



# A Symposium in Memory of David Seyfort Ruegg

**An Event Celebrating the 15th  
Anniversary of the Khyentse Center**

July 22–24, 2025

University of Hamburg,  
Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1, East Wing, Room 221



འཇམ་དཔལ་འབྱོར་པ་



Universität Hamburg

DER FORSCHUNG | DER LEHRE | DER BILDUNG



KHYENTSE  
FOUNDATION



Conveners: Orna Almogi, Cristina Scherrer-Schaub, Dorji Wangchuk

Event coordinator: Ayako Nakamura-Walbeck



David Seyfort Rugg  
August 1, 1931 – February 2, 2021

# Program

Tuesday, July 22	
10:30-11:30	Registration and Coffee Time
11:30-13:00	<b>Opening Session</b> <b>Moderator: Orna Almogi</b> Music: Anna Olivia Amaya Farias & Fabian Sturm Camille Saint-Saëns – Le cygne (The Swan) <b>Eva Wilden</b> (Hamburg) <b>Anja Hartmann</b> (KF) <b>Lambert Schmithausen</b> (Hamburg) <b>Dorji Wangchuk</b> (Hamburg) Jean-Baptiste Barrière – Sonata in G-Dur: Allegro Prestissimo <b>Orna Almogi &amp; Dorji Wangchuk</b> (Hamburg) The Khyentse Center 2011–2015: Activities & Achievements Johannes Brahms – Ungarischer Tanz Nr. 5
13:00-14:00	Lunch Break
<b>Moderator: Dorji Wangchuk</b>	
14:00-14:45	<b>Vesna Wallace</b> (Santa Barbara) How to Understand the Buddha's Omniscience: The Late Indian Commentators on the <i>Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti</i>
14:45-15:30	<b>Serena Saccone</b> (Naples) On Reality, Nature, and Apprehension: The Development of the Idea of <i>sahopalambhaniyama</i> in Buddhist Thought
15:30-16:00	Coffee Break
16:00-16:45	<b>Vincent Eltschinger</b> (Paris) Reflections on Dharmakīrti and His Successors' Doctrine of Rebirth

## Wednesday, July 23

### Moderator: Anne MacDonald

09:30-10:15	<b>Oskar von Hinüber</b> (Freiburg i.B.) Three Sources—One River: The Interaction of Text, Image and Inscription in the Research on Early Buddhism. A Casual Academic Chat
10:15-11:00	<b>Masahiro Shimoda</b> (Tokyo) Rethinking Historical Narratives in Buddhist Studies: A Critical Reflection on the Japanese Legacy and Contemporary Methodologies
11:00-11:30	Coffee Break
11:30-12:15	<b>Vincent Tournier</b> (Munich) Beacons along the Dark River: Śāila Buddhist Lineages and Their Scriptures
12:15-13:00	<b>Giuliano Giustarini</b> (Rome & Mahidol) Stories, Similes, and Their Interpretations in the <i>Sumaṅgala-vilāsinī</i> ( <i>Dīgha Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā</i> )
13:00-14:00	Lunch Break
<b>Moderator: Francesco Sferra</b>	
14:00-14:45	<b>Leonard van der Kuijp</b> (Harvard) A Ride on the <i>gSer gyi shing rta</i> : sMin grol gling Lo tsā ba's Study of the Astral Sciences
14:45-15:30	<b>Helmut Tauscher</b> (Vienna) Nam mkha' dpal mgon – Reading between the Lines
15:30-16:00	Coffee Break
16:00-16:45	<b>Haiyan Hu-von Hinüber</b> (Beijing) Traveling for 1300 Years: Inscribed Buddhist Bronzes from Northwest India via Tibetan Monasteries to the Treasury of the Manchu Emperors
16:45-17:15	<b>Kiyonori Nagasaki</b> (Tokyo) Application of AI in Buddhist Textual Studies

## Thursday, July 24

**Moderator: Leonard van der Kuijp**

09:30-10:15	<b>Norihisa Baba</b> (Tokyo) The Archetype of the <i>Dharmacakrapravartana-sūtra</i> ?
10:15-11:00	<b>Francesco Sferra</b> (Naples) Non-Buddhist Traditions in Early Kālacakra Texts
11:00-11:30	Coffee Break
11:30-12:15	<b>Ryan Conlon</b> (Hamburg) Maximalist Madhyamaka: Vāgīśvarakīrti's Arguments for an All-inclusive Path and Fruition in the <i>Tāttvaratnāvaloka</i> and <i>Saptāṅga</i>
12:15-13:00	<b>Anne MacDonald</b> (Vienna) Hidden in Plain Sight: The <i>Madhyamakāvatāra</i> and Its Tibetan Translations
13:00-14:00	Lunch Break

**Moderator: Vincent Eltschinger**

14:00-14:45	<b>Jan Westerhoff</b> (Oxford) Āryadeva on the Hierarchy of the Two Truths
14:45-15:30	<b>Péter-Dániel Szántó</b> (Budapest) The Epistles Attributed to Nāgārjuna
15:30-16:00	Coffee Break
16:00-16:45	<b>Cristina Scherrer-Schaub</b> (Paris & Lausanne) Afterword
16:45-17:15	<b>Leonard van der Kuijp, Burkhard Quessel, Dorji Wangchuk</b> Conclusion





# Abstracts

## **How to Understand the Buddha's Omniscience: The Late Indian Commentators on the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti***

Vesna A. Wallace (Santa Barbara)

This presentation explores how the two, thirteenth-century Indian commentators on the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*—Raviśrījñāna (the 12th–13th centuries), the author of the *Amṛtakaṇikātippanī*, and Vibhūticandra (the 13th century), the author of the sub-commentary *Amṛtakaṇikodyotanibandha*—explicate the omniscience and ultimate nature of the Buddha's mind through the interpretative lens of the Kālacakra tantric tradition. Among some twenty-six known Indian commentaries on the *Mañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*, the names and attributes of the Vajrasattva's gnosis proclaimed in the *Nāmasaṃgīti*'s 162 verses are the results of the purification, or cessation, of 162 *nāḍīs* within the six *cakras*. Hence, the entire litany of the names of Mañjuśrī Vajrasattva is understood as a proclamation of the outcomes of the sequence of the *śaḍāṅgayoga* practices and the resultant, co-emergent realizations along the path to the Full and Perfect Awakening. Transcending the dualistic mind (*citta*) caught in a web of conceptualizations, Mañjuśrī Jñānasattva is all-encompassing omniscience itself, which is the space-like all-pervading, unitary, and self-aware gnosis of imperishable bliss, manifesting in all appearances, including in the smallest units of the alphabet as well as in silence.

## **On Reality, Nature, and Apprehension: The Development of the Idea of *sahopalambhaniyama* in Buddhist Thought**

Serena Saccone (Naples)

*Sahopalambhaniyama*, necessary/invariable co-apprehension, is a term related to a central argument within the Dharmakīrtian tradition, which aims to prove mere-cognition (*viññaptimātratā*), specifically in the sense of the non-difference between a cognition and its object. The first statement of such an argument is in *Pramānaviniścaya* 1.54ab by Dharmakīrti. In that work, *sahopalambhaniyama* is also linked to the establishment of self-awareness of cognitions, insofar as they are verily devoid of both an object and a subject. This paper seeks to illustrate some of the perspectives as well as interpretations of this idea through the analysis of later Buddhist sources.

## **Reflections on Dharmakīrti and His Successors' Doctrine of Rebirth**

Vincent Eltschinger (Paris)

The Buddhist epistemologists' defence of transmigration (*paraloka*), i.e., of a beginningless and potentially endless cognitive/mental series (*cittasantāna*), raises many interesting questions. Dharmakīrti's and Kamalaśīla's *paralokasiddhis* (in PV 2.34ff. et TSP ch. 22, respectively) arguably contain the most sustained discussions of the mind-body problem in Buddhist philosophical literature. The materialists' contention that cognition cannot arise before the embryo has acquired a complete sensory apparatus strongly challenged the Buddhist conception according to which the *viññāna* is present at every single moment of the entire series, and, for that reason, from the moment of linking up/relinking (*pratisandhi*, also "reincarnation"). To meet this challenge, the Buddhist intellectuals developed intriguing ideas about the origin of consciousness. Last but not least, they also had to define the type of *viññāna* operating at the moment of relinking: *ālayaviññāna*, as the "mainstream" Yogācāras maintained since the *Yôgācārabhūmi*, or *manoviññāna*, as the Vaibhāṣikas and Sautrāntikas believed. My presentation will review and discuss these and other issues connected with the philosophical debate on rebirth.

## **Drei Quellen — ein Fluss: Das Zusammenwirken von Text, Bild und Inschrift bei der Erforschung des alten Buddhismus. Eine wissenschaftliche Plauderei**

Oskar von Hinüber (Freiburg i.B.)

Einige Worte persönlicher Erinnerung an David Seyfort Ruegg werden den eigentliche Ausführungen vorausgeschickt.

Die Kenntnis des alten indischen Buddhismus beruht im Wesentlichen auf drei Quellen: auf Texten, Inschriften und archäologischen Zeugen, besonders Bildwerken. Diese triviale Tatsache ist sattem bekannt. Alle drei Bereiche werden jedoch häufig voneinander getrennt behandelt, wenngleich eine Zusammenschau oft gefordert, aber keineswegs immer umgesetzt wird. An einigen Beispielen aus Literatur, Kunst und Epigraphik soll daher dargelegt werden, wie diese drei Quellenbereiche im Laufe der Forschungsgeschichte in das Blickfeld der Buddhismusforschung geraten, wie sie sich gegenseitig

erhellen und worin gelegentlich die Schwierigkeiten liegen, sie zusammen zu führen. Zugleich wird auch auf die Grenzen des Wissbaren hingewiesen, wenn weder Text noch Bild die gesuchten und benötigten Aussagen über bestimmte Themenbereiche enthalten. Schließlich kann die notwendige Anschauung, die das Textverständnis fördert, auch aus Beobachtungen im heutigen Indien gewonnen werden, was als eine Art Sonderform der Bildbetrachtung angesehen werden und darüber hinaus zu einem tieferen kulturgeschichtlichen Verständnis eines Textes beitragen kann. Es geht also in dieser Fußnote zur Forschung(sgeschichte) nicht um neue Erkenntnisse, sondern um eine Mahnung, sich aller zugänglichen Quellen zu bedienen. Bilder begleiten den vorgetragenen Text.

—English Version—  
Three Sources—One River:  
The Interaction of Text, Image and Inscription  
in the Research on Early Buddhism.  
A Casual Academic Chat

Oskar von Hinüber (Freiburg i.B.)

A few words of personal memory will introduce the talk.

Ancient Indian Buddhism is known mainly from three sources: texts, inscriptions and archaeological finds, particularly images. This is, of course, common place. However, these three areas are rather frequently dealt with separately, although an integrated use is often postulated, but rarely executed. Therefore, a few examples taken from literature, art and epigraphy will be used to demonstrate how these three sources gradually came into focus of the research on Buddhism and how the difficulties encountered when merging them were overcome. Moreover, the limits of the knowledge that can be drawn from the available sources will be explored. Finally, attention will be drawn to observations from present day India as a particular form of using images that can help understanding early Buddhist texts. Consequently, this footnote to (the history of) the research on Buddhism does not aim at creating new insights. It is rather meant as a reminder to use all accessible sources in an intelligent and comprehensive way. The presentation will be illustrated by power point slides.

## **Rethinking Historical Narratives in Buddhist Studies: A Critical Reflection on the Japanese Legacy and Contemporary Methodologies**

Masahiro Shimoda (Tokyo)

In recent years, the long-dominant linear historical model of Indian Buddhism has come under increasing scrutiny (Schopen 2003; Harrison 2018). According to this model, the development of Indian Buddhism progresses in a linear sequence: from early Buddhism, to sectarian forms, and ultimately to the emergence of the Mahāyāna. This framework was originally established through pioneering research conducted in Japan at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century (Anesaki 1898; Mayeda 1903). Although often unacknowledged, the methodologies introduced during this period continue to influence contemporary Buddhist studies. Nevertheless, these approaches have not been fully critically assessed or incorporated into current academic discourse.

In contrast, Seyfort Ruegg (2004) expresses deep skepticism toward attempts to present Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism as a unified historical phenomenon. He argues instead for an approach that engages Mahāyāna through thematic analysis or through the close study of translated and annotated texts—an approach exemplified in the work of Étienne Lamotte. Seyfort Ruegg's critique raises fundamental questions about how to conceptualize the complexity and diversity of Buddhist discourse within a coherent semantic framework, and what forms of narrative are most appropriate for this task.

In this presentation, I will examine the defining characteristics of modern Buddhist studies, particularly their effort to frame Buddhist discourse in historical terms. This will be done by tracing the development of Buddhist studies in Japan and its ongoing influence on the field.

## **Beacons along the Dark River: Śaīla Buddhist Lineages and Their Scriptures**

Vincent Tournier (Munich)

The Śaīla lineages (most importantly the Pūrva- and Aparāśailas) dominated the Buddhist landscape of Āndhra for most of the first millennium CE. Despite their prominent position in an important religious centre of ancient India, and

the fact that they spread as far as the Pāla domain, they have remained largely elusive to this day. Unlike several of the main religious lineages of northern or north-western South Asia (or Laṅkā), no extant scripture attributed to them has so far come down to us. Consequently, there have been only few attempts at situating them in the Buddhist landscape of the time.

Nevertheless, three main sources of information are at our disposal: (1) the rich epigraphic record, which eloquently testifies to the Śāilas' regional prominence; (2) several historical and doxographic works, most notably the 4th/5th-century *Kathāvatthu-aṭṭhakathā*, discuss the origins of the Śāila schools and present their key doctrines; (3) the scriptures of the Śāila schools are referred to and quoted from by several Madhyamaka authors, most notably Bhāviveka (ca 500–570) and Candrakīrti (ca 600–650), both of whom were from southern India.

This paper will outline the historical development of the Śāila *nikāya*, which was considered as part of the trans-regional Mahāsāṅghika order from the 4th century onwards. It will then review evidence of the evolving scriptural corpus of this order, which was apparently transmitted in a distinctive variety of Middle Indic and deserves close scrutiny.

### **Stories, Similes, and Their Interpretations in the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* (*Dīgha Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā*)**

Giuliano Giustarini (Rome & Mahidol)

The *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* is the direct commentary on the *Dīgha Nikāya*, the first collection of the Pāli *Suttapiṭaka*. Though generally attributed to Buddhaghosa, it likely contains a significant amount of material that had been transmitted orally for centuries before he elaborated it in the 5th–6th century CE. The structure of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, characterized by its lengthy discourses, allows for extensive use of narratives, which are thoroughly commented on in its *aṭṭhakathā*. This commentary adds background stories and examples that enrich the *Dīgha Nikāya*'s narratives and clarify its teachings. In this study, I will examine selected stories and similes from the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, focusing on their didactic function and lexical characteristics.

**A Ride on the *gSer gyi shing rta*:  
sMin grol gling Lo tsā ba's Study of the Astral Sciences**

Leonard van der Kuijp (Harvard)

David, our colleague and friend, was interested in many things Indo-Tibetan. Among these, he also took an interest in issues dealing with chronology and to this end he mined the third chapter of sMin grol gling Lo tsā ba Chos dpal's (1654–1718) auto-commentary on his *rTsis kyi man ngag nyin mor byed pa'i snang ba* for a variety of Tibetan views on the Buddha's *Anno Nirvanae*. Subtitled *gSer gyi shing rta*, sMin grol gling Lo tsā ba wrote this work over a period of several years. In connection with Chancellor Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho's (1653–1705) *Vaidūrya dkar po* of 1683–85, the late E.G. Smith has stated that “there is absolutely no doubt that LDum bu Don grub dbang rgyal (17th c.) was the actual author of the famous *Vaidūrya dkar po*...” and this was echoed by the late E. Henning. No longer tenable, the first of several counter arguments to this assertion would be that the Lo tsā ba himself posed the Chancellor a series of thirty questions—to be sure with an attitude of reverence and respect (*gus pa'i blos phul ba*)—about the *Vaidūrya dkar po*'s astronomy as well as that of his 1688 *Vaidūrya gya' sel*. The Chancellor reacted to these questions in an undated work for which printing blocks never seem to have been carved. It is probable that the delays in the composition of the *rTsis kyi man ngag nyin mor byed pa'i snang ba* and its auto-commentary need in part to be viewed against the background of the Chancellor's writings. That sMin grol gling Lo tsā ba continued working on these might suggest that he was not altogether convinced by these treatises. However, only a careful examination of this corpus of texts can provide conclusive answers to these considerations.

**Nam mkha' dpal mgon – Reading between the Lines**

Helmut Tauscher (Vienna)

Nam mkha' dpal mgon, a native of Sabu village near Leh in Ladakh, is renowned in folklore for his contribution to the culture and education of Ladakh in the 17th century, in particular to the production of manuscripts as the foremost scribe and proofreader/editor (*yig dpon* “master of letters”) of King Seng ge rnam rgyal. He presents himself as a dedicate Buddhist, well

versed in Buddhist literature, but not as a particularly modest person. Biographical and personal information, however, is largely restricted to colophons and *ched brjod* of various kind, collected by Joseph Gergan, *Bla dwags rgyal rabs 'Chi med gter* (1975) and Thub bstan dpal ldan, *Sa phud Yig dpon Nam mkha' dpal mgon* (1988–2011). Both are strongly influenced by folklore and thus resorting to assumptions as well as inviting interpretation and speculation.

In addition to this material, a colophon by Nam mkha' dpal mgon in the Basgo Kanjur and the *ched brjod* of a *brGyad stong pa* manuscript kept at Sabu are considered in this paper. Starting point for the present reflections is a rather “normal” colophon. A later version of it (in the Basgo Kanjur), however, turns into what looks like a self-assured and rather aggressive response to some controversy. In this light, two passages appear to be suspect, where Nam mkha' dpal mgon stresses to be without conceit, but no need to do so is obvious from the immediate context. Both cases could be understood as reactions to being actually accused of conceit, boasting, and the like. They are inspired by bKa' brgyud pa literature, namely, the colophon of the Third Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje's supplement to Āryaśūra's *Jātakamālā* and a poem attributed to Mar pa, respectively.

The paper also touches upon things and persons NOT mentioned in the sources, although one could expect them to be: King bDe ldan rnam rgyal never appears in Nam mkha' dpal mgon's writings. Even the dedicational part of the *Sabu ched brjod*, which was clearly composed during the reign of bDe ldan, praises only Seng ge rnam rgyal and his wife, but not bDe ldan. – Does this mean anything?

An edict of Seng ge rnam rgyal entrusts Nam mkha' dpal mgon with the production of a number of manuscripts. The major items of this order, however, do not appear in any list of Nam mkha' dpal mgon's productions. In particular this is true for the Kanjur “made of three precious substances,” which folklore considers his major achievement; Thub bstan dpal ldan even wrote a play about this event. Did he really execute the complete order of Seng ge rnam rgyal? Did he really produce a Kanjur? If not, somebody else must have done so, as at least one Kanjur is reported to have been commissioned by Seng ge rnam rgyal. In this case, Nam mkha' dpal mgon's position as a *yig dpon* cannot have been as singular or exceptional as folklore has it.

**Traveling for 1300 Years:  
Inscribed Buddhist Bronzes from Northwest India  
via Tibetan Monasteries to the Treasury of the Manchu Emperors**

1300 Jahre auf Reisen:

Beschriftete buddhistische Bronzen auf ihrem Wege von Nordwestindien  
über Tibet in die Schatzkammer der Mandschu-Kaiser

Haiyan Hu-von Hinüber (Beijing)

Der Vortrag besteht aus vier Schwerpunkten.

(1) Zunächst wird der **historische Hintergrund** erläutert, wie und wann unsere buddhistischen Bronzeskulpturen im Gebiet „Great-Gandhāra“ entstanden sind. Es handelt sich in erster Linie um das ehemalige Königreich der fromm buddhistischen Familie Paḷola Śāhis, die nach verschiedenen Quellen und den nun erforschten Sanskrit-Inschriften den Großraum um Gilgit und Chilas von etwa 585 bis 745 beherrschte. Als die Tibeter im 8. Jh. während der mächtigen Yarlung-Dynastie einen großen Teil des historischen Nordwestindien eroberten, wurden sowohl Kunstobjekte als auch Künstler im Zuge der tibetischen Feldzüge nach Tibet mitgenommen, womit die einmalige Hochkultur der tibetischen Kunstgießerei begann.

(2) Was die Sanskrit-Inschriften an den Bronzen betrifft, so erstreckt sich die **Forschungsgeschichte** zuerst über zwei Etappen (2001: U. von Schroeder, *Buddhist Sculptures in Tibet*; 2004–2018: O. von Hinüber, *Die Paḷola Śāhis*, und ARIRIAB 10, 12–15, 18 & 21). Ab 2019 beginnt die dritte Etappe bzw. eine enge Zusammenarbeit mit dem *Research Institute for Tibetan Buddhist Heritage* (Palast-Museum, Peking). Es handelt sich um ein groß angelegtes Survey-Projekt, das vor etwa zehn Jahren unter Leitung des Institutsdirektors Luo Wenhua angefangen hat, mit dem Ziel alle Kulturgegenstände in tibetischen Klöstern und Museen digital zu dokumentieren einschließlich in Qinghai, Sichuan, Yunnan und Gansu.

(3) Im Vortrag wird zusammenfassend ein **Überblick über die Fundorte** derjenigen Bronzen vermittelt, die mit einer Sanskrit-Inschrift versehen, aber bis vor wenigen Jahren in der Forschung so gut wie unbekannt geblieben sind. Nun konnten 2021–2025 mehr als zehn Ko-Publikationen darüber veröffentlicht werden. Anhand einiger Beispiele wird zudem dargestellt, inwiefern das neue Material unsere Kenntnisse in verschiedenen Gebieten bereichern kann, wie z.B.:

· Namen und Gruppierung der Stifter: Könige, Beamten, Mönche, Upāsākas und normale Laienanhänger



- Vervollständigung der Genealogie und Verwandtschaft der königlichen Familie Paḷola Śāhis als Förderer des Buddhismus
- die Post-Gandhāra-Kunst als Brücke zwischen zentralasiatischen Ländern wie Tibet, Khotan, Ladakh und Kaschmir
- wie gelangten die altindischen Bronzen im 18.–19. Jh. in die Schatzkammer der Mandschu-Kaiser in Peking

(4) Zum Schluss wird auf die **weitere Entwicklung** dieses Projektes in den kommenden Jahren hingewiesen. Seit 2022 hat unser Projekt die freundliche Unterstützung der Univ. Hamburg erhalten, wobei Dr. Sylvia Melzer (CSMC) ein AI-unterstütztes Informationssystem (Heurist) in Form einer Website „Buddhist Bronze Inscriptions“ eingerichtet hat. So kann man die Fotos der Bronzen mit GeoData, Wörterverzeichnissen und Publikationen zusammentragen und einer breiteren Öffentlichkeit zur Verfügung stellen. Desweiteren können unsere Lesungen und Übersetzungen aller Sanskrit-Inschriften in einem paläographischen Projekt (IndoSkrpt) an der Univ. Lausanne und Würzburg (2025–2028) weiter verwendet werden. Momentan wird in Freiburg intensiv an einigen Bronzen mit Sanskrit-Inschriften geforscht, die vor wenigen Wochen im Sakya-Kloster entdeckt worden sind und am Jahresende in einer Sonderausstellung vorgestellt werden.

## Application of AI in Buddhist Textual Studies

Kiyonori Nagasaki (Tokyo)

In recent years, AI has become increasingly applicable across various fields, and Buddhist textual studies are no exception. Under the leadership of Professor Masahiro Shimoda, the SAT Daizokyo Database Project (SAT) has embarked on a new initiative aimed at compiling a modern version of the Buddhist Canon (Daizokyo), actively incorporating AI technology. The AI application in this context, however, does not involve autonomous actions by AI systems. Instead, it supports human activity by supplementing highly accurate, human-created data.

One area of AI implementation is textual editing. Here, sophisticated AI-powered OCR technology is employed to digitize texts from traditional woodblock prints and manuscripts. However, OCR processes inevitably introduce errors. Correcting these errors manually can be extremely challenging.

To address this, SAT has implemented a strategy where AI automatically compares OCR-generated texts with human-proofread, highly accurate textual variants, identifying discrepancies for correction.

Another area involves using Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG) for research assistance, specifically applied to searching through over 14,000 articles published in the Journal of the Japanese Association for Indian and Buddhist Studies. Here again, the effectiveness of AI is enhanced by supplementing it with high-quality, accurate academic data produced by scholars.

Thus, at least for now, leveraging meticulously prepared human-generated data significantly improves the effectiveness of AI applications, highlighting the growing importance of human data preparation. Following this approach, SAT plans to advance the recompilation of the Buddhist Canon through substantial grant-supported research over the next four years.

### **The Archetype of the *Dharmacakrapravartana-sūtra*?**

Norihisa Baba (Tokyo)

This presentation discusses the archetype of the *Dharmacakrapravartana-sūtra*, which is, needless to say, one of the most important discourses of Indian Buddhism. Following Professor Seyfort Rugg's statement that "to postulate some Urtext from which distinct recensions derive, in the manner of a stemma codicum, would here appear to constitute a misapplication of otherwise sound philological method," I argue not for an Urtext but for an archetype, in the sense of common discourse shared by various schools. As clarified by Kōgen Mizuno and Jin-il Chung, the *Dharmacakrapravartana-sūtra* of the Sarvāstivādins exhibits features that are quite distinct from versions transmitted by the Theriya, Mahīśāsaka, Dharmaguptaka, and Mahāsāṅghika. I compare the Vinaya literature of these five schools and related texts to discuss what the archetype of the *Dharmacakrapravartana-sūtra* might have looked like.

## Non-Buddhist Traditions in Early Kālacakra Texts

Francesco Sferra (Naples)

As is well known, the early Kālacakra texts, in particular the works of Puṇḍarīka (11th cent.), the *Paramākṣarajñānasiddhi*, the *Vimalaprabhā* and the *Paramārthasevā* (the latter still largely unpublished), contain references to other religious traditions. The paper aims to develop an initial investigation of references to non-Buddhist schools in order to understand which traditions in particular were being referred to and to delineate more precisely the social and cultural horizon in which the early Kālacakra masters were active.

## Maximalist Madhyamaka: Vāgīśvarakīrti's Arguments for an All-inclusive Path and Fruition in the *Tattvaratnāvaloka* and *Saptāṅga*

Ryan Conlon (Hamburg)

In his *Tattvaratnāvaloka* and *Saptāṅga*, Vāgīśvarakīrti, an 11th-century Buddhist scholar of considerable renown in his day, vigorously sets forth what I term a 'maximalist' vision of the tantric path and its fruition. While portraying his opponents' views as unnecessarily constrained regarding deity visualization, bliss, and the continued presence of Buddhas in the world, Vāgīśvarakīrti's own vision, derived from Jñānapāda's concept of the seven branches or *saptāṅga*, features these and other qualities of awakening to their fullest degree, justified on the basis of Madhyamaka philosophy. This paper examines how Vāgīśvarakīrti deploys Madhyamaka reasoning to support his comprehensive vision of Buddhist tantra, and analyzes how his philosophical strategy compares with earlier Madhyamaka thinkers such as Candrakīrti, Śāntarakṣita, and Prajñākaramati, some of whom appear to have been less embracing of the phenomenal world and the experiential aspect of the awakened state. The paper aims to highlight Vāgīśvarakīrti's contribution to the fusion of Madhyamaka and tantric Buddhism, as well as to identify the philosophical cruxes he emphasized that would become significant points of discussion in subsequent centuries of Tibetan Madhyamaka thought.

## **Hidden in Plain Sight: The *Madhyamakāvatāra* and Its Tibetan Translations**

Anne MacDonald (Vienna)

One of the most precious jewels to have been preserved in the monastic treasure houses of the Tibetan Autonomous Region is a palm-leaf Sanskrit manuscript of Candrakīrti's (c. 570–650) *Madhyamakāvatāra* together with its commentary, the *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya*. Until the recent discovery of the manuscript, scholars were limited to relying on the Tibetan translation of the *Madhyamakāvatāra* and its commentary. Access to the Sanskrit has brought clarity to verses and prose that were ambiguous or obscure in the Tibetan, and has revealed that arguments which previously seemed imprecise are coherent and sound.

The Tibetan nevertheless retains its usefulness in cases where the Sanskrit is opaque, either due to laconic expression or scribal error. Two renderings of the verses of the *Madhyamakāvatāra* can be found in the Tanjur: one by Nag tsho Tshul khriṃs rgyal ba (1011–1064) and Kṛṣṇapaṇḍita, the other by Pa tshab Nyi ma grags (b. 1055) and Tilakakalaśa. The colophon of the earlier translation by Nag tsho informs us that it was edited by Pa tshab and Tilakakalaśa in accord with their own translation—thus their understanding of Candrakīrti's intent. Scholars have long lamented that little remains of Nag tsho's original translation, and that on account of this, potentially significant alternate interpretations of the verses have been lost. The talk aims to investigate the two translations in an attempt to distinguish the types of changes made to Nag tso's translation, the reasons behind them, and to estimate the extent of the losses.

## **Āryadeva on the Hierarchy of the Two Truths**

Jan Westerhoff (Oxford)

The final verse of the 9th chapter of Āryadeva's *Catuhśataka* makes the intriguing point that the conventional truth is to be preferred to the ultimate truth. There is considerable disagreement between commentators on this text (both in India and in Tibet) about how this verse is to be understood. Is it the position of the *pūrvapakṣin* that Āryadeva sets out to refute? Or does it, despite its apparent inversion of the hierarchy of the two truths, constitute the Mādhyamika's *siddhānta*? This talk will describe some of the commentarial opinions on this verse, as well as suggesting possible ways of reading it in the light of the Madhyamaka theory of the two truths.

## The Epistles Attributed to Nāgārjuna

Péter-Dániel Szántó (Budapest)

The past five years have been remarkably fruitful for students and scholars of Nāgārjuna. The discovery of the *Suḥṛllekha* in its original form (dNgos grub Tshe ring 2020), followed by McClintock and Dunne’s comprehensive study of the *Ratnāvalī*—accompanied by a ‘working edition’ of the available text (2024)—and Phurtsham’s recent complete Sanskrit edition (2024), have significantly advanced our understanding of these seminal works. With these new materials at hand, we are now in a far stronger position to reassess their importance and influence. In the first half of my talk, I will offer philological observations on both texts, while the second half will explore questions of authorship. Given his deep expertise in Madhyamaka, David Seyfort Ruegg would undoubtedly have welcomed these recent developments in Nāgārjuna studies.





