

Vihāra Project

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“Monasteries and Secularity in Indian Buddhism from
the Gupta Period Onward”

Newsletter Vol. 10

International Workshop Organized by the Team of Manuscripts

The Team of Manuscripts organized an international workshop from September 8 to 14, 2023. This workshop, jointly hosted in Tokyo and Kyoto, allowed us at long last to invite overseas researchers to join us, indicating earnest recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, this in-person event was simultaneously held in the online format that we have all become (or have had to become) accustomed to over recent years. The workshop was started at 3 p.m. in consideration of online attendees from overseas, allowing many guests to join us virtually from across Japan and the world. The participation of both in-person and online attendees made this event a great success.

Unfortunately, travel disruptions caused by an unexpected typhoon prevented a number of key members from reaching Tokyo for the first day of the workshop, which was to take place at the Institute for Comprehensive Studies of Buddhism, Taisho University. Thus, the opening day had to be hurriedly switched to an online-only format. However, the fact that the meeting had already been planned as a hybrid event with online participation meant that the format could be changed easily. Members who had already arrived in Tokyo participated from their hotels, and the first day of the workshop was conducted successfully. Miyazaki's opening address was followed by a reading session of the *Sarvasamayasaṃgraha* under the guidance of Prof. Kaie Mochizuki (Minobusan University). The *Sarvasamayasaṃgraha* is a short treatise attributed to Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna (also known as Atiśa). This work can be broadly divided into an introductory section and the main text. The introduction makes mention of the supremacy of the Mantrayāna while citing several treatises, and the main text discusses the Samaya of the Mantrayāna in a commentary of 20 sections. The reading session at this workshop covered the text till the listing of these sections.

With the typhoon passed, the second day of the workshop saw the proper beginning of the in-person gathering.

Members present in person assembled at the Institute for Comprehensive Studies of Buddhism, Taisho University and joined the online participants in a reading session of Jñānaśrīmitra's *Sākārasiddhiśāstra* and Ratnakīrti's *Citrādvaitaparakāśavāda*, led by Bhikṣu Hejung (University of Hamburg/Joong-Ang Sangha University). Dr. Hejung's discussion focused on a topic of longstanding interest, namely, the relationship between the celebrated teacher and his student, i.e., Jñānaśrīmitra and Ratnakīrti of the Vikramaśīla monastery. Closely scrutinizing the relationship between these two figures, Dr. Hejung proceeded to discuss parallel passages in the *Sākārasiddhiśāstra* and in the *Citrādvaitaparakāśavāda*.



Dr. Hejung conducting the reading session

On the third and final days of the workshop's Tokyo leg, Prof. Péter-Dániel Szántó (Eötvös Loránd University) led a reading session of the *Ādikarmāvatāra* in the morning and of the *Suḥr̥llekha* in the afternoon. Hitherto transmitted in only one Sanskrit manuscript, untranslated and unedited, the *Ādikarmāvatāra* covers the practice of observances for novices. This is an important text in relation to lay Buddhist daily practice in the India of around 1200 CE. Prof. Szántó's reading session began at the opening of the text. The *Suḥr̥llekha* has been transmitted as a work by Nāgārjuna (龍樹). There are three Chinese translations, including Yijing's (勸誡王頌), and Tibetan translations,

and research on the text has proceeded thus far using these versions. Given that the text takes the form of a letter to a king, it also has a direct bearing on lay Buddhists. For the reading in this workshop, Prof. Szántó availed of a newly found Sanskrit manuscript, which he is in the process of editing. In the course of the commentary, the textual content was re-examined from the beginning.

After a day for transit, the Kyoto leg of the workshop was underway on September 12 at Kyoto University. As in Tokyo, sessions were held in a hybrid in-person/online format. All three days in Kyoto were led by Prof. Szántó and mainly dedicated to continuing the readings of the *Suḥrillekha* and *Ādikarmāvatāra* begun in Tokyo. The schedule was flexibly responsive to the attendees’ interests, and the Kyoto session concentrated on completing the reading of the *Suḥrillekha*. While the *Suḥrillekha* and *Ādikarmāvatāra* were written at different times and cover different topics, both texts contain much food for thought regarding the secular aspect of Buddhist practice. We can thus say that the sessions devoted to these works were indeed productive. There can be no doubt

that having in-person sessions contributed to their success, and I would like to record my delight at our return to a familiar, face-to-face environment. At the same time, the benefits of ensuring the accessibility of the event by adopting the online mode are also clear. Going forward, our research team will no doubt continue to make use of the online format in line with the circumstances and objectives involved.



Prof. Szántó conducting the reading session

(Report: Izumi Miyazaki,
Head of the Team, Kyoto University)

Secularity of Buddhist Monasteries as Seen in Monastery Construction Rituals

Tantric Buddhism and the other tantric religions that came to the forefront of the Indian religions from the 5th century were characterized by tantric practices rich in symbolism, and adherents were required to undergo initiation rites in order to become practitioners. This does not necessarily mean that the practice of tantric Buddhism was confined to closed communities. Under the influence of Śaivism, the most successful of the tantric religions, tantric Buddhism developed rituals across a wide range of public spheres—which is to say that it put in place rituals to be performed in response to the needs of donors. The most prominent of such rituals was that called *pratiṣṭhā*.

The purpose of *pratiṣṭhā* is to render the object of the ritual into that of worship, that is, to transform it into something fit for religious purposes. The objects are mainly the images of deities, but also ritual implements such as prayer beads and temples/monasteries.

In Śaivism, this type of ritual was laid out in the class of scriptures called *Pratiṣṭhātantra*. While there is no scripture equivalent to the *Pratiṣṭhātantra* in Buddhism, the body of ritual manuals called the *Maṇḍalopāyikā* deals with the same theme. One of the most outstanding *Maṇḍalopāyikā* is Kuladatta’s *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, which explains the regulations governing tantric Buddhist rituals in line with the steps of construction of a Buddhist monastery. With regard to the

secularity of Buddhist monasteries, the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* offers the following highly interesting perspectives.

(1) In the naming of monastery-temples in Śaivism, the king built them as concrete expressions of his power and enshrined Śiva (or Śivaliṅga) in them under his own name, and the same tendency is evident in tantric Buddhism. In its opening section, the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* states that “The donor who wishes to give a name to a monastery should find an appropriate *ācārya*.” Apparently, the same point is made with regard to Śivaliṅga naming of monastery-temples.

(2) Thus, the king is the patron most likely to be donating funds for the construction of a monastery. The *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* in fact states that the king should delight the architects, their assistants, and spectators with various things. Further, the text states that the donor in the ritual should be accompanied by officials for removing foreign objects from the scheduled construction site. This suggests that the donor in question is the king.

(3) In discussing the layout of monasteries, Chapter 4 of the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* divides them into four types and explains the fruit/outcome of each. Similar prescriptions can be found in Chapter 53 of Varāhamihira’s *Bṛhatsaṃhitā*. Of exceptional interest is the fact that the prescriptions in the *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* do not refer to plans for temples but to

residences for personages such as the king, commanding general, and crown prince. The reason why the layout of palaces should be applied to the layout of monasteries is unclear, but this may be a partial expression of the secularity of monasteries.



The entrance to a Nepalese monastery

Although Prof. Masahide Mori's arguments on tantric Buddhism are extant (Mori 1991), I have to say that very little research on this area seems to have been conducted in recent years. In the field of Śaivism, by contrast, Prof. Libbie Mills has published research on Śaiva temple construction (Mills 2019).

Going forward, we can hope that the findings yielded by the accumulating body of research material on this area will be reinforced by archeological findings to produce a deeper understanding of the secularity of monasteries.

Mori Masahide 森雅秀. 1991. “Indo Mikkyō ni okeru Kenchiku Girei : *Vajrāvalī-nāma-maṇḍalopāyikā* Wayaku (1)” 「インド密教における建築儀礼—*Vajrāvalī-nāma-maṇḍalopāyikā*和訳(1)」[Architectural Rituals of Tantric Buddhism in India: A Japanese Translation of the *Vajrāvalī-nāma-maṇḍalopāyikā* (1)], *Nagoya Daigaku Bungakubu Kenkyū Ronsyū Tetsugaku* 『名古屋大学文学部研究論集 哲学』[*The Journal of the Faculty of Letters Nagoya University. Philosophy*] 37, 53–73.

Mills, Libbie. 2019. *Temple Design in Six Early Śaiva Scriptures: Critical Edition and Translation of the prāsādalakṣaṇa-portions of the Brhatkālottara, Devyāmata, Kiraṇa, Mohacūrottara, Mayasamgraha & Piṅgalāmata*. Institut Français de Pondichéry / École française d'Extrême-Orient. Collection Indologie 138.

(Report: Ryugen Tanemura, Team of Manuscripts, Taisho University)

Report on International Workshops (Special Contribution: Prof. Petra Kieffer-Pülz)

In 2021 and 2022 two workshops titled *Studies on Buddhist Monastic Cultures. German-Japanese Collaboration (Parts 1 and 2)*, were jointly organized by the Indology department of the Seminar for South Asian Studies and Indology at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg (represented by the deputy professors Petra Kieffer-Pülz in 2021, and Philipp A. Maas in 2022), and the Japanese Vihāra Project. On the Japanese side Taiken Kyuma from the Faculty of Humanities, Law and Economics of Mie University, and Satoshi Ogura from the Research Institute of Languages and Cultures of Asia of the Institute of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, represented the Japanese Vihāra Project. Due to the pandemic both workshops took place online (2021, March 17 and 24; 2022, March 16, and 23). In addition to Welcoming and Closing Addresses, an Overview of the Japanese Vihāra Project, and the Q&A sections, there were eight lectures all in all, four each in 2021 and 2022.

On the 17th and 24th of March 2021 the four lectures were given by two German scholars, Annette Schmiedchen (Humboldt-University Berlin, Institute for Asian and African Studies, ERC Synergy Grant DHARMA) and Petra Kieffer-Pülz (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg

and Academy of Sciences and Literature, Mainz) and two Japanese scholars, Hiroko Matsuoka (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia, and University of Leipzig, Institute for Indology and Central Asian Studies) and Ryuta Kikuya (Kyoto University). In the Q&A sections Hiromi Habata (International College for Postgraduate Buddhist Studies, Tokyo), Jens-Uwe Hartmann and Roland Steiner (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich) served as discussants. The closing addresses were given by Satoshi Ogura and Jens-Uwe Hartmann. The details of these four lectures are given in Newsletter Vol. 6.

On March 16th and 23rd 2022 Charlyn Edwards (University of Hamburg) and Philipp A. Maas (Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg) on the German side and Shin'ichirō Hori (International College for Postgraduate Buddhist Studies, Tokyo) and Chao-jung Ching (Kyoto University) on the Japanese side presented their contributions. The workshop was again introduced by Taiken Kyuma and Satoshi Ogura, and as discussants served Annette Schmiedchen, Jowita Kramer (University of Leipzig), Taiken Kyuma and Yukiyo Kasai (Ruhr University Bochum). The closing addresses were given by

Future Plans

On March 22, 2024, an online study meeting is to be held by Prof. Satoshi Ogura of the Team of Evaluation. The text, on which reading commentary is in progress, is the Buddha's biography included in the Persian-language history *Zubdat al-Tawārikh*, dating from the Ilkhanate period. The reading commentary this time will focus on the chapter on hell and collaboratively cover the *Aggañña Sutta* in the *Dīgha Nikāya* among other texts. The transmission of the Buddha's biographies in the Persianate world will also receive attention. Dr. Pegah Shahbaz (University of Toronto) has been invited to the meeting, and we look forward to her insights.

Activity Report

From January 4 to 22, 2024, the Team of Indian Archaeology/History of Art conducted fieldwork in India. This time they surveyed Buddhist monastery sites in the Mumbai area, including the Kanheri Caves. They were accompanied by Prof. Pia Brancaccio (Drexel University), who has been collaborating on this project.

Details of the above activities will be reported in Newsletter Vol. 11.

Jowita Kramer and Philipp A. Maas.

The presentations comprised various topics. Several dealt with Buddhist monasteries and the vocabulary used for them, taking into account a variety of sources (Annette Schmiedchen and Petra Kieffer-Pülz). Charlyn Edwards investigated the Nālandā Stone Inscription of Vipulaśrīmitra, probably from the last *vihāra* at Nālandā, whose donor is from the Somapura *mahāvihāra*. She edited, translated and commented on this inscription, and discussed our methods for understanding it. Shin'ichirō Hori based his research on dated colophons of Sanskrit manuscripts in old Bengali Script and showed that despite the destruction of the major Buddhist monasteries in Eastern India by Turkic Muslims around the turn of the 13th century, Buddhists still survived in some rural areas in Bihar until the middle of the 15th century. Archaeological and literary sources formed the basis for Chao-jung Ching's research on "Buddhist Monasteries to the South of the Tianshan Mountains in the 5th–8th Centuries CE." She focused on the complexes of Buddhist monasteries situated to the northern rim of the Tarim Basin (Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, China) and their development as traceable from the evidence of Chinese literature, historical texts and unearthed documents. In addition she examined in depth the economic base of a few sites around today's Turfan and Kucha, and traced their institutional change after the conquest of the Tang 唐 Dynasty (618–907).

The remaining contributors presented research on various individual topics. Philipp A. Maas dealt with meditations practices showing the "Spatial and Somatic Aspects of Early Buddhist and Non-Buddhist Meditations." He started from the earliest unambiguous textual references to meditation practice in premodern South Asia, that is, brief stock phrases preserved in the Pāli canon (4th to 1st c. BCE), drew upon the commentarial literature of the Pāli canon (ca. 5th c. CE), on artefacts, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* and Āśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita*, in order to identify the Buddhist meditation posture as performed at least from the first century of the Common Era onwards. In addition, he analysed quite comprehensive accounts of Buddhist meditation from the *Śrāvakaśāstra* and the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra* to draw a more comprehensive picture of the spatial and somatic aspects of early Buddhist meditation, and compared the emerging conceptions of the early Buddhist meditation posture and the appropriate locations for its practice to early Non-Buddhist accounts concluding that the early Non-Buddhist meditation practice may have been profoundly influenced by its Buddhist analogue.

Several of the contributors had their contributions published in other publications, but four (Edwards, Hori, Kieffer-Pülz and Schmiedchen) will publish their articles in a joint volume that is going to appear in the series of the *Asien- und Afrika-Studien* der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin in 2024.

Unfortunately, these workshops were the last activities of the Indological department of the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. Despite world-wide protests expressed vis-à-vis the rectorate of the University as well as vis-à-vis the Ministry of Science in Sachsen-Anhalt it was decided to close the Indological Department. Thus, the long history of this institution steeped in tradition since 1833 unfortunately ends.

(Report: Petra Kieffer-Pülz, Academy of Sciences and Literature Mainz)