatta's different facets of notoriety, due to the fact that they were possibly created in different contexts and motivated by different ideologies, result in tension and clashes within Devadatta's image.

Moreover, as I will elaborate, before Buddhists themselves have realized, the ongoing degradation of Devadatta had developed into a serious theological problem, especially to the basic karma theory and to Śākyamuni's image as a perfect being. Adding more evil deeds to Devadatta's (past-life and present-life) biographies would not further increase his evilness but, conversely, impair Śākyamuni's perfection. Mahāyāna monks, perhaps realizing the theological problems posed by Devadatta's ever-increasing evilness, show no further interest in deepening Devadatta's depravity. Embracing new ideological views of the buddha-nature and Buddhist cosmology, Mahāyāna followers propose several novel interpretations of the religious significance of Devadatta, often viewing him in a favorable light.

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um
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via Zoom

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