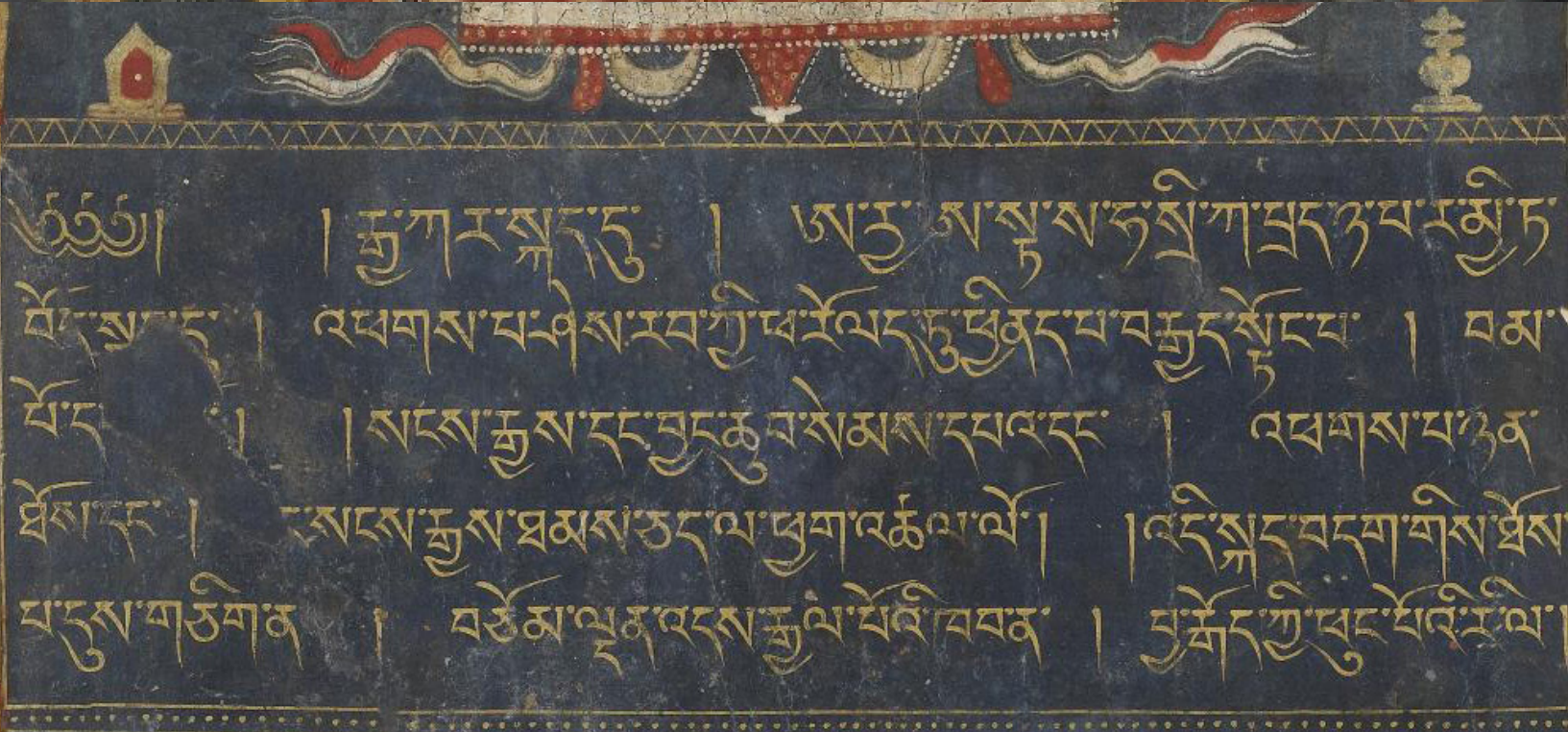# Madhyamaka
in South Asia and Beyond

Abstracts

August 18–22, 2024

Sunday, Aug. 18, Afternoon Sessions

Panel 1: Causation and Emptiness   Room 8, PSK

Convener: Mark Siderits (Kyoto University)

Panel Abstract

The claim that ultimately real entities could not originate in dependence on distinct causes is crucial to a common Madhyamaka strategy for supporting the claim that all dharmas are empty or devoid of intrinsic nature. Nāgārjuna, for instance, begins *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* with a chapter devoted to refuting the possibility that dharmas might originate in any of the four possible ways: from themselves, from distinct entities, from both or from neither. The first half of Candrakīrti's *Madhyamkāvatāra* 6 is similarly structured. And refutation of the 'distinct' lemma is clearly central to the success of the overall argument. For this is the view of causation that is held by those Buddhists who are realists about causation, and it probably comes closest to the common-sense view of the causal relation held by most non-philosophers. For the overall strategy to work, then, Mādhyamikas must be able to demonstrate deep incoherence in the notion that an ultimately real entity might originate in dependence on a distinct cause and conditions.

The aim of this panel is to critically examine the arguments Mādhyamikas deploy to this end. It has recently been suggested (e.g., by Mark Siderits in 'Causation, "Humean" causation, and emptiness', *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 42 (2014): 433–449) that those arguments fail to refute the thesis if causation is understood in Humean terms, as a matter of mere universal succession. Might such a conception of causation help sustain realism about causation, or does it fall to the criticism that it confuses causation and mere correlation? (This and other criticisms of the Humean defense are discussed by Jan Westerhoff in, 'Does causation entail emptiness?' *Asian Journal of Philosophy* 2 (2023): 1–18.) Might it be that Madhyamaka arguments rely on a problematic form of presentism? If existing Madhyamaka arguments against the distinctness thesis do fail, are there others that might work against a more sophisticated formulation of the thesis? These and other questions will be examined in an effort to assess the overall plausibility of a common strategy for establishing emptiness.

A Kantian Interpretation of Nāgārjuna's Notions of Causation and Time

Jenny Hung (The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology)

There has been a recent discussion surrounding the concepts of causation and time within Indian Buddhism. Siderits (2014, 2022a, 2022b) suggests an interpretation of the Abhidharma theory of causation through Hume's regularity theory. Similarly, for Garfield (2019), the striking affinities between Hume's account of causation and certain Madhyamaka perspectives are noteworthy. Westerhoff (2023), on the other hand, argues that there is a contradiction between Abhidharma and Madhyamaka regarding the relationship between causation and emptiness. Bliss (2015) even directly argues that the regularity account of causation is incompatible with the Madhyamaka doctrine of emptiness. Consequently, understanding Buddhist theories of causation and time has become a highly debated topic.

Abstracts

In this paper, I propose that Nāgārjuna's understanding of causation and time can be comprehended within the framework of Kantian metaphysics. I introduce an interpretation of Kant's transcendental idealism, referred to as "relational" transcendental idealism, as proposed by Allais (2007). According to this view, appearances are mind-dependent in the sense that they are akin to a short-sighted person perceiving an elephant, which involves the presence of the actual elephant rather than a mere hallucination. Similarly, for Nāgārjuna, causal notions (including associations, interventions, and counterfactual information) constitute an essential aspect of our perception of the world, requiring additional human impositions beyond the correlational level. However, this does not imply that causation is solely a construct of our minds; there may still be underlying regularities. Likewise, for Nāgārjuna, any understanding of the nature of time as an entity is problematic, as time cannot be conceived of as an entity in any way, be it a dependent entity, an independent entity, a dynamic or a static entity. As a result, time, as an entity, must be the result of our conceptualization. However, he does not deny the existence of time; rather, he argues that we fail to grasp its true nature when we perceive it as a distinct entity.

Building upon this, I propose that Nāgārjuna's perspective can be comprehended by considering misleading intuitions and categories as filters that inevitably shape our understanding of the world, limiting our perception to their influence. Our comprehension of causation and time emerges from this process of "mapping," which is akin to perceiving something red when looking through a red filter; when categories are applied, appearances are interpreted as caused and flowing into the future, yet it does not imply that things must be uncaused, or time does not exist.

I demonstrate that this understanding of causation does not negate the existence of underlying regularities or the flow of time at the level of things-in-themselves, thereby accommodating an objective understanding of karma, the necessity of Buddhist practice, and the possibility of future enlightenment which aligns with the central tenets of religious Buddhism. This proposal is in line with Siderits' (2023) notion that although a comprehensive understanding of causation requires conceptual construction, there may still exist Humean regularity that persists independently of conceptualization.

Pathway from Causation to Emptiness

Li Kang (Washington and Lee University)

In the Madhyamaka school of Buddhism, it is asserted that a dharma is empty of *svabhāva* if it is caused. Yet, the pathway from causation to emptiness remains intricately complex and nuanced. This talk delves into this complex relationship by weaving together insights from historical Buddhist texts and contemporary philosophical literature. I examine what underpins the Mādhyamikas' argument from causation to emptiness, focusing on the roles played by the nature of objects, time, and causation itself. Through this examination, I aim to unravel the connections between causation and emptiness, shedding light on how Buddhist ideas can inspire contemporary philosophical thought.

Does Emptiness Follow from Origination?

Mark Siderits (Kyoto University)

Mādhyamikas frequently claim that the emptiness of all dharmas follows from the fact that they originate. This claim is in some tension with Madhyamaka's alleged thesislessness, a stance that seems to entail that there can be no master argument for emptiness—that Madhyamaka can only

refute specific formulations of realism about dharmas and cannot offer a definitive refutation of all possible realist positions. It is thus worth investigating whether the argument from origination actually succeeds in establishing emptiness. The basic strategy of the argument is to eliminate each of the four possible accounts of origination: that entities originate (1) from themselves, (2) from distinct conditions, (3) from both or (4) from neither. The first, third and fourth options are readily dispensed with. Then the argument seeks to show that origination from distinct cause and conditions is equally incoherent. It is strategies for accomplishing this refutation of (2) that is the principal focus of the present panel. My contribution will raise questions about its chances for success.

Mādhyamikas commonly deploy the three-times strategy against the distinctness thesis, relying on the point that effect succeeds cause, and pointing out that the entity *h* that is alleged to bring about the origination of the entity in question *p* cannot be said to be a cause—to perform the function of originating—when *p* does not yet exist, nor when *p* does exist, and that there is no third time that is somehow intermediate between the two. This argument relies on the idea that both relata of the causal relation must exist in order for the relation to hold. This idea is most commonly expressed in terms of the claim that a cause must have the power to produce the effect, where power is understood in terms of a relation between a giver and a recipient. That relation being one that requires simultaneous existence of the relata, origination from a distinct cause is said to be ruled out. I assess this and other arguments deployed by Candrakīrti in his defense of the view (MAv 6.103) that all things lack intrinsic nature. In doing so I try to respond to Westerhoff's recent criticisms of a regularity theory of causation, a conception meant to evade the difficulties of the 'power' conception of causes.

Section 1: Engaging with Nāgārjuna   Room 8, PSK

Chair: **Alexandra Ilieva (University of Cambridge)**

Nāgārjuna's Examination of Causation

Md Shahidul Islam (National University of Singapore)

The Buddha's fundamental teaching, called *pratītyasamutpāda* (dependent origination), sparked intense debates among early Buddhist scholars with regard to the notion of causation, as they attempted to discern the true meaning of the Buddha's teaching. Nāgārjuna also contemplated the issue of causality with great importance. Causality is one of the central and puzzling notions addressed in his magnum opus titled *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (*MMK*). The notion is closely connected to other notions such as intrinsic nature, self, assemblage, agent and action, among others. It is impossible to make sense of Nāgārjuna's philosophical project without understanding how he deals with the problem of causality. Nāgārjuna addressed the topic directly in the first and twentieth chapters of *MMK*, also indirectly in some other chapters. Many scholars have attempted to clarify how Nāgārjuna deals with causation in the *MMK*, sometimes as part of interpreting his philosophy in general terms, and sometimes as an elucidation of his conception of causation in particular. In doing so, they have often attributed some causal theories to him. In fact, the dominant way of understanding Nāgārjuna's treatment of causation is to take him as holding some kind of thesis regarding the nature of causal relations. The goal of my paper is to refute the claim that Nāgārjuna has a thesis or theory of causation. I will show how some of the major attempts to ascribe a causal theory

to Nāgārjuna fail. Additionally, I will explain why scholars of Nāgārjuna need not feel compelled to ascribe a causal theory to him and how Nāgārjuna's positionlessness can well be understood in terms of the notions of *vitaṇḍa* (refutation-only debate) and a second kind of knowledge.

Thinking like a Mādhyamika: An Anti-Representationalist Approach

Alexandra Ilieva (University of Cambridge)

I aim to show that adopting an explicitly anti-representationalist commitment would significantly alter our contemporary understanding of Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka. I argue that the rejection of representationalism, i.e., the assumption that the function of language is to "mirror" or re-present the world, would have a two-fold effect. First, certain contemporary exegetical disagreements relating to whether or not Nāgārjuna was *doing* philosophy would be dissolved; and second, understanding Nāgārjuna's message not as anti-*realist*, but rather as anti-*representationalist*, would render it thoroughly non-metaphysical. The upshot of this explicitly anti-representationalist reading is to make the Madhyamaka message less exegetically tortuous and more straightforwardly intelligible.

To illustrate this, I describe two thematically intertwined ongoing disagreements in contemporary Madhyamaka scholarship – one metaphilosophical and the other metalinguistic. The former is a disagreement over whether we should read Nāgārjuna as primarily engaging in *philosophy* and the latter is a disagreement over whether we should read Nāgārjuna's *statements* as primarily useful for the goal of liberation or as accurately capturing facts about reality. I then introduce Richard Rorty as a lively conversational partner with whom to revisit contemporary readings of Madhyamaka highlighting some of their tacit representationalist presuppositions, which, I argue, generate and sustain the continued exegetical stalemate.

My primary aim, however, is not to conclusively settle these exegetical debates, but to demonstrate how neo-pragmatist expositions of *anti*-representationalism give us conceptual resources for *sidestepping* the ongoing disagreements in Madhyamaka scholarship. In so doing, we can affirm the significant points made by each exegetical side and hold them together in a single vision. On my anti-representationalist reading of Nāgārjuna, we can understand core Madhyamaka concepts as pointing to a complete dissolution of dichotomies such as subject-object, scheme-content, and mind-world: this move renders the Madhyamaka message not so much a *philosophical* claim, but a *meta*philosophical critique of *svabhāva* and the reification it begets. This then allows for a rational reconstruction of *sarvadṛṣṭiprahāṇa*.

Section 2: Early Madhyamaka I   Room 1, PSK

Chair: Akira Saito (International College for Postgraduate Buddhist Studies)

'Proto-Madhyamaka' in the Pali Canon Revisited: Reconstructing a Foundational Spiritual Project in Early Buddhism

Alexander Wynne (The Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies)

Histories of early Buddhist thought in India usually follow a simple scheme. First comes a canonical period in which the basic teachings were established — the Four Truths, the Eightfold Path, Dependent Origination and so on. This period was followed by the more systematic Abhidharma

philosophies, constructed around the idea of the self's insubstantiality, which were then followed in turn by the Perfection of Wisdom, in which the Abhidharmic notion of insubstantiality was extended to the idea that all *dharma*s are 'empty'. The notion of emptiness was subsequently lucidly articulated in Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikā*, a milestone in Indian philosophy which marks the beginnings of the Madhyamaka tradition.

One problem with this scheme is its simplistic understanding of the canonical period. In particular, it fails to account for the final two books of the Sutta-nipāta (Sn IV–V), the *Aṭṭhakavagga* and *Pārāyanavagga*. In a famous article entitled 'Proto-Mādhyamika in the Pali canon' (1976), Luis O. Gómez claimed that these two Pali books expound a tendency which 'could be characterized in the theoretical realm as the doctrine of no-views, and in the practical realm as the practice of no dharmas'. If correct, this would suggest a quite different intellectual history. For as Gómez recognised, the 'extreme apophatic tendency' of Sn IV–V 'reappears later in the literature of the Perfection of Wisdom, and even more patently, in the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamika'.

Buddhist scholars have unfortunately not been able to build on Gómez's claims; they have largely ignored the idea that Sn IV–V teaches a sort of 'proto-Madhyamaka', and have generally failed to offer a plausible interpretation of the *Aṭṭhakavagga*. 'Proto-Mādhyamika in the Pali canon' was the great breakthrough in Buddhist Studies that never was; the intricacy of the canonical period, and the possible canonical roots of Madhyamaka thought, are still not very well understood.

This paper will reconsider Gómez's most important points within a broader conceptual framework. It will argue that proto-Madhyamaka is more than just an early Buddhist tendency, but rather is implicit in foundational canonical teachings on ontology, epistemology, personal identity, philosophy of mind and spiritual praxis. Bringing to light what has been overlooked and rethinking what has been misunderstood, this paper will outline a coherent spiritual project — a sort of early Buddhist anti-realism — and so provide a richer perspective on Buddhist thought prior to Nāgārjuna.

The Meaning of Dependent Arising for Nāgārjuna

Dhivan Jones (University of Chester)

Nāgārjuna's conclusion (in MMK ch.24 v.18) that dependent arising (*pratītya-samutpāda*) and emptiness (*śūnyatā*) are corollaries is well known. In this presentation I inquire further into what dependent arising meant for Nāgārjuna, and how this leads to that well-known conclusion. In *Suhṛllekha* (v.113), a non-philosophical work, Nāgārjuna praises dependent arising as 'the treasure and essence of the Conqueror's teaching', taking the teaching in terms of the twelve *nidāna*s that explain how *saṃsāra* works. In MMK (ch.26), Nāgārjuna again takes the twelve *nidāna*s as an explanation of *saṃsāra* and its ending. And in *Ratnāvalī* (I vv.48–51), he interprets the summary formula of dependent arising, 'this being, that becomes...' (*asmin satīdaṃ...*), in a way that shows the lack of intrinsic existence (*niḥsvabhāvatā*) in phenomena and dependent arising as the middle way. Nāgārjuna takes these features of dependent arising – the *asmin satīdaṃ* formula, and the twelve *nidāna*s – from mainstream Buddhism, and his interpretation of them derives from a subtle exegesis of early Buddhist discourses such as the *Pratītya-samutpāda-vibhaṅga Sūtra* ('Analysis of Dependent Arising') and of course the *Katyāyana Sūtra* ('Discourse to Katyāyana'). In addition, Nāgārjuna derives a non-realist reading of the twelve *nidāna*s as well as a distinctive account of the objective principle of dependent arising from the *Śālistamba Sūtra* ('Rice-Stalk Discourse'), an early Mahāyāna discourse. In this way, I trace how the distinctive features of Nāgārjuna's account of dependent arising derive from his close reading of Buddhist discourses, while his understanding of dependent arising as showing the lack of intrinsic existence is an innovation that became fundamental to the Madhyamaka tradition.

Abstracts

Svabhāva and Existential Anguish in the Madhyamaka

Stalin Joseph Correya (Independent scholar, formerly Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay)

The Madhyamaka demarcates *svabhāva* as the antithesis of *śūnyatā*. The definition of *svabhāva* Mādhyamikas accept to refute lies within a conception of ultimately real existents called dharmas. Ābhidharmikas contend that only dharmas can possess an intrinsic existence or *svabhāva*, whereas Mādhyamikas deny the coherence of such an idea. In the Mūlamadhyamakakārikā, Nāgārjuna refutes *svabhāva* under two inter-linked verticals. (a) As a theoretic postulate *svabhāva* is understood as a philosophical commitment to the 'building blocks' of reality. By refuting the *svabhāva*-dharma architecture, Mādhyamikas also refute the analogous belief that reality requires irreducible ultimately real existents. (b) Outside quarrels over metaphysics with the Abhidharma, which is largely informed by Ābhidharmika terms of reference, Mādhyamikas also highlight the soteriological and practical dangers of upholding *svabhāva*. They argue that upholding *svabhāva* (and denying *śūnyatā*) would render all 'sacred and profane' ends irrational. All Buddhist practices and doctrines, such as the four noble truths, would then fail to obtain. They would also be unintelligible if the theory of *svabhāva* were used to explain their genesis. Similar nihilistic consequences would ensue for practical pursuits such as assigning moral agency for actions. The Madhyamaka master argument for both (a) and (b) is that *svabhāva* and co-dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*) are mutually incompatible. Dharmas cannot arise unless causally arisen, and whatever is causally arisen cannot possess *svabhāva*.

This paper will argue that the conception of *svabhava* in the Mūlamadhyamakakārikā of Nāgārjuna is merely a technical rebuttal for the narrow goal of bringing down the *svabhāva*-dharma architecture. This refutation of *svabhāva* may lack wider relevance. The paper will argue that the notion of *svabhāva* can have existential implications that transcend the parameters of the Madhyamaka-Abhidharma dispute. These implications ensue if *svabhāva* is thought of as the intransigence and transparency of pre-reflective consciousness, and not just the tendency to reflectively superimpose essence upon (otherwise empty) constituents of the world. Phenomenology conceives conscious experience as transparent, intransigent, and consisting of an irreducible first-person perspective. Phenomenologists argue that the first-person perspective and a sense of mine-ness might be invariable and inevitable in all experiences (including experiences of patients with depersonalizing mental 'disorders' such as Alzheimer's disease). *Svabhāva* can be conceived as the intransigence of consciousness itself, and thus as 'being imposed' simultaneously with experience. Thinking of *svabhāva* as the irreducible feature of every conscious experience may help explain why *svabhāva* is ubiquitous and pervasive in everyday life. When such a reformulation of *svabhāva* is read with the *lokaprasiddha* interpretation of conventional truth/reality (*saṃvṛtisatya*), one might suspect that the Madhyamaka understanding of the world engenders existential anguish. If *svabhāva* is conceived as the pre-reflective tendency to reify that obtains automatically with and as the first-person perspective, then one might have little agency to align one's unique perspective on the world with conventional reality. Candrakīrti in the *lokaprasiddha* thesis projects conventional reality as impervious to reforms; an 'individual' condemned to reify though every experience could well feel anguished and alienated within conventional reality.

Nāgārjuna and Mādhyamikas on the Three Points of Emptiness (*śūnyatā*)

Akira Saito (International College for Postgraduate Buddhist Studies)

As is well known, for realizing emptiness, Nāgārjuna emphasized the importance of understanding the three points of emptiness, that is, emptiness itself (*śūnyatā*), the meaning of "emptiness"

(*śūnyatārtha*), and the purpose or use of emptiness (*śūnyatāyāṃ prayojana*). This significant topic was once analyzed by me in two related articles published in 1998. The three points of emptiness appear in the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (MMK), Chapter 24, verse 7 on which commentators such as *Piṅgala, the author of *Akutobhayā*, Buddhapālita, Bhāviveka and Candrakīrti show, slightly or not, their different understandings.

However, on this interesting topic there remains an inquiry yet to be made. That is, what did Nāgārjuna himself mean by the three related expressions above? To investigate this question, after referring to those commentators' different understandings, this paper further analyzes the context and meaning of MMK, Chapter 24 as well as other related Chapters 13, 15 and 18.

Upādāyaprajñapti in the Perspective of Buddhapālita

Shaoyong Ye (Peking University)

The term *upādāya prajñapti* appears only once in Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, specifically in verse 24.18. While associated with the concepts of emptiness (*śūnyatā*), dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*) and the middle way (*madhyamā pratipad*) in this context, Nāgārjuna does not provide any explication of its meaning. In contrast, extensive discussions related to the concept of *upādāyaprajñapti* are found in Buddhapālita's commentary. From an epistemological perspective, Buddhapālita reinterprets the connotation of *pratītyasamutpāda*, shifting from the literal "dependent origination" to "dependent designation," aligning with the meaning of *upādāyaprajñapti*. This viewpoint posits that all *dharma*s are mere designations dependent upon conditions. Furthermore, Buddhapālita contends that the conditions themselves, upon which these designations depend, are also designations. This implies that everything within our cognitive realm is merely a designation relying on other designations, devoid of any intrinsic existence (*svabhāva*), ultimately leading to an epistemological nihilistic stance.

Reassessing the Third Option in the Madhyamaka Tetralemma: A Comprehensive Survey and Methodological Analysis of Contemporary Interpretations

Philippe Turenne (Kathmandu University – Rangjung Yeshe Institute)

This presentation will elucidate research findings concerning the Madhyamaka's utilization of the *catuṣkoṭi* or tetralemma, with a specific focus on the third lemma. The third lemma explores the logical possibility wherein a dharma is produced through both itself and something else as causes. While Indian and Tibetan commentators have historically treated this option summarily as easily resolved, contemporary commentators tend to view traditional explanations of the third lemma as unsatisfactory, deeming them easily dismissed by counterexamples. This raises the question: why the stark discrepancy in interpretations? First, we will briefly survey a selection of Indian and Tibetan sources explaining how to understand the third lemma of the *catuṣkoṭi*.

Second, we will cover modern interpretations of the same point, and offer an analysis of possible explanations for that discrepancy. In short, the disparity may be attributed to methodological decisions favoring rational reconstruction as a tool for textual interpretation, coupled with the imposition of contemporary metaphysical assumptions onto the reading of Madhyamaka literature. Following an analysis and discussions of these hypotheses, in conclusion, we will offer reflections on the implications of these methodological choices and briefly discuss potential avenues for further research in this domain.

Monday, Aug. 19, Morning Sessions

Section 3: Early Madhyamaka II   Theatersaal

Chair: Christopher Jones (University of Vienna)

On Magic and False Appearances in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*

Eli Franco (University of Vienna)

In the *Vigrahavyāvartanī*, Nāgārjuna uses two examples to explain how something unreal (an empty statement) can act upon another unreal thing: *nimittikapuruṣa* and *māyāpuruṣa*, terms that are usually translated as 'artificially created person,' 'artificial man' or 'artificial being' and 'magic person' or 'illusory man' respectively.

In this paper, I will try to arrive at a more precise understanding of these terms and consider their implications on the nature of absolute reality.

Reflections on the Single Vehicle by Early Mādhyamikas

Christopher Jones (University of Vienna)

Authors of the Indian Madhyamaka tradition were exegetes as well as philosophers, and had a wealth of Buddhist scriptural materials to interpret beyond simply those concerned with the emptiness of phenomena or illusory character of reality. This paper attends on how some early Mādhyamikas – principally Nāgārjuna and Bhāviveka – seem to have situated themselves in relation to some particularly contentious aspects of Mahāyāna Buddhist thinking from the early centuries of the Common Era: specifically, ideas related to the notion of there being only a single vehicle of Buddhist instruction (*ekayāna*), famously taught in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* and found otherwise, predominantly, in sources concerned with "buddha-nature" (*tathāgatagarbha*). We will examine some interesting verses in "minor" works attributed to Nāgārjuna, as well as reflections on these topics found in Bhāviveka's *Tarkajvālā*, and in light of more recent scholarship on both "single vehicle" and "buddha-nature" teaching in India in the first half of the first millennium. An aim will be to clarify the relative importance of these teachings for the early Madhyamaka, which invites further reflection on how its philosophical perspective related to different "buddhological" teachings known to these authors.

Mādhyamika Masters from South and East India (2ⁿᵈ–7ᵗʰ c. ᴀᴅ) with special attention to the 'silent period' (late 3ʳᵈ–late 5ᵗʰ c.): Break in Tradition or Something Else?

Cristina Scherrer-Schaub (University of Lausanne & EPHE/GREI–PSL (Paris))

This paper is a sequel to "The Quintessence of the Mādhyamika Teaching Blossoms Again. Some Considerations in View of the 5ᵗʰ–7ᵗʰ c. AD. (I) Reading the Alkhan'document (Schøyen MSS 2241) in religious and political context" (Scherrer-Schaub 2018).

The topic presented here is part of a pluridecennial and still ongoing research on the history of Buddhism with particular focus on the textual tradition seen as invariably depending on the ternary relation linking the elements of all forms of communication or transmission, that is the actors of history. In this regard, one of the most intriguing questions in investigating the history of textual transmission concerns the conditions of *reception* of an author's work. From the date of the presumed passing away of Āryadeva in 270 to the beginning of Bhā(va)viveka and Buddhapālita's *floruit* in the late 5ᵗʰ– early 6ᵗʰ century, the lineage of the Mādhyamika Masters, for reasons not yet settled, shows a sudden break. This rupture, however, is partially filled by the proved circulation of texts, as for instance the fact that Nāgārjuna's *Madhyamakaśāstra* (or part of it) continues to be commented on in outsiders' circles, and translated into Chinese, and Asaṅga and Kumārajīva stand out as the firsts granting transmission to the Indian Master.

The paper presented will return to the 'silent period' and the following Madhyamaka revival focusing, this time, on the Indian philosophical context at large.

Bridging Texts and Traditions: *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra* and Early Madhyamaka in Kumārajīva's Context

Xueni Lin (Heidelberg University)

The relationship between the *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra* and Madhyamaka, particularly since the translation of Kumārajīva in the fifth century, has remained a central scholastic topic for centuries. Contemporary scholarship has analyzed the potential philosophical commonalities between the *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra* and Madhyamaka. This paper, however, takes a philological approach, illuminating the relationship between the *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra* and Madhyamaka through an analysis of Kumārajīva's translations. Leveraging computational techniques to uncover phraseological and philological evidence, I contend that Harivarman—the author of the *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra* —and the Madhyamaka pioneers as represented in Kumārajīva's Madhyamaka corpus, shared some literary sources. These mainly encompass *sūtra* sources and analogies, which are respectively indicative of the geographical proximity and shared pedagogical traditions.

Kumārajīva, plays a vital role in our discussion, as he translated and introduced both *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra* and Madhyamaka texts to Chinese readers in the fifth century. His works can offer a direct reflection of the link between *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra* and Madhyamaka in his source culture. Through analyzing the intentional consistent wordings used in *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra* and Kumārajīva's Madhyamaka corpus (the *Zhong lun* 中論 T1564, the *Bai lun* 百論 T1569, and the *Da zhidu lun* 大智度論 T1509 which was attributed to Nāgārjuna by Kumārajīva), we can identify the common sources shared by Harivarman and the early Madhyamaka thinkers.

Accordingly, this paper argues that, first, Harivarman and the early Madhyamaka scholars share some common *sūtra* sources, and I will demonstrate their roots in the Indic cultural milieu as preserved in Pāli Nikāya and Chinese Āgama *sūtra*s. Considering specific *sūtra*s often gained

prominence within certain regions and the biography of Harivarman, I contend that Harivarman worked likely in geographical proximity with the early Madhyamaka school, pertaining to North-West India.

Second, Harivarman and early Madhyamaka scholars share some other literary sources, like analogies, which can be reflected by the intentional consistency of uncommon wordings and items of phraseology in Kumārajīva's translation. In the translation of Kumārajīva or his team, they used the same rare wordings, and the same structures for translating the same analogies in *Tattvasiddhi-śāstra* and other Madhyamaka texts. I will suggest that Kumārajīva or his team might have recognized the similarities present within the original Indic texts, and these shared analogies might imply a pedagogical tradition common to both Harivarman and early Madhyamaka scholars.

Open Questions on a *Prajñāpradīpavṛtti* Passage Discussing *svabhāvavāda*

Krishna Del Toso (Independent Scholar)

The presentation will center on a section of the *Prajñāpradīpavṛtti* commenting on the fourth causal alternative of *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 1.1, namely, "not without a cause." This passage elaborates on the *svabhāva* doctrine held by some thinkers who followed the philosophy of a scholar whose name is given in Tibetan as 'Jug-stobs-can and in Chinese as Pózhòuluó (婆冑羅) or Pócáoluó (婆曹羅). The objective is to observe the textual discrepancies between the Tibetan and Chinese translations of the *Prajñāpradīpavṛtti* passage, which raise interesting questions regarding the theoretical orientation of the followers of 'Jug-stobs-can/Pózhòuluó and their philosophical framework.

On the Chinese Translation of the *Prajñāpradīpa*: Problems with the Explanations of the Syllogisms

Masaki Tamura (National Institute of Technology, Kagawa College)

It is well known that Bhāviveka (ca. 490/500–570 CE), a Mādhyamika philosopher, composed a commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, the *Prajñāpradīpa*. Bhāviveka's commentary is unique in that it reformulates Nāgārjuna's arguments as a series of syllogisms. Unfortunately, the original Sanskrit text of the *Prajñāpradīpa*, which was translated into Chinese by Prabhākaramitra (630–632 CE) and into Tibetan by Klu'i rgyal mtshan and Jñānagarbha (early ninth century CE), is not extant.

Following Tsukinowa's (1929a, 1929b, 1931) insistence that the Chinese translation of the *Prajñāpradīpa* was unworthy of scholarly study, scholars have focused on the Tibetan translation of the text. However, in recent years, based on the works of van der Kuijp (2006) and Krasser (2011, 2012), Akahane (2012, 2013, 2014, 2015) published a series of studies that attempted to reevaluate the Chinese translation and reexamine the formation process of the *Prajñāpradīpa*, thus advancing the study of the text to a new stage. Today, the exploration of the *Prajñāpradīpa* must include an analysis of the differences between its Chinese and Tibetan translations, an assessment of the characteristics of the Chinese translation, and an examination of the various processes involved in its formation and transmission.

This paper considers the explanation for Bhāviveka's use of syllogism presented in the Chinese translation of the *Prajñāpradīpa*. This particularly relates to (1) the substitution of another reason (*hetu*) for a reason in a syllogism in order to reformulate another syllogism and (2) how it could be possible to reformulate the passages of Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* as a syllogism. In some cases, we can find that although the Chinese translation of the *Prajñāpradīpa* attempts to add

or delete certain arguments to enable the reader to understand the text more readily, most of these efforts fail. The purpose of this paper is to examine these problems in the Chinese translation of the text and to clarify its characteristics.

Section 4: Madhyamaka in Tibet I   Sitzungssaal

Chair: Dorji Wangchuk (Universität Hamburg)

The Transition of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (MMK) from India to Tibet: Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's Citation and Understanding of the MMK and Beyond

Dörte Kamarid (International College for Postgraduate Buddhist Studies)

This paper concentrates on the manuscript ascribed to Pa tshab Nyi ma grags, a commentary on Nāgārjuna's *magnum opus*, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (MMK).

Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's commentary along with various works were recently discovered and published in the bKa' gdams gsung 'bum by the Peltsek Institute for Ancient Tibetan Manuscripts in Lhasa. This material indeed casts new light on the research of the historical development of translation work in Tibet. Pa tshab Nyi ma grags (1055–ca. 1145) was one of the famous translators (*lo tsa ba*) in the Tibetan tradition, who was a very influential personality with his contribution to the translation work from Sanskrit to Tibetan.

This paper aims to analyse Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's citation of the MMK verses within the First Chapter of his commentary. Besides various topics of studies included in the First Chapter, Pa tshab Nyi ma grags mentioned or explained the MMK verses precisely. The analysis of the *kārikā*s will be presented briefly comparing the different translations of the MMK verses with Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's citation or partial mention of the MMK verses in his explanation. Further, regarding the distinction between *Svātantrika and *Prāsaṅgika pointed out by Pa tshab Nyi ma grags, his emphasis on the *Prāsaṅgika* approach will be presented. Beyond the commentary of the MMK are various topics of studies that seems to have been the content of Pa tshab Nyi ma grags's research during the years of his study in Kaśmīr (late 11th century). Pa tshab Nyi ma grags learned from Indian *paṇḍita*s such as Mahāsumati and others. Combining Madhyamaka thought with logic and epistemology, like Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla and with the influence of Dignāga and Dharmakīrti, Pa tshab Nyi ma grags developed this combination further. Pa tshab Nyi ma grags intended to ensure this transmission in the light of *Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka instead of following the *Svātantrika-Madhyamaka approach, represented by Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla. Some impressions of these influences will be presented.

Pa tshab Nyi ma grags on the Theory of Causality

Chizuko Yoshimizu (University of Tsukuba)

The Tibetan commentator on Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, Pa tshab Nyi ma grags (ca. 1055–1145), demonstrates the non-establishment of cause and effect in his *dBu ma rtsa ba'i shes rab kyi ti ka* (15a10–b17). As I have previously indicated (Yoshimizu 2023, 884), he first refutes the causal relation that the non-Mādhyamikas including non-Buddhists hold and shows Indian Mādhyamikas'

arguments for negating arising. His point is that there is no valid cognition (*tshad ma, pramāṇa*) that proves the existence of cause and effect, whereas there are valid cognitions that negate arising from something other. His discussion is analyzable into two points: 1. Neither cause nor effect exists as such in reality; 2. Arising from something other is impossible. He seems to negate any theory of causality that explains the relation between a particular cause (or a particular collection of causes) and its effect. However, this may result in an annihilation of causation. This paper aims to reveal what Pa tshab intends to bring about by refuting non-Mādhyamikas' theory of causality by examining his discussion more closely.

Jayānanda and Tsong kha pa: A Comparison of Their Views on *pramāṇa*

Atisha Mathur (University of Naples "L'Orientale")

This paper explores the similarities between Jayānanda and Tsong kha pa's Prāsaṅgika interpretations. It is the result of unexpected similarities I noticed while working on my doctoral dissertation on Jayānanda. As one of Tibet's most influential Madhyamaka thinkers, Tsong kha pa's writings on Prāsaṅgika have received much attention from both traditional and modern scholars. His five main writings on this subject (*lta ba'i legs bshad lnga*) have been translated into English, allowing us access to what Tsong kha pa considers the most accurate interpretations of Madhyamaka. Despite having composed the only existing Indian commentary on the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, traditional Tibetan scholars do not typically study Jayānanda when reading Candrakīrti. Even amongst modern scholars, Jayānanda's Prāsaṅgika interpretation is largely unexplored. Of his two extant writings, only the very short *Tarkamudgarakārikā* has been translated while his largest work — the *Madhyamakāvatāraṭīkā* — has received limited attention.

Here I will focus on two aspects of Tsong kha pa's presentation: his insistence on the role of *pramāṇa* within a Prāsaṅgika model and how he uses it to explain the validity of human experience. Tsong kha pa does not consider his incorporation of these elements to be his own. He tries to show how he is merely illuminating Candrakīrti's intention (*dgongs pa*). A large number of scholars, both Tibetan and non, have not always agreed and find that Tsong kha pa exaggerates Candrakīrti's views to a degree where they are no longer authentic representations but personal innovations.

The paper compares the views of Jayānanda and Tsong kha pa on Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatāra*. Although many scholars see their ideas as incompatible, the paper argues that certain passages from their commentaries suggest more similarities than previously thought. This is especially surprising since Tsong kha pa's references to Jayānanda's Madhyamakāvatāraṭīkā are mainly critical.

As part of an Indian exegetical lineage, Jayānanda's perceived scepticism of *pramāṇa* has strengthened the view that its incorporation into Candrakīrti's Prāsaṅgika model is specific to Tibetans. The paper proposes that what some scholars have considered Tibetan innovations may actually have their roots in an Indian presentation of Prāsaṅgika. The paper offers a closer reading of certain passages from Jayānanda's writings that suggest the incorporation of such elements may have always been a necessary feature of Candrakīrti's interpretation.

Unfolding Tsongkhapa's Madhyamaka: A Detailed Analysis of the "Notes on the Eight Difficult Points"

Jorge Bartolomé Herrero (Complutense University of Madrid)

Among the different expositions of Tsongkhapa's unique tenets on Madhyamaka, the one found in the short text *dka' gnad brgyad kyi zin bris* ("Notes on the eight difficult points") stands out among the others for its incisive technical examination which gives a view on the topic not found anywhere else. This fairly short text has been generally overlooked by scholars in favour of other clearer presentations of the particularities of Tsongkhapa's Madhyamaka, especially those presented by later *gelug* authors such as the first *Jamyang Shayba.* Only a short study and a very technical annotated translation of the "Notes" were made by Prof. David Seyfort Ruegg a few decades ago.

Although this is the case, the *dka' gnad brgyad kyi zin bris* constitutes a unique and useful source. Coming from the notes taken by by Gyaltsab Je from Tsongkhapa's own oral explanation on the topic, it gives not only a firsthand account of the thoughts involved in Tsongkhapa's defence of his positions but also provides with an arrangement of arguments not found in other accounts of the points.

This paper aims to fill the gap left from overlooking the text, and magnified by the highly technical language that usually shields it from being properly addressed even in Tibetan language.

In order to do so, the paper will focus on the first section of the text called "Regarding the basis", which includes the first three difficult points, by giving a detailed philosophical analysis of the arguments sustained in that section and exposing some of the main philosophical issues of the presentation, such as the divergence of the text from other authors in the attribution of theories on the connection of the action and its result.

The analysis will have as a main feature the consideration of the "Notes" in its dialogical form. The exposition found in the text is of a highly marked debate style and thus will be addressed by making explicit the presented arguments, objections, and responses, together with a clarification of their key technical terms based on the Tibetan scholarship that the text presupposes on the reader. In this way, the present research intends to unfold the "Notes" for a clear understanding of its contents and structure.

The study of the *dka' gnad brgyad kyi zin bris*, probably the closest source to Tsongkhapa dedicated to the topic of the unique tenets of his system, constitutes a unique and yet unexplored possibility for taking a closer look at the way Tsongkhapa thought about the particular tenets of his Madhyamaka system outside of his commentarial writings.

The Tibetan Traditions of Guides to the Madhyamaka View (*dbu ma'i lta khrid*) and the Schooling of *View with Meditation*

Jacob Fisher (University of Oxford)

Do Mādhyamikas meditate? Or is their view of reality a mere theoretical abstraction, unsuited for personal cultivation? Buddhist traditions would emphatically answer yes and no, respectively. Whereas contemporary interpretations of Madhyamaka, may be more ambivalent, being more concerned with the metaphysical aspects of this system. Such interpretations often explore Madhyamaka through a western "analytical" philosophical framework, and neglect its meditative dimension. This may be partly due to a long-standing Western philosophical emphasis on reason and logic, specifically in the domain of analyticity. This paper challenges such a one-sided approach. It argues that *bhāvanā* is an integral component for inducing an accurate *dṛṣṭi* of Madhyamaka, and as such, it is incumbent on the interpreter to illustrate how their particular interpretation,

be it "coherantist", "nihilist", or "contextualist", bears out in practical meditation. This is done through recourse to a particular genre of Tibetan works on Madhyamaka, the so called *dbu ma'i lta khrid,* or *Guides to the Madhyamaka View.* This genre of Tibetan literature has barely been explored by contemporary Madhyamaka scholarship. While Kamalaśīla's *Bhāvanākrama*-s and the Later Candrakīrti's (11th century) **Madhyamakaprajñāvatāra* are perhaps the closest examples of exact Indian antecedents of *dbu ma'i lta khrid*-s, practical instructions (*upadeśa*) for meditating on emptiness exist in several Indian Madhyamaka treatises. The plethora of *dbu ma'i lta khrid* texts in Tibet is testimony to how the Tibetan traditions saw Madhyamaka as intimately connected to meditative practice. One may say, every serious Tibetan Mādhyamika had to show how their philosophical interpretation was to be applied in precise meditative terms, and what were the stages in that process.

Indian Yogācāras and Mādhyamikas frequently refer to the famous nondual experience of *ārya*'s during meditative absorption to bolster their arguments. Likewise, Tibetan Mādhyamikas also weave within their "philosophical" discussions meditative instructions (*lta khrid, nyams khrid*) and make reference to various meditative experiences (*nyams*). Among others, the *dbu ma lta khrid*-s by Réndawa (1349–1412), Tsongkhapa (1357–1419), Baso Chökyi Gyeltsen (1402–1473), Shakya Chokden (1428–1507), Jamyang Zhépa (1648–1721), and Ju Mipham (1846–1912), provide specific instructions on subjects such as inducing a personal encounter with the appearance of *svabhāva*, maintaining and increasing epistemic certainty in emptiness, avoiding pitfalls like clinging to emptiness, and identifying the hallmarks of accurate insight. The essential message of these texts is that only through navigating these subjective nuances can one cultivate correct understanding, and consequently, a correct interpretation of Madhyamaka.

Contemporary interpretations of Madhyamaka, on the other hand, often tend to sequester discussions of meditative practice, prioritizing the extraction of "hard" philosophical questions, extending logical inquiry, and addressing concerns deemed relevant to Western philosophical traditions. While such work retains undeniable value, this discussion will argue that downplaying the intrinsic connection between metaphysics and personal meditative cultivation – separating *dṛṣṭi* from *bhāvanā* if you will – results in a disembodied Madhyamaka, one unable to navigate the middle way between the two extremes. The analysis thus aims to extend the methodology for interpreting this philosophical tradition – via meditative instructions and the enhanced perspective that they offer. The discussion answers questions such as what do these Tibetan meditative traditions tell us about Madhyamaka metaphysics? How do the meditative instructions of these Tibetan Mādhyamikas relate to their philosophical presentations? What relevance do these instructions have for interpreting core Madhyamaka doctrines?

The Wise Should/Does Not Stand Even in the Middle (*madhye 'pi sthānaṃ na karoti paṇḍitaḥ*): A Genealogy of the Idea of Transcending Even the Middle

Dorji Wangchuk (Universität Hamburg)

One of the Madhyamaka points of contention in the late nineteenth-century debate between the rNying-ma scholar 'Ju Mi pham (1846–1912) and the dGe-lugs scholar dPa'-ris Rab-gsal (1840–1912) in Eastern Tibet was the interpretation of the proposition made by the famous *Samādhirājasūtra* 9.27, namely, that the wise should/does not stand even in the middle (*madhye 'pi sthānaṃ na karoti paṇḍitaḥ*). The former maintained that one should transcend even the middle and the latter maintained that a Mādhyamika must stand in the middle or else one would not be a Mādhyamika in the first place. Each of the two scholars was following his own tradition. But one could say that while the latter indeed represents the dGe-lugs position, the former represents in fact the position of all other

schools. These two positions, in my view, reveal a fundamental difference in the interpretations of the Madhyamaka philosophy in Tibet. In this paper, however, I wish to mainly try and trace the genealogy of the idea of transcending even the middle and of other closely related ideas such as that reality is "devoid of extremes and middle" (*anantamadhya: mtha' dang dbus med pa*).

Monday, Aug. 19, Afternoon Session

Section 3: Early Madhyamaka II   Theatersaal

Chair: Christopher Jones (University of Vienna)

On an Annotated Tibetan Manuscript of *Yuktiṣaṣṭikākārikā* from the *'Bras spungs* Temple: with a Preliminary Transliteration and Translation

Chang Liu (China University of Political Science and Law)

The *Yuktiṣaṣṭikākārikā* (YṢ), a work consisting of 60 verses and a dedication, is regarded as one of the most frequently quoted of the works ascribed to Nāgārjuna (ca.150–250). However, there are not many commentaries on the work itself extant in Indian Buddhism except the *Yuktiṣaṣṭikāvṛtti* (YṢV) of Candrakīrti (ca. 600–650). In Tibetan Buddhism, as far as is known, three commentaries have been handed down, which were compiled, respectively, by Tsong kha pa (1357–1419), rGyal tshab rje (1364–1432), and gZhan phan (1871–1926).

In addition, there is also a Tibetan manuscript of YṢ annotated by a master, probably called gNur ston, which became accessible in recent years and has not been used by previous research. The manuscript, stored in the *'Bras spungs* temple, is a translation by Pa tshab Nyi ma grags and partially differs from the canonical texts in *bsTan 'gyur*. Therefore, the manuscript is crucial for the critical edition of YṢ and provides a significant commentary on YṢ in Tibetan Buddhism. This paper is mainly aimed at analyzing the characters of the writing and the contents of the manuscript. This is then followed by a preliminary transliteration and translation.

It is also worth noting that the information on six Tibetan manuscripts related to YṢ and YṢV can be found in the *Catalogue of Ancient Books in the 'Bras spungs Temple* published in 2004. However, it remains necessary to go through the manuscripts to make the critical editions of the works in the future.

The Eradication of the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination through the Realization of Emptiness of *viparyāsa*

Arihiro Kosaka (Taisho University)

In the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (MMK) 23.13–22, Nāgārjuna critically examines the existence of *viparyāsa* (the four types of false conceptions) through the lens of *śūnyatā*. He expounds that neither the four types of false conceptions nor the four types of unfalse conceptions are substantiated. Furthermore, in MMK 23.23, he asserts that through the non-establishment of *viparyāsa* based on the aforementioned examination, *avidyā* ceases, and the remaining branches such as *saṃskāra* also cease.

Abstracts

In these verses, Nāgārjuna regards *viparyāsa* as the cause of *avidyā*, the primordial factor of the twelve-links of dependent origination. Additionally, within these verses, he delineates the process of liberation, progressing from the contemplation of the emptiness of *viparyāsa* to the annihilation of the twelve links of dependent origination, which cause suffering. Furthermore, it is noteworthy: in contrast to the understanding of the commentators of the MMK such as Bhāviveka and Candrakīrti who, relying on the theory of two truths, consider the twelve links of dependent origination (as shown in the twenty-sixth chapter) to be conventional, and distinguished it from the ultimate level dependent origination, which is synonymous with emptiness and devoid of origination and cessation (as expounded prior to the twenty-sixth chapter), here in MMK 23.23, the ultimate contemplation of *śūnyatā* and the conventional dependent origination are explained in the same causal relationship.

In this paper, I endeavor to explore the following:

· Historical background of Nāgārjuna's theory positing that *viparyāsa* is the causal factor of *avidyā*.

· Interconnection between the liberation process delineated in MMK 23.23 and that elucidated in MMK 18.5.

· Correlation between the contemplation of *śūnyatā* and the conventionally established dependent origination.

Keynote Speech

**Festsaal,
Austrian Academy of Sciences main building**

"What in the World Does a Mādhyamika Rely On? Candrakīrti and Prāsaṅgikas on the Value of the Conventional"

Kevin Vose (College of William and Mary, Williamsburg)

Several contemporary readings of Madhyamaka, particularly as interpreted by Candrakīrti, portray it as a kind of conventionalism, in which the final aim of Madhyamaka's signature teaching of emptiness is a pointing back to the everyday world, now understood in a new light, as lacking any ontic or epistemic foundations. To this end, Candrakīrti's endorsement of a fourfold model of valid cognition, as well as his practice and promotion of arguments by consequence (*prasaṅga*), has come to be seen as his constructive advice for finding guidance in an empty world. Candrakīrti here defends the ways of the world and argues against the possibility and need of establishing those worldly ways with anything more substantial. These readings occasionally take their bearings from the later Tibetan tradition, with Tsongkhapa looming particularly large.

In this talk, I will argue that Candrakīrti and the first to call themselves "Prāsaṅgikas" have a much more radical agenda. The argument proceeds in three steps: First, Candrakīrti's explication of the value of the conventional, dependently arisen world hinges on the three intertwined explanations he provides for *saṃvṛti*. Conventional-as-mutual dependence and conventional-as-worldly agreement concern thought and language, which are imbued with conventional-as-concealment: the world remains trapped in a problematic state of ignorance. As early Prāsaṅgikas see it, believing that worldly appearances are in any way validly established undermines the Madhyamaka project and, incidentally, makes one a Svātantrika, a term they coined to denote not just Mādhyamikas who utilize inferences "dependent on their own [position]" (*svatantra*) but who additionally promote valid cognition in the world.

Second, Candrakīrti's simple affirmation that perception, inference, testimony, and comparison are the means by which "the world knows things" (*lokasyārthādhigama*) cannot be construed as a broad endorsement of worldly practice but rather directs us to the value of a small slice of the cause-and-effect world, the Buddhist path, which Candrakīrti refers to as the "worldly ultimate" (*laukikaṃ paramārtham*). Candrakīrti's model of explaining the "meaning, purpose, and character" of emptiness shows that worldly conventions are not to be trusted but, rather, are examples of "conceptual proliferation" (*prapañca*), which emptiness aims to cure. While the world at large suffers from a thoroughgoing ignorance, Āryas make use of the way cause and effect appear in order to eradicate ignorance and, with it, the appearance of an ignorance-dependent world. Arguments-by-consequence form part of this teaching method.

Third, Candrakīrti and early Prāsaṅgikas depict awakening as the cessation of all forms of dualistic cognition. This model of "what happens at the end" does not return us to a rehabilitated mundane world but undermines it, with the aim of producing a Buddha. When we understand Candrakīrti not as offering broad advice on how to live one's life in the world of conventions but instead as pointing us to the workings of the Buddhist path that will culminate in an absence of ignorance and an absence of that conventional world itself, we appreciate that—like his early followers—his Middle Way is not any kind of conventionalism but draws a sharp distinction between the worlds of ignorance and awakening.

Tuesday, Aug. 20, Morning Sessions

Section 5: Bhāviveka   Theatersaal

Chair: Malcolm David Eckel (Boston University)

Discussing the Role Differences and Context of *Svalakṣaṇa* and *Sāmānya-Lakṣaṇa* from Bhāviveka's Critique of Yogācāra School

Su-an Lin (Fu Jen Catholic University)

Bhāviveka, who lived during the era of a burgeoning new *pramāṇa* system in Buddhism, adopted methods different from earlier Madhyamaka scholars such as Nāgārjuna and Buddhapālita. He drew upon his own established theories to articulate the Madhyamaka viewpoint. While he embraced Dignāga's logic system, he also criticized the Yogācāra school. Consequently, I was curious as to how his epistemology might deviate from Dignāga's system.

Dignāga established the *pramāṇa* system in Buddhist history, but his thoughts predominantly belong to the Yogācāra school. Therefore, within the Yogācāra system, *svalakṣaṇa* (particular) and *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa* (universal) each have their own specific interpretive context. Dignāga proposed in his *Pramāṇasamuccaya* that 'the object of direct perception is *svalakṣaṇa*, while the object of inference is *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*'. He further explained in his system that '*svalakṣaṇa* is real, *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa* is false', thereby attributing a certain superiority to *svalakṣaṇa*. I aim to discuss whether the status of *svalakṣaṇa* and *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa* aligns with the Yogācāra doctrines of *paratantra-svabhāva* and *parikalpita-svabhāva*. If this alignment holds true, Bhāviveka's critique of the Yogācāra statement 'the ultimate *paratantra-svabhāva* is non-existent' provides insights into the role of *svalakṣaṇa* within Madhyamaka. Furthermore, while Bhāviveka, like the Yogācāra school, establishes *sāmānya-lakṣana* through a process of negation, his critique of the 'non-existence of *parikalpita-svabhāva*' reveals his recognition of 'conventional existence'. Does this suggest that he confers a different status upon *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa*?

By juxtaposing Bhāviveka's views against the Yogācāra backdrop, I aim to elucidate Bhāviveka's potential views on *svalakṣaṇa* and *sāmānya-lakṣaṇa* and to highlight the differences between the two schools.

Bhāviveka's Adaptation of Dignāga's Epistemological Ideas

Shenghai Li (National Taiwan University)

It is generally agreed that Bhāviveka was highly indebted to Dignāga as the sixth-century Madhyamaka philosopher is thought to have developed his method of argumentation under the influence of Dignāga's theory of Buddhist logic. The present paper turns to epistemology to assess Dignāga's impact on Bhāviveka in that area. By epistemology, I refer to elements of the general framework of Dignāga's system as well as his views on perception that are presented in the *svamata* section of the Pratyakṣa chapter of the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*. In this paper, a set of textual sources from the third and fifth chapters of the *Madhyamakahṛdaya* as they are clarified and amplified by the commentary *Tarkajvālā* will be considered to assess Bhāviveka's approach to Dignāga's epistemology.

In *Madhyamakahṛdaya* 3.8d and 3.13cd, Bhāviveka speaks of *lakṣaṇa* and more specifically of *svalakṣaṇa* and *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* in the context of his description of conventional reality. While the *Tarkajvālā* explains the two *lakṣaṇa*s also as unique and common characteristics in accordance with the Abhidharma tradition on the second occasion, at both places it explains the two in line with Dignāga's particular and universal. Moreover, the *Tarkajvālā*'s gloss of *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* also references Bhāviveka's own interpretation of the term in the fifth chapter (5.60–68), where he departs from Dignāga's view of the universal. Another case of Bhāviveka's revisionist approach to a central Dignāga idea is where the *Tarkajvālā* describes sensory perception as free from conceptual construction. Here, rather than explaining conceptual construction according to Dignāga's description as "the association with name, genus, etc.," the *Tarkajvālā* (ad 5.14cd and 5.26cd) turns to the Abhidharma notion of conception as examination (*nirūpaṇa*) and memory (*anusmaraṇa*). This is done even while the *Madhyamakahṛdaya* and *Tarkajvālā* agree with Dignāga that a perceptual awareness cognizes the *svalakṣaṇa* of an inexpressible material form.

In the process of responding to the Yogācāra model of cognition (in MHK 5.20–26), Bhāviveka opposes the idea of a consciousness appearing to itself, against Dignāga's assertion of a reflexive awareness; the explanation of the distinction between means of knowledge and its fruit given here also differs from that found in the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*. Finally, the *Madhymakahṛdaya* (5.31–5.38) and *Tarkajvālā* take up the issue of the atomic model of perception. Here, Bhāviveka objects to Dignāga's idealist arguments in the *Ālambanaparīkṣā*, and he holds that a combination (*saṃcita*) of homogeneous atoms lending their force to each other can serve as the object of a cognition. Bhāviveka's position, which is sometimes labelled as Sautrāntika, finds comparable expressions in the epistemological tradition when the idealist view is suspended.

The passages selected here will help outline Bhāviveka's epistemology, which is clearly influenced by Dignāga. Read through the interpretation of *Tarkajvālā*, Bhāviveka's reception of Dignāga's epistemological ideas is relatively mild, as they are often revised or replaced with elements from the older Abhidharma tradition. Bhāviveka also resists a few ideas when they are seen to be coupled with the Yogācāra perspective.

Bhāviveka's Critique of Dignāga — with Emphasis on the Notion of Nonexistence (*abhāva*)

Long Yin Sin (Kyushu University)

In Chapter Five (*Yogācāratattvaviniścaya*) of the *Madhyamakahṛdayakārika* (and its commentary, *Tarkajvālā*), as a part of his systematic critique of Yogācāra thought, Bhāviveka extensively discussed the *apoha* theory. According to Bhāviveka's understanding, for Dignāga, a word has as meaning a *sāmānya* (universal) that is characterized as an *apoha* (exclusion), and this *apoha* is an *abhāva* (absence, or nonexistence). For Bhāviveka himself, on the other hand, the meaning of words is a *sāmānyavadvastu* (a real entity that possesses a universal), and *sāmānya* is characterized as *vijātīyena śūnyatvam* (the emptiness of the dissimilars). Thereby, in the context of undermining the Yogācāra notion of *parikalpita*, he launched several arguments against Dignāga's *apoha* theory. In this study, I attempt to examine this Madhyamaka critique with emphasis on the notion "*abhāva*".

The present paper consists of two parts. In the first part, I will explore how Bhāviveka characterized and interpreted Dignāga's *apoha* theory. By scrutinizing Bhāviveka's arguments against *apoha,* as well as the terminology used, I aim to investigate how Dignāga's *apoha* was understood at that time—viz., before Kumārila's criticism, and to reconstruct the historical development of *apoha* theory in the pre-Dharmakīrtian period. In the second part, I will elaborate the Madhyamaka discussion about the ontological aspects of *apoha* by surveying the typologies

of nonexistence and negation in Bhāviveka's works, and by contextualizing Bhāviveka's critique of *apoha* in the framework of his analysis of *parikalpita*.

Bhāviveka's Arguments in Favor of Rebirth: Sources and Implications

Malcolm David Eckel (Boston University)

In his commentary on the first verse of Nāgārjuna's *Madhyamakakārikā*s, Bhāviveka makes a surprising move. He interprets the fourth option: "production from no cause" (*ahetutaḥ*) as a reference to things that make something happen without strictly speaking functioning as "causes." In this category he includes *īśvara*, or God, as creator of the universe. He also uses this as an occasion to consider the Lokāyata or "materialist" position that things arise "by their own nature" (*svabhāvataḥ*) or "of their own accord." This point leads to one of the Lokāyata's most famous arguments: the denial of a past and future life. This paper will discuss Bhāviveka's response to this view, not only in the commentary on Nāgārjuna's verses, but also in his own *Tarkajvālā* ("Flame of Reason"). It will consider how Bhāviveka developed his arguments out of previous works (notably the *Jātakamālā*) and look briefly at the afterlife of Bhāviveka's arguments in the works of later thinkers, including Candrakīrti, Śāntarakṣita, and Kamalaśīla.

Does an Advanced Bodhisattva See Anything While Cognizing the Thing That We Call a Cup? — On Bhāviveka's Notion of the "Ultimate"

Ching Keng (National Taiwan University)

The primary focus of this paper revolves around a fundamental question: Does an advanced bodhisattva perceive anything different when cognizing an object that an ordinary sentient being simply calls a cup? In the subsequent discussion, I begin by examining Bhāviveka's perspective on Ultimate Reality, followed by an exploration of the response to this question presented in the so-called "Semantic Reading" by Mark Siderits and Jay Garfield. Subsequently, I delve into the perspectives provided by Yogācāra and Jizang (549–623). Finally, I revisit Bhāviveka's *Madhyamakahṛdayakārikā* and *Tarkajvālā* to argue that Bhāviveka acknowledges the existence of the dependent nature at the conventional level. Consequently, the Semantic Reading fails to accurately interpret Bhāviveka's viewpoint.

Building upon this investigation, the paper proposes the necessity to differentiate among three senses of "reality": (a) Conventional Reality: This pertains to conceptualized entities such as a cup, etc. According to Bhāviveka, this exists at the conventional level, whereas Yogācāra contends that it never exists. (b) Relative Reality: This refers to what lies beyond conventional reality. Yogācāra defines this as the dependent nature, existing (*sat*) but not inherently (*tattvatas*). Bhāviveka also agrees that this exists in a relative sense (*saṃvṛtyā*). (c) Ultimate Reality: This denotes what ultimately exists for enlightened beings. Bhāviveka denies its existence, but both early and later Yogācāra schools posit the existence of something in the state of a Buddha. Jizang, interestingly, considers (b) and (c) to be the same.

All three interpretations, except for the Semantic Reading, converge on the acknowledgment that (b) exists. The rejection of (b) could easily lead to metaphysical Nihilism. Consequently, the Semantic Reading is deemed inadequate as an interpretation of Bhāviveka's stance on existence and non-existence.

A significant disparity between Bhāviveka and Jizang lies in Bhāviveka's acceptance of the idea that the world we inhabit (comprising both the imagined and dependent nature as per Yogācāra) must be eradicated. Bhāviveka's concept of the emptiness (*śūnyatā*) of the two natures implies the non-existence of these two natures. This contrasts with Jizang, who never asserts the elimination of the conventional world along with its underlying aspects.

In Both Truths: Avalokitavrata's Interpretation of *niḥsvabhāva*

Ryo Nishiyama (Shitennoji University)

We have an image of Avalokitavrata as a faithful follower of Bhāviveka. As always, Avalokitavrata supplies Bhāviveka's interpretation of MMK 24.18 and tells us how to read it. But there is a part where Avalokitavrata may deviate from Bhāviveka's view. Avalokitavrata's interpretation reminds us of Candrakīrti's view. The point is the existence of an intrinsic nature on the conventional level.

For instance, Bhāviveka gives a reason why Nāgārjuna calls *pratītyasamutpāda śūnyatā* in MMK 24.18ab. The reason is that things have no intrinsic nature. Avalokitavrata supplies commentary on the reason and says *niḥsvabhāva* should be regarded to apply in both truths. The cases I saw give enough reason to say there is no intrinsic nature in either truth for Avalokitavrata. In his view, *niḥsvabhāva* should be applied not only in *paramārtha* but also in *saṃvṛti*. Avalokitavrata's position may thus deviate from Bhāviveka's. As previous studies, including Tibetan doxography, have claimed, Bhāviveka held the position that there is intrinsic nature in the conventional realm. But Avalokitavrata goes beyond such Bhāviveka's image by saying the conventional realm is *niḥsvabhāva*. In this connection, I discuss that Candrakīrti might have affected Avalokitavrata's view. At the same time, I raise a question about Bhāviveka's position on *saṃvṛti* from Avalokitavrata's point of view.

Section 6: Madhyamaka in Tibet II — Sitzungssaal

Chair: Jed Forman (Simpson College)

Reality, Liberation and Ethics in Gampopa's Mahāmudrā: A Yogācāra-Madhyamaka Tradition

Tenzin Bhuchung (Princeton University)

In this paper, I will argue that Gampopa's Mahāmudrā teachings constitute a unique synthesis of the Yogācāra and Madyamaka traditions.

In contrast to composing lengthy philosophical treatises to establish the ultimate nature of reality, Gampopa Sönam Rinchen (1079–1153), a twelfth-century Tibetan scholar and mystic offered pithy instructions in his Mahāmudrā teachings for circumventing conceptual thought and inducing direct realization of the ultimate nondual nature of mind. From this ground of the ultimate nature of the mind, referred to as the ordinary mind or the dharmakāya, all phenomenal appearances (the conventional aspect of the two truths) are perceived as its own expressions or display, thereby collapsing the dualistic structure. The paper will begin by elucidating how his contemplative method taught through the category of "the three aspects of the mind" introduces his view at the experiential level and discuss it within the broader Buddhist philosophical framework.

Abstracts

Gampopa's Mahāmudrā As a Unique Synthesis of the Yogācāra and Madhyamaka Schools

The classification system of the two truths and the three natures are implied in Gampopa's Mahāmudrā works even though the terms to designate them are different from what is found in Madhyamaka and Yogācāra texts. For example, the description of the ultimate nature of the mind as non-arising and phenomenal appearances of the mind closely mirror the two truths in the Madhyamaka tradition.

Furthermore, since phenomenal appearances are not distinct from the ultimate mind, the unity of the two truths is directly introduced in the Mahāmudrā tradition, a position that can also be discovered in Nāgārjuna's writings. The sequence we see in Gampopa's Mahāmudrā of first establishing the absence of dualism with regard to the nature or clarity of the mind and then establishing that clarity itself as non-arising in essence (i.e., emptiness) points to a synthesis of the Yogācāra and Madhyamaka tradition. Additionally, the Mahāmudrā tradition's presentation of the view in terms of three aspects of appearance of the mind highly resonates with the Yogācāra tradition's presentation of the view in terms of the three natures (*trisvabhāva*). The two schemas resemble each other not only in their pedagogical method of searching for the ultimate reality by employing three dimensions of the mind, but also in terms of the eventual result of that search in the discovery of the nature of the mind as free from all dualistic structures. Such a synthesis of the Yogācāra and Madhyamaka tradition was indeed taught by Śāntarakṣita (725–788 CE century), four centuries before Gampopa. He first establishes doctrine of mind-only free from the dualistic structure based on the Yogācāra tradition at the conventional level and then goes on to establish emptiness of the mind as maintained by the Madhyamaka tradition.

Gampopa himself explicitly talks about such a synthesis, arguing that there are aspects of the Mahāmudrā view that accord with both the Yogācāra and Madhyamaka School. The paper will conclude by elucidating how Gampopa's Mahāmudrā employs the unity of two truths on the level of reality to engage in the integration of method and wisdom on the path.

Dialetheic Dialetheism: The Karmapas on the Paradox of the Two Truths

Jed Forman (Simpson College)

Garfield and Priest (2003) propose a Limits-of-Thought interpretation of Madhyamaka. They argue that ultimate truth is dialetheic, accommodating contradiction and paradox. However, they suggest that this does not constitute a bald irrationalism. Indeed, the very arguments that Mādhyamikas marshal to deconstruct conventional truth depend on the law of *non*contradiction. Thus, only at the *limits* of thought does paradox obtain. Within the limits of thought, however, cogent thinking is noncontradictory. In their words, Nāgārjuna "endorses paraconsistent logic with regard to the ultimate while remaining classical with regard to the conventional" (2003, 19n2).

Garfield and Priest's interpretation depends on, what Tom Tillemans calls (2016, 77 ff.), a parameterization strategy. On their view, Nāgārjuna uses contradictions as a reductio at the conventional level. For example, Nāgārjuna denies both existence and nonexistence to demonstrate the incoherency of essences conventionally. In this case, Nāgārjuna does not violate consistency; by parameterizing existence with "essentially," Nāgārjuna uses disjunctive denial to show that essences are absurd.

Yet when Garfield and Priest interpret the ultimate level, they eschew any such parameterization. They understand Nāgārjuna's argument that all things have the nature of having no nature to be an inclosure paradox. That is, the absence of nature is both the nature of phenomena *and* the denial of their having any nature. This statement is true but inconsistent—dialetheic. In sum, all contradictions

are either conventional, such that they could only be rendered true via parameterization, or ultimate, such that they are paraconsistently true without any parameterization.

However, on this explanation, the distinction between conventional and ultimate truth is *itself* parameterized. This is because the assertion that there are both true and false contradictions only avoids inconsistency through the parameter of a paraconsistent, as opposed to a classical, logical framework. By its own lights, therefore, this distinction itself must be conventional.

What, then, is the *ultimate* status of this distinction? Because it concerns the ultimate truth, it must be dialetheic. So, if it is conventionally true that all truths must be *either* dialetheic or not, it must be ultimately true that this disjunctive truth itself is *both* dialetheic and not. That is, it is *dialetheically* dialetheic. However, even this distinction that I just made is only conventional. Ultimately, it is also dialetheic, and so on *ad infinitum.*

I argue this nested approach to dialetheism gives a more consistent interpretation of Nāgārjuna through infinite deferment. To do so, I buttress my analysis of pertinent sections from the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* with selections from the Madhyamaka works of two prominent Karmapas: the Eighth, Mikyö Dorje (1507–1554) (2006, 359) and the Ninth, Wangchuk Dorje (1556–1603) (2013). While Mikyö Dorje raises the question of what type of truth the statement of the two truths is, Wangchuk Dorje gives an answer. Differentiating the common perspective (*gzhan grags*) from the ultimate one, he argues that any such differentiation *itself* only obtains in the common perspective, as well as that statement in turn, and so on. This implies a benign regress consistent with dialetheic dialetheism, rendering all phenomena groundless.

References

Garfield, Jay L., and Graham Priest. 2003. "Nāgārjuna and the Limits of Thought." *Philosophy East and West* 53 (1): 1–21.

Mikyö Dorje. 2006. "Grub mtha' smra ba bzhi'i rtse mor byon pa'i shing rta chen po dbu ma'i lugs kyi rten 'brel dang rten 'brel de ltar ston pa la bstod pa sgro 'dogs skur sdebs dang bral ba gzu bor smra ba'i chu bo wang ka." In *Gsung 'bum mi bskyod rdo rje*, 342–83. New York: Tibetan Resource Center.

Tillemans, Tom J. F. 2016. *How Do Mādhyamikas Think?: And Other Essays on the Buddhist Philosophy of the Middle.* Somerville, MA: Somerville, MA: Wisdom.

 Wangchuk Dorje. 2013. "Rigs kun gtso bo dbang phyug rdo rje'i bstal ba'i bu ma'i don bsdus bsdus pa." In *Karma pa sku phreng rim byon gyi gsung 'bum phyogs bsgrigs*, 85:1–10. Lha sa: Dpal brtsegs bod yig dpe rnying zhib 'jug khang.

Brushing Emptiness: Visualizing Madhyamaka Philosophy in Thangka Art

Shuchita Sharma (Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies) and Sheetal Rana (Banaras Hindu University)

This paper explores the intersection of Madhyamaka philosophy and the traditional Tibetan art form of Thangka painting, focusing on how contemporary Thangka artists engage with Madhyamaka concepts, particularly the notion of emptiness. Through a visual analysis of select artworks, this study aims to understand how artists translate the profound insights of Madhyamaka into the language of color, form, and symbolism, enriching aesthetic and contemplative experiences.

Introduction:
1. Brief overview of Madhyamaka philosophy and its emphasis on emptiness. 2. Introduction to Thangka art and its historical and cultural significance. 3. Highlighting the exploration of Madhyamaka in contemporary Thangka art.

Abstracts

Section 1: Iconography of Emptiness in Thangka Art

Section 2: Color and Emotion in Madhyamaka Art

Section 3: Depiction of Emptiness in Bodhisattva Forms

Section 4: Modern Innovations in Thangka Art

Section 5: Thangka Art as Contemplative Practice

Section 6: Challenges and Opportunities for Thangka Artists

Conclusion:

1. Summarize key findings from the visual analysis. 2. Reflect on the significance of contemporary Thangka art in communicating Madhyamaka philosophy. 3. Implications for the future of Thangka art and its role in fostering a deeper understanding of Buddhist philosophy.

Madhyamaka in the Context of Tibetan Life Writing: Why Did Mi bskyod rdo rje "Change" from a gZhan stong to a Rang stong Interpretation?

Jim Rheingans (University of Vienna)

In the extensive writings of the bKa' brgyud pa's versatile scholar-meditator Karmapa Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–1554), there are several extensive and shorter works that express his Madhyamaka (and related) views and there is a growing number of studies on them, most notably by Brunnhölzl (2004), Draszczyk and Higgins (2016), Draszczyk (2018), Higgins (2020), and Mathes (2020). Maybe the two most seemingly contradictory commentaries on Indian treatises are his assumed *gzhan stong* interpretations in his *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*-commentary (completed in 1531) versus a radical form of *rang stong* proposed in his *Madhyamakāvatāra* exposition "Chariot of the Siddhas of the Dwags po-Lineage," *Dwags brgyud grub pa'i shing rta* (finalised ca. 1544). My previous research on the Karmapa's life and doctrines in context (Rheingans 2017) has pointed to some biographical information that may add to our understanding of the Karmapa's intellectual development. Investigating further textual sources such as hagiographies (*rnam thar*), religious histories (*lo rgyus*), and letters, I will continue this research avenue, and propose some additional perspectives on doctrinal issues and apparent "change" of position. This paper thus wishes to highlight the importance of incorporating historical cum biographical contexts into philosophical debates.

Neck-crossed Lions: Madhyamaka and *Pramāṇa*'s Development and Application of the Reasoning of Neither Singular Nor Plurality

Dhondrup Tsering (Charles University)

The five great reasonings (*gtan tshigs chen po lnga*) are logical reasoning procedures which are employed to prove emptiness in Madhyamaka school, especially common in Tibetan Madhyamaka texts. One of them is the reasoning of neither singularity nor plurality, a logical procedure which is based on the truth that every existing thing is existing either in the form of a singularity or plurality (both of them being interdependent). It can be only empty or without nature if something is neither a singularity nor a plurality in the sense of ultimate nature (or ultimate reality). This reasoning is well explained and applied in the first time in the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (MMK) by Nāgārjuna. This article will first examine how it is defined and employed in MMK and other Madhyamaka texts. Then it will discuss its logical formula developed in the *pramāṇa* texts, especially in the

Pramāṇavarttika. Moreover, it will also investigate how other Indian philosophical schools view singularity (*eka*) and plurality (*aneka*).

The Fourth Anthology Collected in the Mādhyamika Section of the Tangyur

Kaie Mochizuki (Minobusan University)

In the Mādhyamika section of the Tangyur we can see four anthologies. Although the first three anthologies, *Sūtrasamuccaya* of Nāgārjuna, *Śikṣāsamuccaya* of Śāntideva, and *Mahāsūtrasamuccaya* of Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna, are well known, the last anthology, **Bhāvanākramasūtrasamuccaya* (D 3933, P 5329), has not been studied in detail until now. The *Bhāvanākramasūtrasamuccaya* has no information on its compiler or translator in its colophon. The opening verse of the text enumerates its eight-fold contents: (1) the difficulty of finding freedom and favorable conditions; (2) following a spiritual friend; (3) remembrance of the teacher; (4) practices of impermanence; (5) dispassion; (6) the noble truths; (7) the irreversible wheel; and (8) the perfect purity of the three fields, though the compiler later explains the seventh as love, compassion and the awakening mind and the eighth as the six perfections. The first five belong to the superior condition, the remaining three each form a proper division. As the first topic and the contents of the seventh are the same as those of the *Sūtrasamuccaya*, the compiler may have had some knowledge of the earlier anthology, but this is not certain. The text contains a total of 135 citations from 46 scriptures, with a noticeable number of citations from the scriptures compiled in the *Mahāratnakūṭa*. The *Mahāratnakūṭa* consists of forty-nine scriptures and twenty-seven from them are cited here (27/49 = 55%). The most cited scripture in individual is the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* and it is cited twenty-one times (21/135 = 15.6%). The next is *Daśacakrakṣitigarbhasūtra* and it is cited eleven times (11/135 = 8.1%). These two scriptures are not cited in the first three anthologies. Because of these specific characteristics, this fourth anthology may have relied on different traditions than other three anthologies.

Tuesday, Aug. 20, Afternoon Sessions

Panel 3, Book Discussion: Buddhism Between Religion and Philosophy: Nāgārjuna and the Ethics of Emptiness   Theatersaal

Convener: Rafal Stepien (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

Book Discussion Panel: Buddhism Between Religion and Philosophy: Nāgārjuna and the Ethics of Emptiness

Rafal Stepien (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

This panel is dedicated to discussing, evaluating, and critically responding to the recently published book Buddhism Between Religion and Philosophy: Nāgārjuna and the Ethics of Emptiness (New York: Oxford University Press; https://global.oup.com/academic/product/buddhism-between-religion -and-philosophy-9780197771303?cc=at&lang=en&). Following a brief overview of the book by its author, Rafal K. Stepien (Austrian Academy of Sciences), presentations will be given by Jay Garfield (Smith College and Harvard Divinity School), Sonam Kachru (Yale University), Anne MacDonald (Austrian Academy of Sciences), and Jan Westerhoff (University of Oxford). The author will then

respond to the foregoing presentations, and the panel will conclude with open discussion among panellists and audience members.

The book's blurb introduces it as follows:

Nāgārjuna (c. 150–250), founder of the Madhyamaka or Middle Way school of Buddhist philosophy and the most influential of all Buddhist thinkers aside from the Buddha himself, concludes his masterpiece, Fundamental Verses on the Middle Way, with these baffling verses:

For the abandonment of all views He taught the true teaching

By means of compassion

I salute him, Gautama

But how could anyone possibly abandon all views? In Buddhism between Religion and Philosophy, Rafal K. Stepien shows not only how Nāgārjuna's radical teaching of no-view or "abelief" makes sense within his Buddhist philosophy, but also how it stands at the summit of his religious mission to care for all living beings. Rather than treating any one aspect of Nāgārjuna's ideas in isolation, here his metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics emerge as a single coherent and convincing philosophical-religious system of thought and practice.

Grounded in meticulous study of original texts from classical India and China but innovating on the theories and methods underpinning contemporary scholarship East and West, this study shows how profoundly important voices from the diverse religious and philosophical traditions of the world have until now been diminished, distorted, and silenced. In opening up truly global horizons of existing and co-existing in the world, this work challenges the very ways in which we think about religion and philosophy.

Panel 2: Indo-Tibetan Views of Emptiness   Sitzungssaal

Conveners: David Higgins (Tsadra Foundation) and Filippo Brambilla (University of Vienna)

Panel Abstract

The central Buddhist view that all phenomena are empty of an intrinsic nature because they are dependently arisen has lent itself to a wide range of interpretations by Buddhist thinkers across Asia over the past two millennia. As Buddhism evolved in India, and its main philosophical schools were defined in terms of their differing views of emptiness (or selflessness) and the two truths, much scholarly discussion and debate was devoted to the divergent viewpoints of the two Mahāyāna schools, Yogacāra and Madhyamaka. In Tibet, where the Madhyamaka philosophy gained pre-eminence, the question of the correct meaning of emptiness gave rise to a distinction between intrinsic emptiness (*rang stong*) and extrinsic emptiness (*gzhan stong*). *Rang stong* was simply shorthand for the standard Madhyamaka view that all phenomena are empty of intrinsic natures (*rang gi ngo bo*; *svabhāva*). In contrast, *gzhan stong* signified a more affirmative view—prevalent in buddha nature (*tathāgatagarbha*) scriptures, tantra, and certain Mahāyāna eulogies (*stotra*)—positing that the ultimate is empty (*stong*) specifically of extrinsic (*gzhan*) adventitious phenomena, i.e., the conventional. Based on this distinction, which neatly characterizes the two longstanding cataphatic and apophatic strains of Buddhist thought, heated debates erupted over which definition of emptiness best characterizes ultimate reality, or rather, which interpretation best conveys the definitive, as opposed to provisional, meaning of the Buddha-dharma. This panel takes the distinction as a jumping-off point to explore interpretations and classifications of emptiness from a variety of theoretical perspectives, including compatibilist attempts to reframe

these differing views as complementary rather than contradictory. While focusing on Tibetan philosophical discourse, the panel also welcomes contributions that delve into the original Indian sources and doctrines underpinning its evolution.

Madhyamaka in the Kālacakra Tantra

John Newman (New College of Florida)

The Kālacakra *tantra* first appears during the early decades of the 11th century CE in India. The earliest masters of the Kālacakra tradition produced a very large mass of revealed and exegetical literature in a relatively short period of time. As is the case with Vajrayāna literature in general, the early Kālacakra texts are not primarily philosophical in nature if we define "philosophy" as a rational analytical inquiry into fundamental questions about metaphysics and epistemology. The early Kālacakra literature – like Indic Vajrayāna literature as a whole – instead focuses upon presenting the revelation of an elaborate soteriology grounded in ritual and yogic practice. Nevertheless, the early Kālacakra corpus is somewhat unusual because it provides fairly detailed information about the philosophical view which forms the basis of its mysticism.

The foundational exegetical work of the Kālacakra *tantra* is the *Vimalaprabhā-ṭīkā* of Kalkin Puṇḍarīka, a mythic *nom de plume*. In his presentation of Buddhist *siddhānta* Kalkin Puṇḍarīka tacitly quotes eight verses from the *Jñānasārasamuccaya* ascribed to (an) Āryadeva. This and other passages in the *Vimalaprabhā* and other Kālacakra texts make it explicitly clear that the Kālacakra follows the Madhyamaka view of Nāgārjuna, and it rejects a putatively absolutistic "idealist" doctrine of the Yogācāra/Vijñānavāda philosophical tradition. But given the various interpretations of Nāgārjuna's thought this raises the question of what, exactly, "Madhyamaka" means within the Kālacakra.

This paper briefly explores the Madhyamaka philosophical tenets (*madhyamakasiddhānta*) of the Kālacakra *tantra*, focusing on ontology. The Kālacakra *tantra* emphasizes Nāgārjuna's position that everything is "essenceless" (*niḥsvabhāva*), and that phenomenal reality (*saṃvṛtisatya*) is governed by the principle of dependent origination and is illusory. The two-fold nature of reality, emptiness and appearance, is expressed in Kālacakra mysticism as *śūnyatābimbam* – "emptiness image." This technical term designates the object of a *yoga*-induced vision of both the ultimate and the phenomenal dimensions of the universe. We will highlight the fact that this vision entails knowledge of both the ultimate nature of the universe (*śūnyatā* / *niḥsvabhāvatā*) and the totality of the quotidian objects of everyday mundane experience (*sarvākāraṃ paṭaghaṭādikaṃ bimbadarśanam*). We will conclude by considering possible precursors for the Kālacakra *śūnyatābimbam* doctrine – especially in Mahāyāna *sūtra*s and in Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatāra* 6.37–38 – and possible references to similar ideas in the *Bodhicittavivaraṇa* ascribed to (a) Nāgārjuna, and in two works attributed to Ratnākaraśānti.

Intrinsic Emptiness *and* Extrinsic Emptiness: Three Strains of Compatibilism in the Tibetan Emptiness Debates

David Higgins (Tsadra Foundation)

The Seventh Karmapa Chos grags rgya mtsho (1454–1506) once remarked that the views of intrinsic emptiness (*rang stong*) and extrinsic emptiness (*gzhan stong*) are without contradiction (*'gal med*). His comment touches on a leitmotif of the Bka' brgyud discourses on emptiness that arose in the post-Classical period (15th c. onward)—the idea that these contrasting emptiness views are best regarded as complementary rather than contradictory. My presentation will focus on three discernable dimensions of compatibilism underlying these discourses: (1) *Doxographical compatibilism* refers to

attempts to reconcile polarized theories of emptiness as well as the schools of Indian and Tibetan Buddhist thought with which they became variously associated. On the Indian side, *gzhan stong* was routinely identified by its proponents as Madhyamaka—or even as "Great Madhyamaka" (*dbu ma chen po*) by Dol po pa himself—but was typically identified as Cittamātra by its detractors, with the implication that it typified a metaphysical idealist standpoint that had long since been refuted by Indian Madhyamaka scholars. On the Tibetan side, the two rubrics became associated in the minds of many Tibetan scholars with two major schools of Tibetan Buddhism: *rang stong* with the Dge lugs sect and *gzhan stong* with the Jo nang sect. (2) *Hermeneutical compatibilism* refers to attempts to coordinate two general orientations of Buddhist thought and discourse: an apophatic or negating orientation (*dgag phyogs*) that refutes the existence of any essence or foundation amongst all phenomena, and a cataphatic or affirming orientation (*sgrub phyogs*) that makes room for positive descriptions of the ultimate. (3) Finally, *contemplative compatibilism* refers to attempts to combine two distinct styles of contemplation: analytical meditation (*dpyad sgom*) that discerns emptiness through a deductive process of eliminating objects of negation (*dgag bya*) and resting meditation (*'jog sgom*) that settles into the direct recognition of mind's empty nature. Within each of these overlapping dimensions, post-classical Bka' brgyud thinkers sought a middle way between polarized viewpoints by combining the virtues of each while avoiding the vices of privileging either one to the exclusion of the other.

Analytical and Direct Approaches to Emptiness in Yu mo Mi bskyod rdo rje's Four Lamps: Exploring the Tantric Forerunners of "Emptiness of Other" (*Gzhan Stong*)

Klaus-Dieter Mathes (The University of Hong Kong)

The *gzhan stong* hermeneutics of the Jo nang pas not only profit from a particular synthesis of Yogācāra and Tathāgatagarbha thought, but also from the concept of a primordial buddha (*ādibuddha*) in the Kālacakra, there equated with the "reflection of emptiness" (*stong nyid gzugs*), and the emptiness replete with all supreme aspects. Yu mo Mi bskyod rdo rje (1038?–1117?) summarizes these positive descriptions as the "emptiness of the path" (*lam gyi stong pa nyid*). Being perceptible for non-conceptual wisdom, it is distinguished from the intellectually determined emptiness of the view. This distinction must have led Tāranātha (1575–1634) and Thu'u khwan Blo bzang chos kyi nyi ma (1737–1802) to the identification of Yu mo ba as the originator of *gzhan stong*. It should be noted, however, that Yu mo ba quotes in support of his emptiness of the path a passage from *Vimalaprabhā* on 5.127, which characterizes Mahāmudrā as *rang stong*, i.e., the emptiness of all phenomena from an own-nature. It must have been in view of such passages that 'Gos Lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal (1392–1481) takes *stong nyid gzugs* in the sense of realizing the nature of mind, and relates it to Sgam po pa's (1079–1153) Mahāmudrā.

Although the term *gzhan stong* is not found in the proto–Jo nang reception of Kālacakra, it will be argued that Yu mo ba's emptiness of the path can be considered a forerunner of *gzhan stong*–emptiness, if its characterization as *rang stong* is restricted to the level of relative truth. Moreover, it will be shown that later Jo nang masters (such as Nya dbon Kun dga' dpal, 1285–1379) quote the same *Kālacakra*– and *Vimalaprabhā*-passages as Yu mo ba in his Four Lamps in order to justify their *rang stong*/*gzhan stong* distinction.

Dharmeśvara's (1092?–?) Interpretation of Emptiness in the *Kālacakratantra*

Filippo Brambilla (University of Vienna)

Chos kyi dbang phyug (1092?–?), better known by his Sanskrit name Dharmeśvara, was among the earliest Tibetan exegetes of the Kālacakra system. He had a direct connection to the Kālacakra tradition and its 'Bro transmission lineage through his father and main teacher, Yu mo mi bskyod rdo rje (1038?–1117?), who had studied and practiced Kālacakra under Sgro ston gnam la brtsegs (11th/12th c.), a prominent disciple of the Kaśmīri master Somanātha (11th–12th cent.). Notably, Dharmeśvara's scholarly pursuits extended beyond tantra, encompassing the study of Madhyamaka and Pramāṇa. He received his training primarily from Yu mo and furthered his studied at the Sa skya monasteries of Rkyang 'dur and Brgya gling, where he later emerged as a respected teacher. Continuing his father's legacy, Dharmeśvara perpetuated the family transmission of the 'Bro lineage, passing on the Kālacakra teachings to his daughter Jo 'bum and sons Nam mkha' 'od zer and Se mo che ba (12th cent.).

The present paper outlines Dharmeśvara's interpretation of emptiness in the Kālacakra system, drawing from his *Commentary on the Difficult Points of the Glorious Kālacakra's Definitive Meaning* (*Dpal dus kyi 'khor lo'i nges don gyi dka' ba'i gnas rnams 'grel pa*). Here Dharmeśvara distinguishes between a negative perspective (*dgag phyogs*) and an affirmative perspective (*sgrub phyogs*) on emptiness, associating them with, respectively, the Madhyamaka of provisional meaning and that of definitive meaning (*drang ba dang nges don gyi dbu ma*). Arguing that the affirmative perspective is the most consistent with the Kālacakra doctrine, Dharmeśvara elaborates a positive discourse in which he equates emptiness with ultimate reality and buddha nature, referencing both tantric sources and buddha nature (*tathāgatagarbha*) literature.

How Did the Jo nang Master Tāranātha Make Madhyamaka 'Supreme': A Sūtra-Hermeneutic Approach in His *dBu ma theg mchog*

Renju Guo (The University of Hong Kong)

According to the modern Jo nang master Ngag dbang blo gros grags pa's (1920–75) historical work '*A Clarification on the Religious History of the Jonang Lineage*' (*Jo nang chos ,byung gsal byed*), Nāgārjuna's 'analytic corpus' (*rigs tshogs*) and 'hymnic corpus' (*bstod tshogs*) reflect the *rang stong* ('empty of an own-being') and the *gzhan stong* ('empty of other') views of Madhyamaka philosophy respectively. This statement demonstrates a contentious issue throughout Tibetan intellectual history: Which mode of emptiness do these Mādhyamika teachings presuppose? The *rang stong* view asserts that everything, including the Buddha and his qualities, lacks intrinsic essence and independent existence. Conversely, some followers of *gzhan stong*, particularly the Jo nang pas, maintain that the ultimate buddha-nature of the mind is independently existent and empty of everything else which does not belong to it.

Although other Tibetan traditions, such as the rNying ma pa, the bKa gdams pa and the bKa' brgyud pa, also hold the *gzhan stong* view to some extent, the Jo nang teachings of *gzhan stong* are arguably the most comprehensive and representative within Tibetan Buddhism. One of the most influential Jo nang masters - rJe btsun Tāranātha (1575–1634) is a prolific scholar with a vast range of interests in the creation of tantric, philosophical and historical works. Recognizing the decline of the Jo nang doctrine, Tāranātha dedicated himself to the preservation and revitalization of the Jo nang tradition when he became the head of Jo nang monastery after 1588. He embarked on the creation of extensive philosophical texts to clarify and further develop Dol po pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan's (1292–1361) view, which he directly received from Dol po pa through meditative

visions and dreams, as documented in Tāranātha's autobiography. If we consider that Dol po pa established the fundamental tenet of the Jo nang school, Tāranātha should be recognized as "the first to systematize the Jo nang tenet system by referring to it as 'Empty-of-other Madhyamaka' throughout his oeuvre."

This research focuses on one of Tāranātha's philosophical works - '*Definitive Ascertainment of the Great Madhyamaka: Extensive Teachings of the Supreme Vehicle*' (*Theg mchog shin tu rgyas pa'i dbu ma chen po rnam par nges pa, abbreviated as dBu ma theg mchog*). It was compiled by Tāranātha's disciples to preserve his complete teachings on the core aspects of *gzhan stong* philosophy, with an unfinished final chapter at the time of his death. In the seventh chapter, Tāranātha employs the epistemological principle of Madhyamaka, specifically the notion of two truths, as a methodological framework for consolidating the *gzhan strong* reinterpretation of Yogācāra's three natures, eight consciousnesses and an ultimately existent *tathāgatagarbha* into the Mādhyamika teachings. This research aims to analyze how Tāranātha employed a sūtra-hermeneutic approach to justify the *gzhan stong* philosophy by reinterpreting the Mādhyamika treatises such as *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, *Bodhicittavivaraṇa*, *Śālistambakakārikā*, *Suhṛllekha*, *Ratnāvalī* and *Tikāyastava* attributed to Nāgārjuna, *Catuḥśataka* by Āryadeva, as well as *Bodhicaryāvatāra* by Śāntideva.

"Concept Dharmakāya" (*rnam rtog chos sku*)—the Madhyamaka of Unity— as Taught in the Dvags po Bka' brgyud Tradition of Tibetan Buddhism

Martina Draszczyk (Independent Scholar, formerly University of Vienna)

"Emptiness" can legitimately be seen as the starting point, focal point, and end point of Buddhism. This emptiness is alluded to in a well-known passage cited in the *Lalitavistarasūtra* in which the Buddha claims to have found a nectar-like dharma that is profound, peaceful, free from reference points, luminous and unconditioned. He adds, however, that were he to teach it, it would not be understood. Nevertheless, he showed his disciples the noble eightfold path, the Middle Path, meant to lead to the attainment of this realization. For two millennia, Buddhist scholars have sought to clarify the nature of this realization, not least of all in Tibet where it became a topic of intense discussion and debate and gave rise to many original formulations. An important innovator in the early days of Buddhism in Tibet was Gampopa (1079–1153), the principal source of the major Kagyu traditions. Central to his Mahāmudrā teachings was the expression "concept dharmakāya" (*rnam rtog chos sku*), with which he emphasized the unity of conventional and absolute reality. The dharmakāya, he explains, stands for the realization that all outer and inner phenomena are empty of intrinsic natures (*rang gi ngo bo*; *svabhāva*); for him, it also implies that the ultimate nature of mind, mind-itself (Tib.: *sem nyid*), is both empty and unobstructed, as well as connate wisdom (*lhan skyes ye shes*; *sahajajñāna*). In his *Excellent Qualities*: *Teachings to the Assembly* Gampopa specifies, that "the nature of mind is not nonexistent; connate wisdom is the truth. When mind is realized, the nature of reality is directly revealed." In this regard, the Fourth Shamarpa (1453–1524) elucidates, that "this view of the Dagpo Kagyu [tradition] corresponds to the Madhyamaka of Unity." As to the term "connate" he says that it "signifies the original nature of any phenomenon whatsoever, the simultaneity of emptiness and clarity [i.e. manifestation]." According to this view, mind-itself being compared with the sky as such is neither affected by all the cloud formations— the adventitious processes of consciousness and their manifestations—gathering and dissipating therein, nor is it essentially different from them. In short: "concept dharmakāya" alludes to the observation that the true nature of the adventitious processes of consciousness is not different from mind-itself. According to this tradition, the view of "concept dharmakāya" accords with the Buddha's *prajñāpāramitā* teachings and mirrors for example the well-known sequence in the *Heart Sūtra* "form is emptiness and emptiness is form."

The Truth in Context: Karmapa VIII Mikyö Dorje's Prāsaṅgika, Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltsen's Zhentong, and the Demands of Contextualization

Seth Auster-Rosen (The University of Chicago)

Karmapa VIII Mikyö Dorje (*Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje*, 1507-1554) relies upon epistemological and ontological contextualization in his Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka philosophy, just as Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltsen (*Dol po pa Shes rab rgyal mtshan*, 1292-1361) relies on a distinction between conventional and ultimate discursive contexts in his *zhentong* (*gzhan stong*) Madhyamaka. Even so, in his *Praise to Dependent Arising* (*Rten 'brel bstod pa*) the Karmapa disregards context in his critique of Dolpopa's Madhyamaka view. I argue that doing so hides important philosophical similarities between the two thinkers' views while also making the Karmapa's own system vulnerable to a similar decontextualization. In this presentation, I will briefly lay out the contextualization projects of both the Karmapa and Dolpopa, and then explore the dynamics and stakes of the Karmapa's critique of Dolpopa's Madhyamaka account in the *Praise.*

The ontological and epistemological contextualization central to Karmapa VIII's Prāsaṅgika-Madhyamaka is part of a broader philosophical program that Higgins and Draszczyk (2016, 2019) identify as a "soteriological contextualism." That program typically engages binaries—for instance, recognizing the distinction between mind's innate nature and its adventitious stains in a conventional context, but then recognizing their inseparability in an ultimate context—though for his Prāsaṅgika philosophy the Karmapa takes up a framework of three contexts (*gnas skabs gsum*) from the Sakyapa (*Sa skya pa*) thinker Taktsang Lotsāwa Sherab Rinchen (*Stag tshang lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen*, 1405-1477). Dolpopa's distinction between discourse accessible by a conventional awareness (*rnam shes*) and the awareness of primordial gnosis (*ye shes*) is redolent of the Karmapa's soteriological contextualization. However, in his critique of Dolpopa's *zhentong* philosophy, the Karmapa ignores Dolpopa's insistence that the stark opposition of conventional and ultimate "kingdoms" (*rgyal khams*) only obtains in the context of a conventional discourse, while such distinctions fall apart in an ultimate one.

In my presentation, I argue that the Karmapa's disregard for epistemological and ontological context in his critique of Dolpopa's Madhyamaka belies the similarity between the two thinkers' projects, but it also has implications for the intermural reception of the Karmapa's own three-context Prāsaṅgika view. By ignoring the importance of context in Dolpopa's system, the Karmapa makes that system easier to pillory as reifying the ultimate truth while denigrating the conventional truth. However, by reinforcing the polemical habit to ignore context in opponents' views rather than modeling a refutation that gives due consideration to discursive context, the Karmapa exposes his own view to similar decontextualization tactics.

Wednesday, Aug. 21, Morning Sessions

Panel 4: Candrakīrti's Epistemology: Bridging the Past and the Present   Theatersaal

Conveners: Jay Garfield (Smith College and the Harvard Divinity School), Sonam Thakchoe (University of Tasmania), Jan Westerhoff (Oxford University)

Panel Abstract

We propose a panel that explores Candrakīrti's contributions to epistemology and their relevance in contemporary philosophical discourse. Candrakīrti advanced Madhyamaka understanding of the structure of knowledge and of epistemic warrant. His works anticipate contemporary coherentist epistemologies and add nuance to our understanding of the two truths. They also ground the most important debates in Tibetan epistemology, debates often prosecuted in the context of Candrakīrti exegesis. And Candrakīrti is a major figure in contemporary engagements of Western and Buddhist philosophy. This panel will offer Madhyamaka scholars an opportunity to engage with his epistemological ideas.

Panel objectives:

1. To bring together Madhyamaka scholars from various academic backgrounds to explore Candrakīrti's epistemology.

2. To facilitate an examination of Candrakīrti's epistemological contributions through attention to all of his primary works, including the Prasannapadā, Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya, Catuḥśatakaṭīkā, Śūnyatāsaptativṛtti, Pañcaskandaprakaraṇa and Yuktiṣaṣṭikāvṛtti.

3. To foster dialogue between traditional Madhyamaka scholars and academic philosophers, encouraging a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary approach to understanding Candrakīrti's epistemology.

4. To assess the contemporary relevance of Candrakīrti's epistemology.

Out of the Slough: The Positive Side of Candrakīrti's Epistemology

Jay Garfield (Smith College and the Harvard Divinity School)

Many commentators — canonical and contemporary — have noted affinities between Candrakīrti's epistemological stance and that of Pyrrhonian skeptics. Some have argued that since Candrakīrti is a skeptic, he denies the possibility of knowledge, or denies that there is any truth in conventional truth. This is to ignore the positive phase of Pyrrhonian skepticism and to ignore the fact that the affinities between Candrakīrti's position and that of the Pyrrhonian skeptics extend to this positive phase. In that positive phase, knowledge is reconstructed as having no foundations, and as emerging from conventional epistemic practices. These practices enable us to distinguish truth from falsity within the conventional, and to distinguish justified from unjustified belief. I will argue that Candrakīrti is not an epistemic nihilist: he is communitarian pragmatist, like Wittgenstein or Sellars.

The Buddha's Knowledge of the World and the Place of Representationalism in Candrakīrti's Epistemology

Jan Westerhoff (Oxford University)

In his *Madhyamakāvatāra* Candrakīrti raises an intriguing epistemological problem for the way Buddhas know the world. The Enlightened One has understood that all things have the same characteristic of being unborn, that is, not causally produced by any substantially real causal relation, and hence empty. Having realised the essential identity of all things in terms of their emptiness, the Buddha knows the nature of all phenomena and is thereby omniscient. However, if reality is completely pacified in this way, lacking any causal structure that divides it into causes and effects, or into subjects and objects, it seems to be impossible for the Buddha to stand in any epistemic relation (which we would ordinarily consider to be a causal relation) that somehow mirrors the structure of the world. Such mirroring would be required since Candrakīrti appears to accept the Sautrāntika view of perception at the level of conventional reality, a view that endorses a form of representationalism according to which mental representations (*ākāra*) accurately mirror the external object perceived. How Candrakīrti utilises this picture in order to give an account of the way the Buddha knows the world will be the subject of this presentation.

Candrakirti's Deflationary Representative Theory of Perception

Sonam Thakchoe (University of Tasmania)

Richard Rorty identifies the concepts of representation and experience are closely related and have led to a crisis in contemporary philosophy. Rorty suggests that these concepts cannot be separated and proposes a radical solution in the form of global anti-representationalism. In this paper, I argue that Candrakīrti's deflationist representationalism served as a precursor to Rorty's radical global anti-representationalism. I propose that Candrakīrti's perception theory presents an alternative representationalism that avoids two problems identified by Rorty in contemporary philosophy. Candrakīrti's theory challenges the myths of the given and the problem of immediacy of representationalism. According to Candrakīrti's deflationist representationalism, sensory experience for ordinary beings is always mediated, necessarily fallible, and opaque. Hence, it cannot provide us with immediate, infallible knowledge or transparent meanings. Representations do not offer any epistemic privilege. Their occurrence does not imply understanding, and having them does not count as knowing them.

Does Candrakīrti do Epistemology?

Dan Arnold (The University of Chicago)

Depending on the sense of the expression "Candrakīrti's epistemology," it may not make sense to say he has one. To be sure, if the expression refers to Candrakīrti's *epistemological presuppositions*, as those are variously evident in his philosophy, then there can be no denying that there is much to be said about his preferred ways of appealing to our ways of knowing. But if the expression refers to Candrakīrti's *epistemological doctrine* — to his own contribution, that is, to the discourse of *pramāṇaśāstra*, which had become "first philosophy" for a great many of Candrakīrti's Indian contemporaries — then what is most salient surely is Candrakīrti's principled refusal of that discourse. This is particularly clear in the first chapter of the *Prasannapadā*, wherein Candrakīrti

presses an extensive critique — framed at the outset as parallel to Nāgārjuna's critique of epistemological terms in the *Vigrahavyāvartanī* — of Dignāga's epistemology. Many modern interpreters follow Tom Tillemans in thinking Candrakīrti's rejection of epistemology obviously problematic; if Candrakīrti thus eschews warrant for his claims, they reason, how can that fail to undermine his position? I will argue, however, that Candrakīrti's rejection of *epistemic* norms does not mean his position is altogether without normative support; in fact, Candrakīrti unhesitatingly invokes Ābhidharmika and linguistic-grammatical discourse alike as normative, and if that is acknowledged it may be easier to appreciate his critique of Dignāga as reflecting principled refusal of the idea that epistemology is first philosophy — and that, it should be clear, is not to refuse *philosophy*, but to make a philosophically interesting move.

Candrakīrti in Realist Garb: Using Mipham to Save Candrakīrti from the Semantic Interpretation

Pierre-Julien Harter (The University of New Mexico)

Candrakīrti has been read predominantly in anglophone scholarship of the past few decades as an anti-realist philosopher rejecting metaphysical realism. This talk will focus on the status of *saṃvṛti* for Candrakīrti to propose an interpretation of his view as a non-naïve metaphysical realism. To do so, I will sketch the difference of interpretations developed in two Tibetan commentaries on the sixth chapter of the *Madhyamakāvatāra*, that of Tsongkhapa and of Mipham. I will start by emphasizing the importance of upholding all three definitions Candrakīrti gives of *saṃvṛti* without privileging one over the other. I will argue that the semantic interpretation, which seems to follow the lead of Tsongkhapa, largely focuses on the definition of *saṃvṛti* as conventional usage (*saṃketo lokavyavahāra*), which explains the now universal translation of saṃvṛti as "conventional." In privileging this definition over the two other (obscuration and dependent production), Tsongkhapa identifies conventional existence and conceptualization, rejecting that there could be anything beyond conceptualizations lest we would entertain a subtle form of substantialism. For Tsongkhapa, all we need to establish a *saṃvṛta* entity, validly established as such, is mere conceptual imputation (*rtog pas gtags pa tsam*). While he agrees that there is no *saṃvṛtisatya* without conceptualization, Mipham rejects the claim that all there is to define it is conceptualization. Just because we need conceptualization to talk about *saṃvṛta* entities, it does not mean that they are reducible to our conceptualizations. For Mipham, a further criterion than mere conceptual imputation needs to be added: we need to know if an imputation corresponds to what a conventional entity is in fact because there cannot be an imputation without a basis of imputation. His argumentative move, I will argue, is a grammatical one. In other words, the definition of *saṃvṛti* as conceptual imputation should not be privileged over its definition as dependent production (*pratītyasamutpāda*). Mipham maintains them both, arguing that maintaining a reference to dependent production as a basis for conceptual imputation is not a remnant of a substantialist grasping. For him, there could be realism without substantialism. I will argue that this interpretation opens up the possibility of defending a realist interpretation of Madhyamaka, against the semantic and anti-realist interpretation. I will relate this realist interpretation to the realist turn in (Western) philosophy that has occurred in the past 30 years, in particular the contextual realism of Jocelyn Benoist, which could be brought in fruitful dialogue with Madhyamaka.

Prāsaṅgikas' Epistemological Coherentist Account of Candrakīrti: How Many Bullets Should Be Bitten?

Yat Ching Yeung (Temple University)

This paper examines the development and philosophical possibility of an epistemological coherentist account based on a Prāsaṅgika reading of Candrakīrti.

Prāsaṅgikas reject a single privileged foundational belief as an endpoint justification while emphasizing a coherent interdependent network in which epistemic parts mutually support each other. Critically drawing upon Taktsang Lotsawa Sherap Rinchen's (*sTag tshang Lo tsā ba Shes rab rin chen*, 1405–1477 CE) first two challenges among his "Eighteen Great Contradictions" to Tsongkhapa's (*Tsong kha pa bLo bzang grags pa*, 1357–1419 CE) integration and understanding of Candrakīrti, the first part of this paper demonstrates the gradual development of an explicit coherentist account that has been woven from a Prāsaṅgika interpretation. It involves responses from Khedrupjé (*mKhas grub rje dGe legs dpal bzang*, 1385–1438 CE), Panchen Lama Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen (*Paṇ chen bLo bzang chos kyi rgyal mtshan*, 1567–1662 CE) and Purchok Ngawang Jampa (*Phur bu lcog Ngag dbang byams pa*, 1682–1762 CE). Taktsang's challenges compel the coherentist position to refine itself and justify the compatibility between a valid epistemic warrant and a non-foundational metaphysical claim regarding the illusory convention.

However, a Prāsaṅgika reading might invite problems of epistemic relativism, semi-realism, and epistemic justification of conventional reality. So, the second part of this paper examines to what extent a Prāsaṅgika should bite these bullets. By analyzing a coherentist account, this paper hopes to reinforce the sophistication of the later Prāsaṅgikas' interpretation of Candrakīrti's epistemic view and engage it with the contemporary discourse in epistemology.

Section 7: Śāntideva & other 8th-century Mādhyamikas, Prajñākaramati — Sitzungssaal

Chair: Stephen Harris (Leiden University)

A Report on a Newly Discovered Palm-leaf Manuscript of Prajñākaramati's *Bodhicaryāvatārapañjikā*

Junqi Wang (Renmin University of China)

The *Bodhicaryāvatārapañjikā* (BCAP) composed by Prajñākaramati (c. 10–11th century) is the only published Sanskrit commentary on Śāntideva's renowned *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (BCA). The critical edition of the BCAP, which was published in the early 20th century by Louis de La Vallée Poussin (1901–1914), has been carefully studied by many scholars. However, this early critical edition of BCAP is far from perfect. According to La Vallée Poussin's "*Introduction,*" the critical edition is based on two Sanskrit manuscripts; he notes, "The first is in the Nepalese character and contains (with several large lacunae) the whole of the work; the second, in the Maithili character, contains only the commentary on the ninth chapter." This means that the first eight chapters of his edition of the BCAP are based only on a problematic Nepalese manuscript. There are therefore significant lacunae in the commentaries to the BCA's verses: 1.1, 3.22–33, 4.1–45, 8.18–22, 8.24–25, 8.40–47, and 8.108–186, as well as many smaller textual lacunae and unreadable passages scattered throughout the whole text which ultimately have hindered the exhaustive study of the text as a whole.

Abstracts

With the recent discovery of a BCAP Sanskrit palm-leaf manuscript (ZX0617–ZB20) in the Tibetan Autonomous Region, further study of the BCAP has become possible. This newly discovered palm-leaf manuscript remains something of a mystery. We have, for instance, considered issues such as the manuscript's unorthodox pagination (Wang 2022), the seemingly arbitrary insertion within manuscript ZX0617–ZB20 of a leaf taken from the *Saṃghāṭasūtra* (Wang et al. 2021) and multiple handwritings by at least two scribes.

On the whole, the manuscript is incomplete and only 120 leaves are left. To begin, the recto of the first folio contains two instances of Tibetan cursive script (*dbu med*). On the upper left corner of the folio there is some text inscribed by the manuscript's proprietor, or perhaps by a librarian. The note mentions that the proprietor/librarian is not certain whether this manuscript is a version of the Sanskrit *Munimatālaṃkāra* (*thub dgongs rgyan*) or the BCAP (*spyod 'jugi 'grel pa*). He mentions that further comparison with the text as it appears in the *bstan 'gyur* is required. On the verso of the first folio, the manuscript reads "*namo buddhāya ‖ mūrddhnā praṇamya sugatān* sahadharmma¦⊙kāyān utkhātamohatarumūlahataprapañcān*.*" Above the sentence "*mūrddhnā praṇamya sugatān* sahadharmmakāyā,*" there is an interlinear transliteration of the Sanskrit to Tibetan that is written using red ink. The writing stops abruptly after the short sentence mentioned above. The author of this Tibetan transliteration may have been the same proprietor or librarian who left a note on the recto.

A second note on the recto written in Tibetan script appears to the immediate right of the string hole. This note states that the original proprietor of the manuscript was called *dpyal lo tsā ba kun dga' grags* and that it later was passed on to the yogi *seng ge rgyal mtshan* from *thar pa gling* Monastery. This *dpyal lo tsā ba kun dga' grags* is probably the known translator of another text, the *Madhyamakāvatāraṭīkā* (D3870, P5271). According to van der Kuijp's (1993) study of the colophon to a Chinese-Tibetan version of the *Ratnaguṇasañcayagāthā* in Yunju Monastery, both *dpyal lo tsā ba kun dga' grags* and another figure called Jayānanda collaborated in the translation of the *Madhyamakāvatāraṭīkā* while serving at the Tangut court under Emperor Renzong (r. 1139–1193). The former was a Dharma Preceptor (*fashi*) and the latter was the National Preceptor (*guoshi*). Chen (1985, 55–56) notes that according to the reign title recorded in the Yunju Monastery version of the *Ratnaguṇasañcayagāthā*, the document can be dated to sometime after 1142 (Daqing 3). Therefore, we can say with some certainty that *dpyal lo tsā ba kun dga' grags* and Jayānanda would have served at the Tangut court at some point between 1142 and the end of Renzong's rule in 1193. The BCAP manuscript may therefore have been owned by *dpyal lo tsā ba kun dga' grags* before his posting at the Tangut court.

In the verso of folio 1 the manuscript begins with the *maṅgala* verses of BCAP followed by a commentary on BCA 1.1. And the manuscript abruptly ends with a commentary on BCA 7.25. Throughout the 120 leaves, the content is not continuous which would suggest that many leaves must have long been lost.

Still, after a thorough examination it seems certain that the large lacunae in the La Vallée Poussin (1901–1914) critical edition related to the commentaries on BCA 1.1, 3.28–33, and 4.1–45 can be complemented by the content of the palm-leaf manuscript. This paper aims to supplement the La Vallée Poussin (1901–1914) edition, filling in lacunae in this early critical edition with the information provided in the palm-leaf manuscript.

Śāntideva and the Virtue of Patience (*kṣānti*)

Stephen Harris (Leiden University)

This talk draws on the characterization of the virtue of patience (*kṣānti*) by the 8th century CE Madhyamaka philosopher, Śāntideva, to argue for the cross-cultural applicability of the category of virtue theory to Buddhist ethical thought. I begin by responding to two objections to using the concept of virtue to engage with Buddhist thinkers. First, I consider the concern that Buddhist metaphysical commitments to selflessness and radical impermanence entail they cannot be understood as developing a rich account of virtuous character. In response, I argue that the Abhidharma Buddhist account of reliably repeating casually connected mental states provides a sufficient metaphysical basis for theorizing conventionally existing virtuous habitual dispositions, for authors such as Śāntideva. Second, I consider the objection that Śāntideva's thought is best understood as a consequentialism, committed to the impersonal maximization of happiness. Such characterizations, however, are controversial, and risk imposing foreign commitments on Śāntideva's ethical thought. Moreover, consequentialist theories can also give an important role to virtue; therefore, we need not settle the question of whether Śāntideva is a consequentialist to engage with his conception of virtue.

Instead, I argue that we can engage more naturally with Buddhist moral philosophers by using the broader, more inclusive category of virtue theory, as characterized by Julia Driver. For Driver, a virtue theory is any systematic account of the virtues and their role in moral life. Significantly, any moral theory may develop a virtue theory; for instance, a universal consequentialist might hold that virtues are those qualities that help the agent maximize good consequences, and a deontologist can theorize the importance of virtue in performing one's duty or following the relevant rules. Using this concept, therefore, allows us to consider the insights of Buddhist thinkers like Śāntideva without situating them in relation to ongoing debates as to whether consequentialists, deontologists or virtue ethicists provide the most adequate theory of right action.

In illustrating these points, the talk takes as its case study Śāntideva's understanding of the virtue of patience, the disposition to remain mentally tranquil in times of difficulty. I show how Śāntideva develops patience to benefit its possessor, by eliminating anger, which he argues always damages its possessor, as well as by enabling the virtuous person to endure any amount of physical pain without mental suffering. The refinement of desire is also central to Śāntideva's account of patience, given that he claims that anger can only be fully overcome when selfish desires have been transformed into compassion for all beings.

Perspectivism and Linguistic Dynamics in Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra*

Roy Tzohar (Tel Aviv University)

The ninth chapter of Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (Bca, IX 1–8) delves into the understanding of the two truths, presenting three points of view: those of the "spiritually undeveloped" (as per Crosby and Skilton's translation, *prākṛtaka*), the "spiritually developed" (*yogin*), and those who surpass the latter by challenging their understanding through commonly accepted analogies (*dṛṣṭānta*). Prajñākaramati's commentary (heavily drawing from *Madhyamakāvatāra* VI) further elucidates these perspectives, illustrating varying interpretations of the conventional realm, culminating in the viewpoint of the *ārya*s.

This paper employs this framework as a general hermeneutical lens to approach the entirety of Bca, viewing it as a discourse that oscillates freely among these articulated perspectives.

Central to this exploration is an analysis of how this oscillation manifests through the text's employment of figurative language and key metaphors. Specifically, it examines how a certain pivotal term or concept —such as purity, the body, afflictions, and others—may alternately be linked to divergent, often diametrically opposed (!), semantic domains, consequently eliciting disparate judgments and values.

Contrary to mere happenstance, this linguistic dynamism is posited as a conscious and deliberate practice, reflecting an acute awareness of the inherent referential instability within language and as aiming to underscore the conceptually constructed nature of its referents. To underscore the uniqueness of this Madhyamaka perspective from other Buddhist nominalist approaches, the paper concludes with a comparative analysis with early Yogācāra, examining its account of discrepancies in perceptions of external objects among different observers.

Negotiating the Interplay of Conventions and Ultimacy

Joseph O'Leary (Sophia University Tokyo)

Philosophers and theologians scrupulously aim to "get things right," even if that slows down their utterance. Few topics are as hard to get right as that of "conventional truth." One may wander freely in Buddhist tradition picking up a great variety of positions, so that "conventional truth" becomes the charter of an anarchic "anything goes." Better to seek a stable basis for discussion in the seminal text of Nāgārjuna (*Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 24:8–11), and its elaboration by Candrakīrti; I take Śāntideva as following in their footsteps and not bringing any new complication to the conventional/ultimate dyad. Even as thus limited, the topic lends itself to complex and confusing discussion.

Perry Schmidt-Leukel, in his powerful work on Śāntideva, detects some inconsistency in my reception of Nāgārjuna, and sees me as sometimes swayed by and sometimes resisting the dictum of Mark Siderits: "the ultimate truth is that there is no ultimate truth." This may well be so. However, I would never subscribe to Siderits's slogan if it means reducing Madhyamaka to a flat negation of anything going beyond the empirical everyday. Siderits says that according to a "possible interpretation, the ultimate truth according to Madhyamaka is just that there is no such thing as the way reality ultimately is" (*Nāgārjuna's Middle Way*, 2013, 252). Is the "interpretation" just his own, or has it textual warrant? Siderits's interpretation has itself been variously interpreted.

The passage which Schmidt-Leukel cites as reductionist actually strains against a reductionism that would whisk away nirvanic ultimacy, and instead elevates the samsaric to the nirvanic:

"Saṅkara believed that every negation is implicitly the affirmation of something else—'Whenever we deny something unreal, we do so with reference to something real' (Thibaut, 2:168)—and even the ultimate negation of all terms applied to Brahman testifies to its supreme ineffable reality. In contrast, Buddhist negation does not posit anything at all. Yet this very nonpositing has a positive sense, attuning us to the freedom of nirvāṇa. In the negating itself emptiness is realized, and there is no further ultimate to be sought. Conversely, emptiness exists only as the negation of samsaric delusion. It cannot be set up as an ineffable absolute; rather the 'emptiness of emptiness' signifies that emptiness is always correlated with the dependently arising phenomena of which it is the emptiness. Thus questers after ultimacy always finds themselves referred back to the world of dependently arising phenomena. Buddhist apophaticism does not project an ever more hyperessential absolute but rather goes in the opposite direction, allowing one to taste the freedom of emptiness but giving one no foothold in anything absolute." (*Conventional and Ultimate Truth*, 2015, 280–1)

Yes, we are thrown back on the samsaric world and its conventional language, but in constantly discovering the emptiness of the dependently originating we undergo a religious liberation, and

are not trapped in the conventional. Samsara becomes nirvanic, and the conventional language becomes the language of ultimacy, the only language it has. Emptiness is nirvanic freedom and raises all samsaric empty phenomena to the nirvanic level. When the bodhisattva compassionately engages with the samsaric and its conventions it is not in order to reduce everything to the merely conventional, but in order to make the conventional a path of liberation by revealing its emptiness. "Precisely if its illusionary nature is realized, conventional truth can become a useful and even indispensable tool of religious life" (Perry Schmidt-Leukel, *Buddha Mind, Christ Mind: A Christian Commentary on the Bodhicaryāvatāra*, 2019, 464).

When Schmidt-Leukel says that: "In recognizing the illusionary character of all conceptually constructed reality, one inevitably implies the corresponding idea of a non-illusionary and ultimately true reality" (420), he sounds as if he is following the logic of Śaṅkara noted above, and imposing on Madhyamaka an implicative (*paryudāsa*) negation in place of the non-positing negation (*prasajya-pratiṣedha*) which is its chief weapon. He continues as follows: "But this correspondence is asymmetrical. It does not apply from the perspective of ultimate reality, which rather entails the voidness of all conceptual distinctions" (420). That would yield a different reading of the dictum "the ultimate truth is that there is no ultimate truth": when a yogī or a buddha has attained perfect insight into the emptiness of all dharmas, he can cast aside the crutches of the conventional and the very distinction of conventional and ultimate become inoperative.

Śāntideva, at least as we usually imagine him, is less interested in such sublime perspectives than in the usefulness of conventional truth as a means at the service of compassion and teaching. His chapter on *prajñā* is located as the climax of the work's presentation of *bodhicitta* in terms of lived praxis (see Schmidt-Leukel, 53–8).

saṃvṛtiḥ paramārthaś ca satyadvayam idaṃ matam | buddher agocaras tattvaṃ buddhiḥ saṃvṛtir ucyate ||9.2|| "The conventional and the ultimate, these two realities we accept. Ultimate reality is not a domain of cognition. Cognition is called the conventional reality." (Trans. Steinkellner)

Western science, philosophy, and theology have invested heavily in *buddhi,* but no matter how robust and true are the systems this generates, they belong to a fragile conventional world. Śāntideva urges that we fully realize this fragility by cultivating attention to emptiness:

vinā śūnyatayā cittaṃ baddham utpadyate punaḥ | yathāsaṃjñisamāpattau bhāvayet tena śūnyatām ||9.49|| "Without emptiness, the bound mind will return, as in the case of unconscious absorption. Therefore one should contemplate emptiness."

Thought goes round in circles and becomes a prison unless it can put itself back in contact with its real empty condition, by shifting from *buddhi* to contemplative *prajñā.* Then it can speak eloquently of emptiness.

The application of the conventional/ultimate dyad in theology multiplies the risks of confusion. In *Conventional and Ultimate Truth* I blended the Madhyamaka notion of conventional truth with Kant's "reflective (or reflecting) judgement," interpreting both as free and flexible practices. The very element of theology, I claimed, is the free play of reflective judgment over the traditional heritage of language and thought, constantly bringing to awareness its conventional status: "Open-ended critical reflection on conventions in view of ultimacy is an art of theological judgment that discovers its own principles and possibilities as it proceeds and as it relativizes or overcomes conceptions of the theological task that are less adequate to what is to be thought today" (ix). It may well be, as Schmidt-Leukel says, that I do not follow through on this in a radical way, but revert to standard patterns of seeing theological language as pointing to a reality which eminently transcends it. The conundrum here is how to affirm the objective truth (and basis in divine revelation) of credal utterance while recognizing the conventional fabric of this utterance (its historical contingency, reliance on language, on subjective factors such as the religious imagination, on available discourses

as it is torn between ancient horizons and contemporary regimes of truth, on process of communal discernment and consensus). The secure wisdom and soteriological purpose of Śāntideva may make him a trustworthy point of reference in negotiating these tensions.

Was the 8th century Yogācāra-Mādhyamikas' *apoha* theory an absolute acceptance of Dharmakīrti's view or a transformation for the sake of upholding the emptiness (*śūnyatā*) of all dharmas? - Focusing on Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla -

Daeyong Park (Ven. Dongkwang) (Dongguk University)

The paper aims to examine, as part of the philosophical discourse on "language, universals, and reality" in Mahāyāna Buddhism, how the 8th century Yogācāra-Mādhyamika philosophers, namely Śāntarakṣita (ca. 725–788) and Kamalaśīla (ca. 740–795) supplemented and transformed 6th century Dignāga's *apoha* system so that it could overcome its fatal weaknesses amidst the fierce debate on language (*śabda*) between Buddhists and non-Buddhists.

Nāgārjuna (ca.150–250), revered as the founder of the Madhyamaka school, spoke of the heuristic nature of language while advocating the absolute emptiness of all *dharma*s (*dharmanairātmya*). Later, in the 5th and 6th centuries, Dignāga presented an original linguistic theory known as *apoha* (exclusion of others).

As we know, once the theory was introduced in the fifth chapter of Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (PS), it immediately faced fierce criticism from other schools' scholars, particularly from Uddyotakāra (ca. 550–610), Kumārila (ca. 600–650), and Praśastapāda (550–600). They claimed to find fatal weaknesses in it and criticized it fiercely, especially the idea of co-reference (*sāmānādhikaraṇya*) and the relationship between qualifier and qualificand (*viśeṣaṇaviśeṣyabhāva*) in compound words such as blue lotus (*nīlotpala*). Since their criticism of *apoha* was quite sophisticated, Dignāga's innovative theory was in danger of being permanently lost. However, not long after these criticisms, Dharmakīrti (ca. 600–660), Dignāga's intellectual successor, composed the *Pramāṇavārttika* (PV), a comprehensive commentary on PS, addressing the weaknesses of the *apoha* theory. Due to the successful response and refutation (*uttarapakṣa*) in Dharmakīrti's PV, no trace of re-criticism by non-Buddhist scholars would be found for some time to come.

In the 8th century, the theory finally took on a new aspect with the Yogācāra-Mādhyamikas Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla. They held Nāgārjuna's view of emptiness (*śūnyatā*) on the ontological level, accepted Dignāga's *apoha* theory on the epistemological level, and employed Bhāvaviveka's *svatantrānumāna* on the logical level. While Bhāvaviveka relied on the epistemology based on Dignāga's theory of self-consciousness (*svasaṃvedana*), Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla relied on the epistemology based on Dharmakīrti's theory of non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*). Nevertheless, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla strictly adhered to the Madhyamaka position when it came to the ultimate truth (*paramārthasatya*) and acknowledged that Yogācāra's position was valid only with regard to *saṃvṛtisatya*.

In conclusion, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla accepted and transformed Dharmakīrti's *apoha* theory from the position of *saṃvṛtisatya,* and therefore their theory became the cornerstone for the emergence of various *apoha* systems, namely, the <above, below>·<affirmation, negation, positive negation>·<External, Internal, Non-External, Non-Internal> *apoha* theories in later Indian Buddhist philosophy.

Wednesday, Aug. 21, Afternoon Sessions

Panel 5: Madhyamaka in 11th–13th century Tibet and the Tangut State   Theatersaal

Convener: Zhouyang Ma (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

Panel Abstract

The development of the Tibetan Madhyamaka tradition in the early centuries of the Later Diffusion was an integral part of the renewed spread of Buddhist teachings, which itself was characterized by deepened interactions with Indic masters and intensified work of translation, alongside a growing output of indigenous Tibetan compositions. The profound influence of this period extended beyond the Tibetan Plateau, reaching to the heart of the Tangut State in the north, a noteworthy demonstration of transregional intellectual dynamics.

Scholarship on this era has highlighted the transition in Tibetan Madhyamaka from an interpretative tradition drawing from Śāntarakṣita, Kamalaśīla, and Jñānagarbha to the adoption of Candrakīrti's ideas, and the disagreement between followers of these two trends, which became embodied within the Svātantrika/Prāsaṅgika divide. Recent research has unveiled additional factors in the making of Tibetan Madhyamaka in that period that enrich this picture, such as the role of Atiśa in the transmission of Candrakīrti's thought prior to Pa tshab's agency, and the contrasting approaches to Madhyamaka represented by scholastic treatises and personalised instructions.

Set against this background, the panel has three primary objectives. Firstly, it seeks to uncover intellectual connections between Tibetan Madhyamaka scholars of this period and Indian Mādhyamikas. Secondly, it endeavors to reveal original interpretations and ideas of Tibetan thinkers, and to explore their possible role in shaping the Madhyamaka tradition in Tibet. Thirdly, the panel aims to draw attention to the interplay between the Madhyamaka tradition in Tibet and the Tangut State, shedding light on the people and intellectual practices at play in the transmission of the tradition and its adaptation within Tangut Buddhism.

This panel invites papers that draw on recently discovered Tibetan and Tangut textual sources, which provide valuable insights into these three areas of inquiry. These sources include early Tibetan Madhyamaka commentaries and native treatises preserved in the library of gNas bcu lha khang in Drepung Monastery and published in the *bKa' gdams gsung 'bum* series, as well as Tangut manuscripts uncovered from Khara-Khoto. These papers will engage in both philological and philosophical inquiries based on these significant textual sources to help build a more comprehensive view of the early developments in the domain of Tibetan Madhyamaka and the intricate nature of Tibeto-Tangut connections.

When Dreams Come True — A Contested View on the Division of Conventional Truth Ascribed to rNgog Blo ldan shes rab

Pascale Hugon (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

While the Tibetan tradition of Madhyamaka interpretation based on the "three Eastern Mādhyamikas" that later came to be labeled "*svātantrika*" is associated with the lineage stemming

from rNgog Blo ldan shes rab (1059–1109), none of the latter's works on the topic is extant. Studies of his Madhyamaka position have so far been mainly focused on cursory comments he made in his *sPrings yig bdud rtsi'i thigs pa*, on discussions tied to the integration of Buddha-nature into Madhyamaka (Kano 2010, 2016), and later accounts of his views, notably by gSer mdog paṇ chen Śākya mchog ldan (Seyfort Ruegg 2000: 28–34). The present paper relies on the examination of a variety of views on the division of conventional truth in the *dBu ma de kho na nyid dpyod pa* by the twelfth-century scholar rGya dmar ba Byang chub grags to explore the position that was, according to the annotations in the manuscript of that work, supported by "the translator"– in all probability rNgog Blo ldan shes rab. The position under consideration stands out as an extreme version of the Vaibhāṣika-Madhyamaka adopted by rGya dmar ba himself, and later by his student Phya pa Chos kyi seng ge (Hugon 2016, 2020), in that it not only endorses the direct cognition of extra-mental objects, but further claims that *all* non-conceptual cognitions are correct and have a true object. As such, appearances in dreams and hallucinations qualify as correct conventionals (*yang dag pa'i kun rdzob*). Support for and criticism of this view in the *dBu ma de kho na nyid dpyod pa* revolves around the interpretation of specific passages in Jñānagarbha's *Satyadvayavibhaṅga* and its commentary by Śāntarakṣita. My paper considers these key passages, as well as further arguments appealing to logic and the scriptures put forth by by rNgog Blo ldan shes rab's students Gangs pa she'u and Khyung rin chen grags and by rGya dmar ba himself. In addition to clarifying rNgog Blo ldan shes rab's position, this study thus intends to shed additional light on the dynamics of the development of the Tibetan Madhyamaka tradition in the early centuries of the Later Diffusion.

What Remains after Negation: Phya pa chos kyi seng ge's View on *vastumātra*

Jongbok Yi (Stockton University)

This paper aims to investigate the concept of the 'bare entity' (*dngos po tsam, vastumātra*) within the philosophical framework of Chapa Chökyi Sengge (*phywa pa chos kyi seng ge*, 1109–1169, Chapa henceforth), focusing specifically on its relationship with the object of negation and the concept of entity. In my preliminary analysis of Chapa's Commentary on Kamalaśīla's Illumination of the Middle Way (*dbu ma snang ba 'grel pa*), I found that he does not negate the existence of the entity without any specification, which he equates with 'existence without specification' (*yod pa tsam*), even while negating the entity as the object of negation. To clarify this point, the paper will scrutinize 'entity without specification' in *Bodhisattvabhūmi* to understand its fundamental meaning within the Mind-Only School and compare it with Chapa's interpretation of the entity without specification.

To investigate the relationship between the object of negation and the entity without specification and to provide context for Chapa's use of these terms, this paper will introduce two other concepts: the true entity and the conventional or false entity. This will clarify the meaning of 'entity' and distinguish it from the 'entity without specification' in Chapa's philosophical context. For the purposes of this paper, I will use 'entity without specification' to denote a basic entity devoid of any attributes.

Unveiling No-thing-ness and Not-that-ness: A Reconsideration of *med dgag* and *ma yin dgag* in Tibetan Madhyamaka Philosophy

Hiroshi Nemoto (Hiroshima University)

The aim of this paper is to unravel the conundrum surrounding the Tibetan concepts of *med dgag* and *ma yin dgag*, providing a new perspective to comprehend the highly complicated discussion of Madhyamaka philosophy in the Gsang phu ne'u thog tradition. It is indeed true that *med dgag* and *ma yin dgag*, originally derived from the Indic concepts of *prasajyapratiṣedha* and *paryudāsa* respectively, figure in some Tibetan Madhyamaka texts as semantic concepts relating to the interpretation of negative statements. However, in many Tibetan texts, they appear as epistemic concepts indicating the way one apprehends truth by negating the object of negation, a point not extensively articulated in previous studies. Tibetan thinkers, in many cases, are not discussing the act of negating but rather *the object known through negation*.

Specifically, *med dgag* is defined in two ways: [1a] as an entity known by negating something without projecting other factors (*chos gzhan 'phen pa*) into cognition, and [1b] as that which is known by discarding a positive factor (*sgrub chos dor ba*). Conversely, *ma yin dgag* is defined in two ways as well: [2a] as an entity known by negating something while projecting other factors into cognition, and [2b] as that which is known without discarding a positive factor. The former perspective (1a, 2a) finds support from Gro lung pa, Rgya dmar ba, Sa pan., and Tsong kha pa, while the latter (1b, 2b) is advocated by Phywa pa, Gtsang nag pa, and Mtshur ston. In any case, the truth of emptiness is generally characterized as *med dgag*, which I render as "no-thing-ness." Similarly, an illusion-like phenomenon is designated as *ma yin dgag*, and I translate it as "not-that-ness."

These epistemic concepts of *med dgag* and *ma yin dgag* were likely formulated in the Gsang phu ne'u thog school under the influence of the complexity of Indian Madhyamaka discourses. First to be noted is Kamalaśīla's discussion of whether Madhyamaka reasoning proves *prasajyapratiṣedha* or *paryudāsa*. Second, and not less important, is the interpretation of "non-seeing" (*adarśana*), which an Ārya attains within meditative equipoise. Kamalaśīla understands the Ārya's non-seeing as *paryudāsa*, implying that the mystic experience of the Ārya consists in vivid perception of ultimate reality, not merely the absence of perception. It is likely that Kamalaśīla's two discussions above are incorporated in Tibet, culminating in the epistemic concepts of *med dgag* and *ma yin dgag*. Based on this hypothesis, the present paper attempts to provide a foundation for understanding the complicated Tibetan Madhyamaka debates.

Jitari Among the Tanguts: Khara-Khoto Commentaries to the *Bodhicittotpadasamadanaviddhi* and Their Possible Relevance for the bKa' gdams Spread in Xixia

Kirill Solonin (Renmin University of China)

Among the textual clusters of Tangut Buddhism, the group of texts gravitating around the Bodhicaryavatara is one of the most well represented. Apart from the main text and its commentary, we have a set of "ritual manuals" based on the text, the most well-represented one is the the *Bodhicittopadasamadanaviddhi* by Jitari 950–1000?. For this particular text we observed the so-called "shift of status", i.e. the text by Jitari has generated its own unique commentarial tradition, unknown from the relevant Tibetan sources. In all probability, this commentarial tradition represents the local lineage of textual production in the Amdo and Khams area during the 11th–12th centuries. In

this study we intend to collect the known commentaries to the text and provide initial analysis of the contents from the perspective of the spread of bka' gdams teaching in Xixia.

A Preliminary Study on the *Explanation of the Meaning of the Two Truths Preserved in Tangut: An Exegesis Work Related to Atiśa's *Satyadvayāvatāra*

Mengxi Li (University of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences)

In Atiśa's notable works, *Satyadvayāvatāra* did not receive enough attention within the exoteric system of Tibetan Buddhism when compared to *Bodhipathapradīpa*. Nevertheless, in the Tangut manuscripts, there exists a set of texts of *Satyadvayāvatāra* and its associated commentaries or treatises based on their Tibetan or Sanskrit originals. This not only refreshes our understanding of the historical value of *Satyadvayāvatāra* and its related texts but also remedies the gaps in our knowledge regarding the early developmental history of Madhyamaka in Tibet. This research will provide a preliminary introduction to one of the Tangut commentary literatures closely linked to *Satyadvayāvatāra* attributed to an Rngog lotsāwa (whether or not Rngog Blo ldan Shes rab needs to be further examined), extract its framework, locate its quotations, and make its initial critical edition. This text is generally comprised of two sections: a preamble detailing the famous narration of how Naktso Lotsāwa invited Atiśa to Tibet which reveals the writing origin of this text, and the main text, which either elucidates *Satyadvayāvatāra* line by line or offers reinterpretations of its commentaries.

Further Exploring rMa bya Byang chub brtson 'grus' Influence in the Tangut State: A Case Study of the Tangut *Ornament of the Sixfold Collection of Madhyamaka*

Zhouyang Ma (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

In my earlier work, I established the presence of rMa bya Byang chub brtson 'grus (d. 1185) in the Tangut State (1038–1227). This paper extends the exploration of his influence in the Tangut State, focusing on a Tangut text (Inv. no. 2818) titled *Ornament of the Sixfold Collection of Madhyamaka*. The Tangut title closely corresponds to the Tibetan *dBu ma rigs tshogs kyi rgyan*, the title of rMa bya's most significant Madhyamaka work. While the Tangut text is not a direct translation of the Tibetan work, its structure mirrors its Tibetan counterpart, adding an intriguing dimension to the study. This paper will first introduce both the Tangut text and rMa bya's Tibetan work, followed by a detailed analysis of parallel passages. Through this examination, it aims to demonstrate that the Tangut text reflects the influence of rMa bya's Madhyamaka ideas in the Tangut State. The paper will conclude with general reflections on the Tangut assimilation of Tibetan Buddhist scholasticism.

<div style="background:#fbb040">

Section 8: Candrakīrti   Sitzungssaal

Chair: Yoshiyasu Yonezawa (Taisho University)

</div>

Candrakīrti's Advice on Disengaging from Desire

Karen Lang (University of Virginia)

The *Catuḥśataka* of Āryadeva (c. 3rd century CE) describes the bodhisattva's accumulation of the prerequisites of merit (chapters I–VIII) and wisdom (chapters IX–XVI). Chapter eight serves as a transition between the earlier chapters' concentration on accumulating merit and the latter chapters' focus on attaining knowledge. In the pivotal eighth chapter, he offers his advice on preparing students to receive the Buddha's profound teaching about emptiness. Several centuries later, Candrakīrti (c.600–675) structures his commentary on this text around a teachers' traditional oral explanations of texts and the practice of oral debates. Candrakīrti's primary concern in his commentary on the eighth chapter of *Catuḥśataka* is exposing the destructive potential of desire (*rāga*) for prolonging suffering in the relentless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. He employs both reasoned arguments and amusing stories to persuade people to give up their habitual ways of interacting with the world and to change their ignorant beliefs and behaviors. Candrakīrti intends to provoke anxiety and disgust towards the desirable objects of the world with the aim of refining this powerful reaction into disenchantment with the world. This short paper will explore how Candrakīrti in the eighth chapter of his *Bodhisattvayogācāracatuḥśatakaṭīkā* argues for eradicating desire and the subsequent adoption of the Buddhist path to *nirvāṇa*.

What Lies at the Root of Defilements: Focusing on Candrakīrti's Understanding of *satkāyadṛṣṭi* and *prapañca*

Yoshiaki Niisaku (Musashino University)

At the beginning of chapter 18 of Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* (PsP), which is the commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (MMK), Candrakīrti discusses reality (*tattva*) and entering into reality (*tattvasyāvatāra*). And then, in the established theory (*sthitapakṣa*) of entering into reality, Candrakīrti explains that *saṃsāra*, i.e., defilements (*kleśa*), actions (*karman*), and sufferings (*duḥkha*), is caused by the false view of a substantial ego (*satkāyadṛṣṭi*).

On the other hand, prolific conceptualization (*prapañca*), which is one of the most important concepts in Madhyamaka philosophy as the root of defilements, is mentioned in MMK 18.5, which is one of the most well-known verses in MMK. It reads as follows:

Due to the exhaustion of actions (*karman*) and defilements (*kleśa*), there is liberation. Actions and defilements are due to conceptuality (*vikalpa*). They (*vikalpa*) are due to prolific conceptualization (*prapañca*). But prolific conceptualization ceases in emptiness (*śūnyatā*). (MMK 18.5)

Therefore, as far as MMK 18.5 is concerned, Nāgārjuna understands the root of defilements as prolific conceptualization. However, there are two distinctive interpretations not mentioned by Nāgārjuna in Candrakīrti's commentary on MMK 18.5: (1) prolific conceptualization occurs when one perceives things; (2) the direct cause of defilements is the false view of a substantial ego, not conceptuality.

In this presentation, I would like to discuss what lies at the root of defilements focusing on Candrakīrti's understanding of the false view of a substantial ego which is mentioned as the cause

of defilements by Candrakīrti himself and prolific conceptualization which Nāgārjuna says is the root of defilements.

First, I would like to discuss (1) based on Candrakīrti's commentary on MMK 18.5 and MMK 18.7 with the new Sanskrit edition of PsP chapter 18, especially focusing on the concepts of characteristic (*nimitta*) and speech (*vāc*). Second, I would like to discuss (2) based on Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya*, and his understanding of *pudgalanairātmya* and *dharmanairātmya*.

Nāgārjuna for Candrakīrti

Yoshiyasu Yonezawa (Taisho University)

The historical attribution of Nāgārjuna as the founder of the Madhyamaka school is substantiated by Tibetan doxographies. Despite Nāgārjuna's undeniable influence on the development of Indian Buddhism, uncertainties persist regarding his direct commitment to establishing the Madhyamaka school during his lifetime. Against this backdrop, this paper shifts its focus towards Candrakīrti, a self-identified Mādhyamika, who expressed veneration for Nāgārjuna in his treatises. This redirection sets the stage for an in-depth exploration of Candrakīrti's reliance on Nāgārjuna as the founder of the Madhyamaka school, aiming to elucidate the depth and nature of this acknowledgment. The paper, primarily grounded in the analysis of the *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya* (MABh), unfolds in two distinct parts. The initial segment delves into the term '*pramāṇapuruṣa*' (the person of authority) in the sixth chapter of MABh. Through a meticulous examination of Candrakīrti's usage of the term '*pramāṇa*,' a comprehensive understanding emerges, revealing its broader application beyond a mere logical designation. The second segment engages with the final five verses and their commentaries in MABh, providing insights into Candrakīrti's position as a Mādhyamika. In conclusion, anchored in a rigorous textual analysis, this paper endeavors to ascertain Nāgārjuna's role in founding the Madhyamaka school through the lens of Candrakīrti. By scrutinizing Candrakīrti's reliance on Nāgārjuna, this nuanced exploration contributes to our understanding about the establishment of the Madhyamaka school.

On Hitherto Unknown Quotations of the *Māyājāla-sūtra* in the Madhyamaka Sources

Gleb Sharygin (LMU München, BSB München)

The *Māyājāla-sūtra* is a "new" (hitherto un- or only very scarcely known) canonical Sanskrit Buddhist *sūtra* from the recently recovered Sanskrit *Dīrgha-āgama*.[1] It was a canonical *sūtra* for (Mūla)Sarvāstivāda. My Ph.D. thesis was concerned with the critical edition and study of this text. This is a unique text with many unorthodox features.

I found that it is likely quoted at least once in Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* – Anne MacDonald could not identify (MacDonald 2015, Vol. II, §72, pp. 161–162) the source of the quote, because the *Māyājāla* had not yet been edited and translated at that time. The quotation has to do with Candrakīrti's criticism of the view of the conservative Buddhist regarding the nature of *pratītya-samutpāda* – only the "*anutpanna*" interpretation is correct. In order to prove that, Candrakīrti quotes all passages available to him from the conservative Buddhist canon that present the world as unreal or deceptive. Among them is the likely quotation from the *Māyājāla*, which was a canonical text of (Mūla)Sarvāstivādins. Slightly later (MacDonald 2015, Vol. II, §76, pp. 174–175) we find the passage on the *idaṃsatya-abhiniveśa-parāmarśa* ("holding fast to and insisting "this is the truth"", which is the central concept/problem of the *Māyājāla*) – it might also imply the *Māyājāla-sūtra*.

---

1   For the details on acquisition, structure and contents see Hartmann & Wille 2014.

Another possible quotation I find (following MacDonald, op. cit., fn. 338) is in Candrakīrti's commentary to Nāgārjuna's *Śūnyatāsaptati* (Erb 1997: 226.5–7). It is devoted to the notion of *idaṃsatya-abhiniveśa-parāmarśa-kāyagrantha,* which is exactly the main problem of the *Māyājāla.* As Felix Erb notes regarding the mention of the term (my translation, Erb 1997: 153, fn. 500: "Whereas in the Pāli sources the content of the dogmatically held view is one of the *dṛṣṭi,* e.g., the eternity of the world, etc., but the reality of the world itself is not doubted at all, in Ca[ndrakīrti – G. Sh.], on the other hand, it is precisely this idea of the reality of the world that forms the content of the *idaṃsatyābhiniveśa*". I argue that Candrakīrti proposed this tenet or doctrine precisely on the basis of the *Māyājāla,* because in it the *idaṃsatya-abhiniveśa-parāmarśa-kāyagrantha* implies namely the reality, existence of the world (which is negated, which is unique for the Śrāvakayāna *sūtra!*).

In my paper I will shortly present the *Māyājāla-sūtra,* then, my philological and philosophical analysis of the quotations in the *Prasannapadā* and *Śūnyatāsaptativṛtti,* and then discuss the significance of the *Māyājāla-sūtra* as a canonical Śrāvakayāna text for the Madhyamaka authors with regard to the strategies of legitimization of Madhyamaka by the means of quoting the suitable canonical sayings.

References

Erb, Felix. 1997. Śūnyatāsaptativṛtti. *Candrakīrtis Kommentar zu den „Siebzig Versen über die Leerheit" des Nāgārjuna [Kārikās 1–14].* Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

Hartmann, Jens-Uwe & Wille, Klaus. 2014. "The Manuscript of the *Dīrghāgama* and the Private Collection in Virginia". In *From Birch Bark to Digital Data: Recent Advances in Buddhist Manuscript Research: Papers Presented at the Conference, Indic Buddhist Manuscripts: the State of the Field, Stanford, June 15–19, 2009*, ed. Paul Harrison and Jens-Uwe Hartmann, 137–156. Wien: Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

 MacDonald, Anne. 2015. *In Clear Words.* The Prasannapadā, *Chapter One. Vol.II: Annotated Translation, Tibetan Text.* [Sitzungsberichte der philosophisch-historischen Klasse 863; Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens 86]. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press.

What Elevates Candrakīrti's Thought to the Highest Status?

Drukgyel Tsering (The University of Hong Kong)

In spite of the hypothesis that Candrakīrti had limited influence in India, his philosophy, known as Prāsaṅgika in Tibet, has been considered the highest expression of Buddhist philosophical thought in Tibetan Buddhism since the fifteenth century, with the exception of the Jo nang school. Red mda' ba and his student Tsong kha pa played a crucial role in advocating for its hierarchical place, arguing that Candrakīrti precisely interprets Nāgārjuna's thought, with Nāgārjuna, in turn, perfectly representing the Buddha's final intent. However, these Tibetan scholars offer strikingly different, and to some extent even conflicting, justifications for this stance. In the presentation, we will look into Red mda' ba's narrative and his philosophical argumentation supporting Candrakīrti's supremacy by referencing his biography and his independent Madhyamaka work, the *Light of the Moon: Distinguishing the Two Truths* (*Bden gynis rnam par 'byed pa gnad kyi zla zer*).

Thursday, Aug. 22, Morning Sessions

Section 9: Developments, Revisions, and Critiques: Theatersaal 8th–14th century Madhyamaka

Chair: Hong Luo (Peking University)

A Re-examination of Dharmakīrti of Suvarṇadvīpa's Identity as a Mādhyamika Scholar

Ven. Bandeng (Renmin University of China)

This paper presents a new perspective on Dharmakīrti of Suvarṇadvīpa (Dharmakīrtiśrī, gser gling pa chos kyi grags pa), a Buddhist scholar active in the regions of South and Southeast Asia during the 10th and 11th centuries, and a prominent figure in the Indo-Tibetan Buddhist community. Notably, as the principal teacher of Atiśa, Dharmakīrti had a profound impact on the Kadam school founded by Atiśa, as well as on subsequent major schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Despite the traditional Tibetan Buddhist (as well as modern scholars') view of him as a Yogācāra scholar, this paper challenges this perspective from three aspects, aiming to demonstrate that Dharmakīrti of Suvarṇadvīpa was in fact a Mādhyamika scholar:

1. Examination of early biographies of Atiśa regarding Dharmakīrti's life reveals that these accounts do not support the view of him being a Yogācāra scholar.

2. Analysis of the extant works of Dharmakīrti does not reveal any clear works belonging to the Yogācāra school.

3. Detailed analysis of quotations in Dharmakīrti's representative work, the Durbodhālokā (a subcommentary on Haribhadra's Abhisamayālaṃkāravivṛti), based on recently identified Sanskrit manuscripts and Tibetan translations, reveals content related to Mādhyamika and Yogācāra debates, further supporting the thesis that Dharmakīrti was a Mādhyamika scholar.

Imagining Emptiness: Tracing the ideas of emptiness and Madhyamaka in *utpattikrama* literature

Ryan Conlon (Universität Hamburg)

With the emergence of the *mantranaya* in the seventh century, ritual texts emphasizing a practice later known as the *utpattikrama*, or 'stage of arising', rapidly began to proliferate. These texts—be they scriptures, anonymous works, or the carefully crafted compositions of learned scholars—soon became arguably the foremost works of their time to describe Buddhist contemplative practice in India. Although having roots in earlier ritual texts that focused on image worship in the pursuit of worldly aims, this literature promoted a salvific form of meditation consisting in the production of intricate visualisations and the recollection of associations between those images and the elements of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*. From an early stage, traditional authorities recognised that this practice entails a high degree of mental fabrication (*kalpanā*) and complexity (*prapañca*). They were thus conscious of a tension between the practice and non-conceptual gnosis (*nirvikalpajñāna*) and emptiness (*śūnyatā*), both essential to Mahāyāna Buddhism's soteriology and philosophy. Consequently, the *utpattikrama* was not without its critics; however, as its associated texts continued to be produced,

their authors actively explored ways of integrating non-conceptual gnosis and emptiness, and they also occasionally advanced ideas that were distinctly Madhyamaka.

In this paper I trace the history of the idea of emptiness in literature pertaining to the *utpattikrama*. I ask in which texts was emptiness conspicuously absent, how its absence led to controversy, and what strategies were adopted by authors to incorporate it. In particular, I examine the extent to which *sādhana* authors used the genre to advance sectarian positions with respect to Yogācāra or Madhyamaka; to remain neutral and accommodating towards both; or to advance a position that elevates the *mantranaya* above and beyond the two classical philosophical positions. I focus especially on Indian *sādhana*s connected to the *yoginītantra*s, composed from the tenth to thirteenth centuries.

On Veṅkaṭanātha's Refutation of Madhyamaka According to His *Paramatabhaṅga*

Marcus Schmücker (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

My contribution will analyse the reception of Madhyamaka in the work of Veṅkaṭanātha (1268– 1369), one of the most important representatives of the late Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta after Rāmānuja. The theistic tradition of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta repeatedly refers to the Buddhist tradition in its polemics, above all in epistemological and ontological discussions. While references to the Buddhists are vague in the earlier development of the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, they become more precise and frequent with Veṅkaṭanātha. The numerous references to Buddhists in his works written Sanskrit are relatively well documented, but little attention has yet been given to such references in his *Paramatabhaṅga*, a doxographic work written in Maṇipravāḷa, a hybrid language combining elements of Sanskrit and Tamil. The fifteen chapters of this work deal above all with other traditions, including Madhyamaka, which is examined in the extensive *Mādhyamikabhaṅgādhikāra* chapter, alongside the three other Buddhist schools of Sautrāntika, Vaibhāṣika and Yogācāra. Focussing on this chapter, I will present and analyse certain important arguments in Veṅkaṭanātha's refutations. Moreover, I will demonstrate intertextually some of the many references to the Madhyamaka school in his Sanskrit works. I will suggest some possible reasons why, when establishing his own ontological presuppositions, Veṅkaṭanātha went to so much effort to refute this Buddhist school in particular.

Even Nāgārjuna Accepts: Remapping the Middle Way in the Light of Ratnākaraśānti's Interpretation of *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* Verse 24.18

Hong Luo (Peking University)

Starting with Ratnākaraśānti's interpretation of Nāgārjuna's (2nd/3rd CE) *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (MMK) verse 24.18 (24.18), the heart of the Middle way doctrine, we shall revisit the different explanations of this verse transmitted in classical Chinese, Sanskrit, and classical Tibetan and highlight two hermeneutical trends under which all interpretations of 24.18 may arguably be subsumed: the *treble-schema model*, which is best exemplified in Kumārajīva's (鳩摩羅什, 343–413 CE) Chinese translation of 24.18 and which takes 24.18 as a direct quotation of the Buddha's own words, and the *even-schema model*, the most typical advocate of which is Candrakīrti (600–650 CE) and which attributes emphatically 24.18 to Nāgārjuna. We conclude that the exegetical ramification on the origin of 24.18 may have been the hidden drive of the doctrinal disputes and sectarian dislikes in the history of Madhyamaka, and its significance for Buddhist Studies merits and awaits further explorations.

"The Two Truths are Not Enough:" Ratnākaraśānti's Critiques of [Pseudo-] Mādhyamikas in the *Madhyamakālaṃkāravṛtti-Madhyamāpratipad-siddhi*

Daniel McNamara (Rangjung Yeshe Institute)

One of the most pervasive themes in Mahāyāna philosophy—emic and etic, sympathetic and critical—is the idea that madhyamaka is, or could be misconstrued to be, some kind of nihilism (*nāstikatva*). This concern is found in early Mahāyāna sūtras such as the the *Saṃdhinirmocana* and *Aṣṭasahāsrika-Prajñāpāramitā*; in *śāstras* like Nāgārjuna's *Vigrahavyāvartanī* and Asaṅga's *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, and in contemporary academic discourse (Jay Garfield's "Madhyamaka is not Nihilism," and Jan Westerhoff's "On the Nihilist Interpretation of Madhyamaka." Given the vast stretches of time and space across which these conversations have taken place, it seems safe to conclude that this question in not definitively settled.

Likewise, given the scale of collective concern within the Mahāyāna about madhyamaka and the danger of nihilism—even across seemingly opposing camps—there are surprisingly few texts presently available to us that are dedicated specifically to this topic. This paper is focused on one such text, composed by the Vikramaśīla scholar-siddha Ratnākaraśānti (c. 970–1045): *Madhyamakālaṃkāravṛtti-Madhyamāpratipad-siddhi* (*Proving the Middle Path: A Commentary that Ornaments Madhyamaka*, hereafter MAV). This text takes as its main purpose the proper exposition of the two truths, but scarely mentions them again until the end of the text. In the interim, we see sustained arguments against Mādhyamika positions and demonstrations of the need for a third category beyond "conventional" and "ultimate"—namely, *paratantra svabhāva*. These discussion repeatedly cast (Pseudo-)Mādhyamikas as the worst kind of nihilists and declare that the three natures is necessary for any authentic Mahāyāna view, including that of Nāgārjuna himself. This paper will explicate Ratnākaraśānti's critiques, with special attention to why and how he asserts that Nāgārjuna accepted the three natures.

Previous scholarship treating the MAV has generally situated it among Ratnākaraśānti's other works (see, for example, Seton 2015), or has focused on specific trajectories of argument within the text (e.g., Moriyama 2013). This presentation builds on that past work and considers the text on its own and as a whole. This strategy allows us to consider, as a group, Ratnākaraśānti's arguments against various madhyamaka viewpoints. It also allows discussion of Ratnākaraśānti's attempts to correct these pseudo-Mādhyamikas.

This paper follows the progression of the MAV. After a brief introduction, this presentation summarizes the text as a whole, highlighting its broad division into critiques of others' views and proofs of Ratnākaraśānti's own. It then attends to refutations of three "pseudo-Mādhyamika" positions: (a) those who say that everything is false (*thams cad brdzun par smra ba*, **sarvālīkavāda*), (b) those who say everything is non-existent (*thams cad med par smra ba*, **sarvanāstivāda*), and—later in the text, possibly as an addendum—those who hold that "all phenomena are illusion-like" (*sgyu ma lta bu nyid chos thams cad*, **sarvadharmamāyopama*).

The paper will conclude with some reflections about what I take to be the main point of Ratnākaraśānti's argument: the two truths are not enough—at least, not on their own. Ratnākaraśānti does not reject the two truths outright, but insists that they are only coherent if one accepts the three natures.

"Cittamātrising" Nāgārjuna: Śāntarakṣita, Kamalaśīla and Ratnākaraśānti on *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā* 21 & 34

Daisy Sze Yui Cheung (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

Previous research has shown that both Śāntarakṣita and Ratnākaraśānti quote Nāgārjuna's *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā* 21 & 34 as a set of proof verses and interpret them according to Yogācāra theory. However, the reading of *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā* 21 as quoted by Śāntarakṣita and Ratnākaraśānti differs from the canonical Tibetan translation of the text. Kajiyama (1978) is of the opinion that Śāntarakṣita quotes *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā* 21 in the *Madhyamakālaṃkāravṛtti* and "changes the original reading so that the verses may be interpreted according to his own theory." Mimaki (1982) maintains that Ratnākaraśānti follows Śāntarakṣita in quoting *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā* 21 with a different reading. On the other hand, Tsong kha pa (1357–1419) points out in the *Drang nges legs bshad snying po* the following: Kamalaśīla said in the *Madhyamakālaṃkārapañjikā* that the "altered verse" was from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, and it was Ratnākaraśānti who attributed the "altered verse" to Nāgārjuna. The editors of Ichigō 1989 (Gómez and Silk) also maintain that the "altered verse" is from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. In this paper, I will re-examine all the evidence and propose alternative possibilities.

The second part of this paper focuses on the differences in interpretations of Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla vs. Ratnākaraśānti on *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā* 21 & 34. While Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla's interpretation of *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā* 21 & 34 is still within the framework of the two truths of Madhyamaka, Ratnākaraśānti interprets these two verses according to the Yogācāra theory of the three natures. In other words, Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla interpret the verses in a Yogācāra-Madhyamaka way, but Ratnākaraśānti is really "cittamātrising" Nāgārjuna in order to show that Nāgārjuna also teaches the "Madhyamaka of the three natures (*rang bzhin gsum gyi dbu ma*)" he upholds. This paper focuses on passages from Śāntarakṣita's *Madhyamakālaṃkāravṛtti*, Kamalaśīla's *Madhyamakālaṃkārapañjikā*, Ratnākraśānti's **Madhyamakālaṃkāropadeśa* and Ratnākaraśānti's hitherto understudied tantric Guhyasamāja commentary **Kusumāñjali*.

Panel 6.1: Buddhist Philosophy between Madhyamaka and Sanlun: From Nāgārjuna to Sengzhao	Sitzungssaal
Convener: Rafal Stepien (Austrian Academy of Sciences)	

Panel Abstract

Recent research on Madhyamaka philosophy has been intense. Many of the publications in this field have sought to elucidate the metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical positions of Madhyamaka in India and Tibet, but this has hitherto been coupled with a relative dearth of work on Chinese forms of Madhyamaka. These Chinese elaborations—known as the Sanlun 三論 or Three Treatise school and most closely associated with Sengzhao 僧肇 (374–414) and Jizang 吉藏 (549–623)—are the focus of this panel.

More specifically, this panel will be devoted to Sanlun Buddhist philosophy in conversation with its Indian Madhyamaka antecedents. The aim is to study the transmission of religious and/or/cum philosophical ideas and arguments between Buddhist South Asia and the Chinese world in the early centuries of the common era, specifically in a bid to unearth and evaluate Chinese Sanlun's distinctive

contributions to and elaborations on Indian Madhyamaka in historical and systematic manner.

Papers in this panel will be devoted to a diverse range of topics in Madhyamaka/Sanlun philosophy. They include the nature and possibility of agentless ethical action, the dismissal of the metaphysical realist thesis that things and their properties exist independently of our conceptual contributions and how this relates to the apparent conflation of notional codependence with existential codependence in Madhyamaka/Sanlun texts, the nature of the 'Sengzhao trick', the use of double negation in Sengzhao's works to resolve riddles of purity, Sengzhao's assertion of momentary permanence in conversation with conceptual pragmatism, as well as discussions of various other concepts fundamental to Madhyamaka Buddhist philosophy such as causation, conditionality, existence, identity, impermanence, and origination – all as seen through the lens of universal emptiness.

In terms of texts studied, these will include foundational treatises of this Three Treatise school including the *Middle Treatise* (*Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikā* / *Zhong lun* 中論) and *Twelve Gates Treatise* (*Shi-er men lun* 十二門論) attributed to Nāgārjuna 龍樹, as well as Sengzhao's major work, the *Zhaolun* (肇論), incorporating his treatise "Things Do Not Shift" (物不遷論). This panel forms one of a pair devoted to Sanlun philosophy, with the other panel focusing more specifically on the works of Jizang.

Nāgārjuna's *Twelve Gates Treatise* (十二門論)? A Contribution to Chinese Madhyamaka/Sanlun Buddhist Philosophy

Rafal Stepien (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

The *Twelve Gates Treatise* (*Dvādaśamukhaśāstra* / 十二門論) is traditionally attributed to Nāgārjuna 龍樹 (c. 150–250), founder of the Madhyamaka school. Together with the *Middle Treatise* (*Mūla-madhyamaka-kārikā* / 中論) also of Nāgārjuna and the Hundred Verse Treatise (*Śatakaśastra* / 百論) of Āryadeva 提婆 (3rd century), it is one of the three core texts of the Sanlun (i.e. Three Treatise: 三論) school, the Chinese development of Indian Madhyamaka, and consequently exerted a pivotal yet under-studied influence on the subsequent history of Chinese Buddhist philosophy. The text examines concepts fundamental to Buddhist philosophy such as causation, conditionality, existence, identity, impermanence, and origination – all as seen through the lens of universal emptiness. Although no longer extant in the original Sanskrit, the work remains available in the Classical Chinese translation of Kumārajīva 鳩摩羅什 (344–413).

This paper has two aims. Firstly, it is concerned to expound the metaphysical positions espoused within the text and assess the coherence and cogency of certain arguments presented in support of them therein. Secondly, it aims to situate the *Twelve Gates Treatise* within the broader currents of Madhyamaka philosophy by critically evaluating its attribution to Nāgārjuna based on the philosophical relationship between this treatise and other texts undisputedly authored by him. The paper thus provides both a critical summary of a major work of Chinese Madhyamaka Buddhist philosophy and a preliminary analysis of its place in the history of Indo-Chinese Buddhist philosophy.

Resolving a Madhyamaka Puzzle

Chien-hsing Ho (Academia Sinica)

Nāgārjuna (c. 150–250 CE), the purported founder of Indian Madhyamaka, argues against a great number of views that explicitly or implicitly take things to be endowed with an independent

and invariable nature or existence. However, Hayes (1994) points out that many of Nāgārjuna's arguments commit the fallacy of equivocation. On closer inspection, it is more advisable to say that some of the arguments appear to conflate *notional* codependence with *existential* codependence. That is, from the fact that the two concepts *X* and *non-X* are interdependent, they hold that the referents of the concepts are interdependent too. Why does Nāgārjuna make such an apparently implausible conflation? I take this to be a Madhyamaka puzzle. Taber (1998) and Westerhoff (2009), among others, have attempted to resolve the puzzle in their own ways.

I believe that the key to the resolution of the puzzle hinges on the Madhyamaka dismissal of the metaphysical realist thesis that things and their properties exist independently of our conceptual contributions. However, in this paper, instead of focusing on Indian Madhyamaka, I turn to the two Chinese Madhyamaka thinkers, Sengzhao (374?–414) and Jizang (549–623), to work out the resolution. Unlike Nāgārjuna, these thinkers hold or tend to hold that the myriad things are themselves indeterminate with respect to their nature and form. Like Nāgārjuna, they appear to conflate *notional* codependence with *existential* codependence. For my purposes, I attend to Sengzhao's and Jizang's works to show that they practically advocate the dismissal as well as accept the idea that a given thing does not itself legislate what specific concept must be used to apply to it. I elucidate Jizang's notions of the middle and of the provisional. Then I argue that, given the idea and the dismissal, it is possible and plausible for the Chinese Madhyamaka thinkers to make the conflation. This will then resolve the puzzle.

The Nature of the Sengzhao Trick: A Key Term in the *Zhaolun* and a Sinitic Response to Madhyamaka

Rafal Felbur (Heidelberg University)

Investigating the fundamental orientation of Nāgārjuna and his successors — the 'nature of the Madhyamaka trick' — has been a central focus in the contemporary examination of the Indo-Tibetan Madhyamaka tradition. This inquiry, tracing back to Burnouf, has gained momentum in recent decades, propelled by advancements in philosophy and religious studies, as well as by new textual discoveries.

However, the study of Chinese Madhyamaka or Sanlun authors, including the central figure in my paper, Sengzhao 僧肇 (fl. early 5th century CE), and his collected works, the *Zhaolun* 肇論, has not witnessed a comparable development. Despite seminal contributions to the study of Sengzhao by scholars like Tsukamoto, Liebenthal, and Robinson (all of whom wrote well over half a century ago), and despite ongoing attempts to interpret Sengzhao as a mystic visionary, a fundamentally rational but flawed logician, or a premodern practitioner of linguistic deconstruction, the debates in this realm have been overall noticeably less dynamic compared to those on the Indo-Tibetan side, both in terms of quantity and quality of published scholarship.

The chief premise of my paper is that one way to re-invigorate our thinking about the big questions concerning this material — what is the 'nature of the Sengzhao trick,' and, by extension, what can we learn from the Sinitic engagement with Madhyamaka ideas — is to return to patient and rigorous philological work on the microscopic scale. An effective way to do so is to zoom in on individual key terms in the *Zhaolun* materials and to carefully reconstruct the work that they perform in their discrete argumentative contexts.

In my paper, I focus on one specific term in the *Zhaolun*, a term which, I argue, plays a particularly important role in this corpus. The term in question is *ji* 即. Already Robinson recognized its importance: "The term *ji* requires special notice,' he wrote in 1967, 'since it exhibits both grammatical and lexical behavior of a peculiar kind," performing two distinct functions in the

Zhaolun: (1) that of copula of complete identity between A and B; and (2) that of a transitive verb meaning 'for A to become B,' or 'for A to remain B.'

In my paper, I discuss the use of 即 in the *Zhaolun*, with particular attention to the divergent ways in which this term has been interpreted in scholarship to date. I show that while many instances of *ji* in the *Zhaolun* do fall under one of the two definitions stipulated by Robinson, not all do. Moreover, those instances that Robinson's definitions fail to capture play key argumentative role(s) in the *Zhaolun*, and as such must be carefully accounted for in any attempt to make sense of these foundational Sanlun materials, and of their engagement with their Indian sources.

Double Negation: How Sēngzhào Applies the Zhuāngzǐ to Resolve Riddles of Purity in Classical Mādhyamaka Thought

James Garrison (Baldwin Wallace University)

> [The Buddha] is not pure, not defiled...
>
> (The Vimalakirti Sutra, trans. Burton Watson, 131)

The *Vimalakīrti Sūtra*, a text that prefigures the core of early South Asian Madhyamaka philosophy and greatly influences the proliferation of Buddhism in East Asia (*Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*, LXII; Fan Muyou, 59–61), maintains that defining purity in terms of impurity/defilement will not do when it comes to insight into Buddha nature. In this text, hearing the question "Why...is this Buddha land so filled with impurities?" leads the Buddha to respond:

> What do you think? Are the sun and moon impure? Is that why the blind man fails to see them?...[I]t is the failings of living beings that prevent them from seeing the marvelous purity of the land of the Buddha...this land of mine is pure, but you fail to see it. (*Ibid*, 29)

To simplify and summarize, the problems arising from this naïve view of purity can be understood simply as a matter of logic. To wit, defining something as purely one's own, like the self, is to define it in opposition to everything else, such that one's own pure self would always be defined and thus fettered by what it is not. Thus, pure light would be defined in terms of darkness, and be haunted by a shadow.

Sēngzhào, as one of the leading thinkers of the Sanlun school, advanced and extended this strand of Madhyamaka philosophy in a specifically Chinese idiom by applying a method of double negation to articulate the 'middle' in 'middle way' in terms at home in the Middle Kingdom. In particular, Sēngzhào argues that double negation defines *paramārtha satya* [ultimate truth], such that "Dharmas neither have the characteristics of existence nor those of non-existence" (*Chao Lun*, 17 [57]).

While the notion of double negation certainly exists in the work of Nāgārjuna (Kantor, 4–6), I maintain that Sēngzhào draws upon a specific sensibility from the *Zhuāngzǐ* to articulate, however fleetingly, the double negation of extremes of pure existence and pure non-existence resolving in an ineffable, insubstantial middle. In particular, the chapter 'Discussion on Making All Things Equal' rejects purity being localizable to a 'this' as opposed to some 'that' promotes instead the idea of occupying in the middle, at the pivot point (*Zhuangzi*, trans. Burton Watson, 10.). This notion of the center/middle (*zhōng*) is precisely what Sēngzhào draws upon where he holds that:

> Tao harmonizes with your spirit. Mysteriously you act (without acting) in complete conformity (with the Order of Nature), as does 'the centre of the circle' (which enables the gate to turn freely on its hinges, itself being unmoved). (*Chao Lun*, 55 [101])

Following from this, I maintain that, although Sēngzhào may be inconsistent in mixing classical Madhyamaka Buddhism and Daoism thought as some contend (Tan, 195, 204, 206–209), in bringing a distinctly Chinese sense of 'middle' to the 'middle way' his work represents a major conceptual advance key to Buddhism's spread in China.

The Conceptual Benefit of Sengzhao's Historic Error

Shad Gilbert (University of Helsinki)

Fifth-century Chinese Mādhyamika Sengzhao's assertion of momentary permanence is famously problematic. Rather than unambiguously affirming the emptiness of all things in his treatise "Things Do Not Shift" (物不遷論, hereafter TDNS), renowned translator Kumārajīva's star pupil instead declares that objects, while never spanning moments, nonetheless remain eternally lodged within their respective instants. Although inspired by MMK and other respectable Mahāyāna texts, this treatise has thus often been dismissed by the Madhyamaka community as violating orthodoxy or, at best, merely conveying conventional truth. The current paper, however, argues for the real-world, modern-day value of TDNS as a framework for the reconceptualization of common secular views regarding permanence and impermanence.

For metaphysicians, change over time is thorny, and for many others, the typical Buddhist response that all things perish immediately upon inception is terribly unsettling. The contention that moments replace moments like sparklers at a holiday party and that all things, oneself included, instantly arise and depart without, a Mādhyamika might add, fully attaining or lacking existence dispels any sense of security. "To the uninterrupted series of moments of the flame that one sees, wrongly, as a 'unity,'" fourth or fifth century Abhidharma commentator Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa-Bhāṣya* declares, "'lamp' is the name metaphorically attributed." Still, there is no lamp, just momentary sparks, and perhaps not even that.

Vasubandhu's Far Eastern contemporary Sengzhao ventured a bit of permanence. Notwithstanding its widely recognized commission of the so-called four assumptions (existence, non-existence, sameness, and difference), TDNS looks to Daoist progenitor Laozi in offering a considerably firmer alternative: moments do not vanish, they accumulate. After all, "a nine-story tower begins as a lump of soil," *Daodejing* records, so, reasons TDNS, "the cause does not perish in the past." "Though it resides in the past, it does not change." Understandably, later Mādhyamikas couldn't get on board. Even if more assuring, accumulation was a non-starter.

Still, China's Buddhist luminary hasn't penned rubbish. At points TDNS creatively promotes mainstream Madhyamaka ideology, and even where it falls short, this treatise provides useful content for a project in conceptual engineering. Employed as "pragmatic *a priori*" in keeping with Kantian pragmatist C. I. Lewis's conceptual pragmatism, Sengzhao's presentation of permanence and impermanence offers the cosmopolitan outsider a promising revision of these nearly universal ideas. As an autonomous entity on the fringes of Madhyamaka orthodoxy, TDNS through its advocacy of accumulation can be shown to offer amelioration of these concepts in spite of, and arguably due to, its historic error.

Thursday, Aug. 22, Afternoon Sessions

Panel 7: Late Indian Yogācāra Engagements with Madhyamaka — Theatersaal

Convener: Davey Tomlinson (Villanova University)

Panel Abstract

This panel will explore connections between Madhyamaka and the later Yogācāra tradition in India. Bringing together senior and junior scholars from Europe, Asia, and North America, and working at the intersection of philosophical and philological methods, we will inquire into the ways Mādhyamikas took up and reworked Yogācāra arguments; the ways Yogācāras took up and reworked Mādhyamika arguments; and the ways Yogācāras decisively responded to Mādhyamika criticism at the turn of the second millennium. Our panel will have three parts, with a pair of papers taking up each of these three topics.

The first part will consider Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla. Birgit Kellner will build on two recent papers where she has examined arguments in Dharmakīrti that have been presented as neither-one-nor-many arguments and put forward new interpretative hypotheses about them. Her aim here will be to trace the further reception and interpretation of these arguments in later Yogācāras, including Yogācāra-Madhyamakas such as Śāntarakṣita and Kamalaśīla. Pei-Lin Chiou will then consider Kamalaśīla's theory of cognition in the context of customary reality (*saṃvṛtisatya*), bringing together his reflections on this topic in the *Madhyamakāloka* and his accounts of *sākāra* and *nirākāra* cognition in the *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā*. She will show that Kamalaśīla's view of cognition in the *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā* is based on this theory of customary reality.

The second part will consider Prajñākaragupta's engagement with Madhyamaka in his *Bhāṣya* on *Pramāṇavārttika* 3.3–4 and its importance for later Yogācāra. Cat Prueitt will show how Prajñākaragupta appropriates and reworks Mādhyamika arguments against pragmatic efficacy (*arthakriyāsāmarthya*) as the mark of ultimate existence (*paramārthasat*). Prajñākaragupta thus claims that Dharmakīrti cannot finally advance pragmatic efficacy as the mark of ultimate existence, as earlier commentators straightforwardly read him; rather, it is the highest criterion of *conventional* existence (*saṃvṛtisat*). Nevertheless, against Madhyamaka, Prajñākaragupta holds that manifest non-dual awareness ultimately exists. Davey Tomlinson will show that Prajñākaragupta's engagement with Madhyamaka created a faultline in later Yogācāra, wherein we find Ratnākaraśānti defending a more conservative interpretation of Dharmakīrti, according to which pragmatic efficacy is a mark of awareness' ultimate existence, and Jñānaśrīmitra elaborating Prajñākaragupta's Mādhyamika-style critique of pragmatic efficacy.

The third part of our panel will turn to Jñānaśrīmitra's head-on confrontation with Madhyamaka. Parimal Patil will show Jñānaśrīmitra's general strategy, discussing four lines of argument Jñānaśrīmitra develops against Madhyamaka in the *Sākārasiddhiśāstra*, arguments against: (a) wide-scope interpretations of the neither-one-nor-many argument; (b) pragmatic efficacy as a feature of the conventionally real; (c) critiques of reflexivity (*svasaṃvedana*) as the distinguishing feature of awareness; and (d) the so-called *reductio* method of argument (*prasaṅga*). After introducing these arguments, he will discuss why Jñānaśrīmitra takes them to be successful and provide considerations in favor of us doing so too. Finally, Bhikṣu Hejung will focus on Jñānaśrīmitra's explicit response, in chapter five of the *Sākārasiddhiśāstra*, to Prajñākaramati's critique of self-awareness made in the

course of commenting on verses 9.17–26 of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. He will present how Jñānaśrīmitra secures the validity of self-awareness with a special focus on the correct way of designating the reflexivity of awareness.

What's in a Neither-one-nor-many Argument? A Dharmakīrtian Perspective

Birgit Kellner (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

The neither-one-nor-many argument (short NONMA) has become a historically significant Madhyamaka proof of emptiness in the form in which it was articulated by Śrīgupta and Śāntarakṣita. Certain later Indian thinkers, notably Jitāri, interpret Dharmakīrti as pursuing an ultimate Madhyamaka intention, a line of interpretation that also continues in the Tibetan tradition. Among the passages from the *Pramāṇavārttika* (PV) that are quoted in this connection feature also some that are taken to express a NONMA, especially from the section PV *pratyakṣa* 353–362. In two forthcoming papers (one in the Bloomsbury Handbook on Non-Duality in Indian Philosophy, the other in a volume resulting from a symposium in honour of Tom Tillemans to appear with Wisdom Publications) I analyze this section and argue that Dharmakīrti's alleged NONMA is better construed as a "neither-identical-nor-different-argument" (NINDA). This NINDA significantly differs from a NONMA in some of its logical features and, most importantly, argues from a Yogācāra perspective maintaining the ultimate reality of consciousness; it has been used by some later Yogācāras, albeit without attribution to Dharmakīrti, to support the doctrine that consciousness has false forms (*ālīkākāravāda*). Building on recent work on later Yogācāra theories of consciousness (by e.g. Shinya Moriyama and Davey Tomlinson), and expanding the frame of reference as well as sharpening logical analysis, this paper aims to develop a better understanding of the logical features, as well as the philosophical uses and limitations, of NONMAs and NINDAs in the period after Dharmakīrti.

Kamalaśīla's view on the nature of the *ākāra* of cognition and his theory of customary reality

Pei-Lin Chiou (University of Vienna)

The Mādhyamika Kamalaśīla (ca. 740-795) is renowned for his engagement with theories developed in the Yogācāra and Pramāṇa text traditions. Previous studies have noted that in his Pramāṇa treatise, the *Tattvasaṃgrahapañjikā* (TSP), a commentary on his teacher Śāntarakṣita's *Tattvasaṃgraha* (TS), he endorses various Yogācāra views on the nature of the *ākāra* of cognition in contexts where he argues from the Yogācāra position. For example, in the *Bahirarthaparīkṣā*, he defends the view that cognition is endowed with *ākāra* and that *ākāra* is unreal. In TSP ad TS 3626, he argues for the Buddha's omniscience from three perspectives: one he calls the *nirākārajñānavāda*, one the *sākārajñānavāda*, and the third is unnamed. The variety of positions on the *ākāra* of cognition that he takes in the TSP makes it difficult to determine what his actual view is. This problem is compounded by his refutation of the ultimate reality of cognition in his Madhyamaka treatises, where he argues against both the theory that cognition and *ākāra* are real and the theory that cognition is real while *ākāra* is unreal.

In this paper, I will explore Kamalaśīla's view on the nature of *ākāra* from a new angle, specifically in reliance on his theory of customary reality (*saṃvṛtisatya*). In Kamalaśīla's Madhyamaka system of thought, cognition represents the highest level of customary reality. That is to say, all phenomena (*dharma*), which are customary entities, are nothing but cognition. When

cognition cognizes customary entities, it cognizes nothing but the *ākāra*s in itself. Kamalaśīla's theory of customary reality thus contains clues for us to navigate his view on the nature of *ākāra*. His accounts of ordinary cognition of customary entities, along with the two kinds of transformed awareness — the supramundane non-conceptual gnosis (*nirvikalpajñāna*) and the subsequently attained awareness (*pṛṣṭhalabdhajñāna*) — based on his theory of two realities (*satyadvaya*), also help to address this issue.

The main materials to be discussed in this paper will include Kamalaśīla's definition of customary reality and customary entities in the *Madhyamakāloka*'s lesser-studied section on the two realities, as well as his statements on ordinary cognition and the two kinds of transformed awareness in that treatise and the *Bhāvanākrama*s. Attention will also be paid to his *Avikalpapraveśadhāraṇīṭīkā*, a sūtra commentary that can be seen as complementary to the *Madhyamakāloka* and the *Bhāvanākrama*s in terms of Kamalaśīla's view on the nature of *ākāra*.

Prajñākaragupta's Critique of Pragmatic Efficacy as the Mark of Ultimate Existence

Catherine Prueitt (The University of British Columbia)

This paper explores whether Prajñākara's understanding of the Two Truths in his commentary on PV 3.3–4 can be treated as a form of ontological pluralism. According to Prajñākara's view, which he develops building on but in opposition to his Mādhyamika interlocutor, entities that exist ultimately are those that manifest within a present moment of awareness, but entities that exist conventionally exist insofar as they are practically efficacious. The criterion that distinguishes the two modes of existence is whether or not the entity in question withstands rational analysis (ultimately existent entities do; conventionally existent entities do not). This would be an intriguing form of ontological pluralism that isn't found in contemporary work in metaphysics. Given the strength of Prajñākara's arguments, if there is a viable pluralist position in the neighborhood, it is likely to be one that contributes significantly to our understanding of the philosophical space that pluralists may explore. Moreover, considering Prajñākara's thought under the rubric of ontological pluralism clarifies the way in which his own view diverges from his Mādhyamika opponent.

Prajñākaragupta's Causal Scepticism and the Debate between Ratnākaraśānti and Jñānaśrīmitra

Davey Tomlinson (Villanova University)

In his *Bhāṣya* to *Pramāṇavārttika* (PV) 3.3–4, Prajñākaragupta offers a sustained criticism of causal efficacy (*arthakriyāsāmarthya*) as the mark of ultimate existence (*paramārthasat*). The critique is offered in the voice of a Mādhyamika interlocutor, but, contra earlier commentators, Prajñākara says that Dharmakīrti's intention here is to *accept* these arguments and their conclusions. That is, Prajñākara argues that the Mādhyamika's *Causal Scepticism* is true and is Dharmakīrti's final view on the matter: there is no source of knowledge that shows that what ultimately exists has causal efficacy; so, causal efficacy can only be the mark of *conventional* existence (*saṃvṛtisat*). (This is how he finally reads the enigmatic statement in PV 3.4d: *saṃvṛtyāstu yathā tathā*.) This is not to say that Prajñākara is, or reads Dharmakīrti as, a Mādhyamika—the Mādhyamika denies the ultimate existence of non-dual reflexive awareness, which Prajñākara defends. Yet this adoption of Madhyamaka *Causal Scepticism* in the context of Dharmakīrtian Yogācāra was profoundly influential.

Another paper on our panel by Cat Prueitt will consider Prajñākara's arguments in detail. This paper will show that Prajñākara's engagement with Madhyamaka created a faultline in later Yogācāra. The division between the Nirākāravāda of Ratnākaraśānti and the Sākāravāda of Jñānaśrīmitra concerns more than just the nature of mental images (*ākāra*s) and whether these are intrinsic to awareness: they also disagree about whether or not awareness in its ultimate nature is causally efficacious. Ratnākara defends a more conservative interpretation of Dharmakīrti according to which causal efficacy is indeed the mark of awareness' ultimate existence—and in his *Prajñāpāramitopadeśa* (PPU) and *Madhyamakālaṃkāravṛtti* (MAV), he responds to precisely the sorts of Madhyamaka arguments against causal efficacy that Prajñākara adopted. Meanwhile, in his critique of causal efficacy in third chapter of the *Sākārasiddhiśāstra*, the *Madhyamāvatārapariccheda*, Jñānaśrī cites and responds to relevant passages from the PPU (and alludes to the MAV, I believe). He argues at length for *Causal Scepticism* in a Yogācāra context for both epistemological and soteriological reasons, grounding his discussion finally on Prajñākara's reading of PV 3.4. This paper, then, will show the influence of Prajñākara's adoption of Madhyamaka *Causal Scepticism* on later Yogācāra by considering in detail Ratnākara's and Jñānaśrī's arguments concerning our knowledge of causal efficacy.

Jñānaśrīmitra and the Middle-Way

Parimal Patil (Harvard University)

Jñānaśrīmitra is no friend of the Middle-Way, either as it is understood by his *Madhyamaka* rivals or his nemesis in the *Yogācāra* text-tradition, Ratnākaraśānti. In this paper, I discuss four lines of argument that Jñānaśrīmitra develops against *Madhyamaka* in his magnum opus, the Sākārasiddhiśāstra: His arguments against (a) wide-scope interpretations of the "neither one nor many" argument; (b) "pragmatic efficacy" (*ārthakriyā*) as a feature of the conventionally real; (c) critiques of reflexivity (*svasaṃvedana*) as the distinguishing feature of awareness; and (d) the so-called *reductio* method of argument (*prasaṅga*). After introducing these lines of argument, I briefly discuss why Jñānaśrīmitra takes them to be successful and provide considerations in favor of us doing so too. Along the way, I consider what this may tell us about the history of Madhyamaka during the final phase of Buddhist philosophy in India.

Jñānaśrīmitra's Defence against the Candrakīrtian Critique of Self-awareness: With Reference to Chapter Five of the *Sākārasiddhiśāstra*

Bhikṣu Hejung (Joong-Ang Sangha University)

The landscape of late Indian Buddhism is embellished with the divergent philosophical positions of competing schools. These intra-Buddhist arguments have complexity for deciding what philosophical position belongs to which particular school. In Ratnākaraśānti's (10th century) *Prajñāpāramitopadeśa* as a case in point, we see that the famous Madhyamaka-Yogācāra binary brought about a more intricate distinction that these two are further divided into the four in terms of whether the validity of appearance (*ākāra*) is affirmed or not. Jñānaśrīmitra, apart from his rivalry with Ratnākaraśānti, also engages in arguments against Madhyamaka schools in view of Ratnākaraśānti's distinction. In chapter five of the *Sākārasiddhiśāstra*, where Jñānaśrīmitra defends self-awareness against the critique of Madhyamaka schools, he gives a special treatment of the critique of self-awareness raised by a Candrakīrtian Mādhyamika, Prajñākaramti.

Jñānaśrīmitra begins this section by presenting Śāntarakṣita's *Madhyamakālaṅkāra* 16–17 (also *Tattvasaṅgraha* 1999–2000) that Prajñākaramati quotes and refutes in his great commentary of the *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Prajñākaramti criticizes that Śāntarakṣita endorses the validity of self-awareness being restricted to the conventional level. This is because the reflexivity of awareness would not make sense even to ordinary people's linguistic convention. To support his argument, Prajñākaramati mentions the famous scriptural sources that refute self-awareness: the mind cannot know itself, and the tip of a finger cannot touch itself. Further, Prajñākaramati presents *Bodhicaryāvatāra* 9.22–23 as showing Śāntideva's intention to deny self-awareness.

This paper aims to illuminate how Jñānaśrīmitra defends self-awareness against Prajñākaramati's critique. He first points out that the reflexivity of awareness does not violate the linguistic convention of the world because we see intransitive expressions such as 'a lamp shines forth itself' and so on. Regarding the scriptural sources that defeat self-awareness, Jñānaśrīmitra gives a different interpretation that the true intention of those scriptures is to negate the subtle subject-object duality crept into one's mind, not to defeat self-awareness. To support his interpretation, Jñānaśrīmitra cites other scriptural sources such as the *Saṃdhinirmocasūtra* and the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. Furthermore, according to Jñānaśrīmitra, Prajñākaramati misunderstands Śāntideva's intention. Jñānaśrīmitra goes through *Bodhicaryāvatāra* 9.26, where he spots Prajñākaramati's misinterpretation that led to reading his position into what Śāntideva said.

Panel 6.2: Buddhist Philosophy between Madhyamaka and Sanlun: From Sengzhao to Jizang   Sitzungssaal

Convener: Rafal Stepien (Austrian Academy of Sciences)

Panel Abstract

Recent research on Madhyamaka philosophy has been intense. Many of the publications in this field have sought to elucidate the metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical positions of Madhyamaka in India and Tibet, but this has hitherto been coupled with a relative dearth of work on Chinese forms of Madhyamaka. These Chinese elaborations—known as the Sanlun 三論 or Three Treatise school and most closely associated with Sengzhao 僧肇 (374–414) and Jizang 吉藏 (549–623)—are the focus of this panel.

More specifically, this panel will be devoted to Sanlun Buddhist philosophy in conversation with its Indian Madhyamaka antecedents. The aim is to study the transmission of religious and/or/cum philosophical ideas and arguments between Buddhist South Asia and the Chinese world in the early centuries of the common era, specifically in a bid to unearth and evaluate Chinese Sanlun's distinctive contributions to and elaborations on Indian Madhyamaka in historical and systematic manner.

Papers in this panel will be devoted to a diverse range of topics in Madhyamaka/Sanlun metaphysics, epistemology, and hermeneutics. Much of the focus, however, will be on the notion of the two truths (*satyadvaya* / *erdi* 二諦); that is, conventional truth (*saṃvṛtisatya* / *shisu di* 世俗諦) and ultimate truth (*paramārthasatya* / *zhendi* 真諦) as developed in and around the writings of Jizang. Thus, Jizang's formulation of the doctrine of the mutual identity of the two truths with reference to the semantic non-dualist reading, the structurally homomorphic relationship between Jizang's deployment of the two truths and the dichotomy of *shi* 是 ("affirmation") and *fei* 非 ("negation") in pre-existing paradigms of abstract thought within the Chinese intellectual

world, and Jizang's employment of the distinction between the two truths as an essential means of preventing practitioners of the Dharma from hypostatizing any form of linguistic representation as unambiguous truth, will be discussed, as will Jizang's epistemological use of *guan* 觀 as a critical instrument permitting perception of the Real 实相, the Middle Way.

In terms of texts studied, these will include Jizang's *On the Doctrine of the Two Truths* (*Erdi yi* 二諦義), his comentary to Nāgārjuna's *Middle Treatise* (*Mūlamadhyamaka-kārikā / Zhong lun* 中論) the *Zhongguanlun-shu* (中觀論疏), and his two commentaries on the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra*. This panel forms one of a pair devoted to Sanlun philosophy, with the other panel focusing more specifically on works from Nāgārjuna to Sengzhao.

Jizang on the Mutual Identity between the Two Truths: A Critical Reassessment of the Semantic Non-Dualist Reading of the Two Truths Doctrine as it Pertains to Sinitic Madhyamaka Buddhism

Ernest Brewster (Austrian Academie of Sciences)

Jizang (549–623), the Sino-Parthian Buddhist scholar-monk of the Sui Dynasty, advances the argument that the 'conventional truth' (Skt.: *saṃvṛtisatya*; Chi.: *shisu di* 世俗諦) and the 'ultimate truth' (Skt.: *paramārthasatya*; Chi.: *zhendi* 真諦) of the nature of the 'dharmas' (Chi.: *fa* 法), the fundamental constituents that make up the entirety of the universe, are "mutually identical" (Chi.: *xiangji* 相即). In his treatises and commentarial works, notably in his seminal work, *On the Doctrine of the Two Truths* (Chi.: *erdi yi* 二諦義), Jizang puts forward his formulation of the doctrine of the mutual identity of the two truths. Here he makes two claims: first, he contends that the two truths are fundamentally inseparable in that they together function to make evident one and the same reality; second, he argues that the two truths are mutually non-contradictory, in that one and the same entity can both conventionally exist as a discrete entity possessing an 'intrinsic nature' (Skt.: *svabhāva*; Chi.: *zixing* 自性) that is neither derived from another entity or entities, and ultimately not exist as a discrete entity possessing an intrinsic nature. Jizang concludes that conventional truth and ultimate truth are mutually non-exclusive aspects of one and the same reality; that, taken together, two truths provide an account for how the commonplace perception of conventional reality is compatible with the fundamental emptiness of all dharmas; and that the doctrine of two truths comprises an exhaustive explanation of all dharmas.

Jay Garfield and Mark Siderits, deriving their reading from Indic Buddhist sources, in particular, the *Root Stanzas on the Middle Way* (Skt.: *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*) composed by the Mādhyamika philosopher Nāgārjuna, propose a semantic non-dualist explanation of the relationship between two truths. They argue that because ultimate truth accurately illuminates the nature of conventional reality, ultimate truth and conventional truth are mutually compatible. To Garfield and Siderits, ultimate truth, as it neither asserts nor affirms the intrinsic reality of 'conceptual fictions,' corresponds to the facts of conventional reality. In a pithy summarization, Garfield and Siderits state: The ultimate truth is that there is no ultimate truth. A corollary to this proposition, as unpacked by Jan Westerhoff, is that the only ultimate reality is the conventional reality. In Westerhoff's reading, ultimate truth does not reference a metaphysical reality, or layer of reality, that lies beyond a conventional reality that is characterized by the constant flux of arising and ceasing entities. Yasuo Deguchi and Chien-hsing Ho, however, regard Jizang's understanding of the doctrine of the two truths as a metaphysical explanation of reality wherein ultimate truth designates an ultimate reality that transcends the conventional reality.

In this paper, I argue that the conception of the mutual identity between two truths, developed throughout the body of work of Jizang, is not predicated on a metaphysical explanation of the

nature of reality. Instead, I propose that a semantic non-dualist reading of the doctrine of two truths is congruent with Jizang's explanation of the nature of reality.

Comparative Background for the Study of the Two Truths in Post-Nāgārjunian Madhyamaka Exegesis

Jackson Macor (University of California, Berkeley)

The doctrine of the two truths (Skt. *satyadvaya*, T. *bden gnyis*, Ch. *erdi* 二諦) has proven to be one of the most potent, as well as one of the most contentious, exegetical devices in the interpretation of Madhyamaka philosophy. This is despite the fact that the two truths scarcely feature in the writings of Nāgārjuna (c. 150–250), and are therefore an object of uncertain and perhaps even dubious importance in his overall project. This makes it all the more remarkable that Jizang 吉藏 (549–623), the most prolific Chinese exegete of Madhyamaka texts, identifies the two truths as the central tenet (Ch. *zong* 宗) of the Chinese translation of the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (i.e., the *Zhonglun* 中論), thereby placing the two truths at the very heart of Madhyamaka thought. This begs the simple question of why Jizang forefronts the two truths when they occupy such a seemingly peripheral role in the writings of Nāgārjuna.

In this paper, I shall argue that in contrast to the history of Madhyamaka in India and Tibet, where we can identify the specific point at which the two truths are foregrounded with the innovative writings of Bhāviveka (c. 500–570), the two truths are highlighted by Chinese interpreters of Madhyamaka, including Jizang, principally because they neatly fit into pre-existing paradigms in Chinese philosophy. In particular, I shall demonstrate that the manner in which Jizang and his intellectual forebearer Sengzhao 僧肇 (374–414) deploy the two truths is structurally homomorphic to the dichotomy of *shi* 是 ("affirmation") and *fei* 非 ("negation") in the *Qiwulun* 齊物論 chapter of the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 and its authoritative commentary by Guo Xiang 郭象 (d. 312).

Unlike Nāgārjuna, for whom the interdependence of such dichotomies illustrates that each pole is unarisen and unreal (Skt. *asat*), for Sengzhao and Jizang, in direct continuity with the *Zhuangzi* and Guo Xiang, such interdependence rather demonstrates that each pole is unfixed (Ch. *buding* 不定), thereby contributing to a strongly dialectical approach to the two truths that is not clearly evidenced in the Madhyamaka of Nāgārjuna. As a result, regardless of their intentions, Sengzhao and Jizang offer us a distinctively *Zhuangzian* reading of Madhyamaka philosophy. This exemplifies how the tradition of Chinese Buddhist exegesis we now call Sanlun 三論 is not merely an East Asian offshoot of Indian Madhyamaka, but an organic development within the Chinese intellectual world wherein Buddhist texts are appropriated into pre-existing paradigms of abstract thought.

Sanlun Master Jizang's Nonduality of Speech and Silence

Hans-Rudolf Kantor (Huafan University)

In the Buddhist tradition of East Asian Madhyamaka, the works of Jizang 吉藏 (549–623) are considered the pinnacle of what has been known since the Song dynasty (960–1279) as the Sanlun Zong 三論宗 (School of Three Treatises). Both in the pre-modern textual tradition and in modern scholarship, "three treatises" (*sanlun* 三論) is synonymous with the exegetical tradition in China that, from the sixth century onwards, aimed to hermeneutically master the broad spectrum of Buddhist doctrinal literature from India and Central Asia on the basis of Kumārajīva's (334–413) Madhyamaka transmission. Jizang's approach to doctrinal exegesis is largely inspired by

Nāgārjuna's view of the two truths (*erdi* 二諦).

For Jizang, the distinction between two truths—between the conventional truth and ultimate truth—is an essential means of preventing practitioners of the Dharma from hypostatizing any form of linguistic representation as unambiguous truth. In his major works he further holds that, without cancelling the necessity of such distinction, understanding the two truths means gaining insight into the nonduality (*buer* 不二) of the Dharma—an insight which culminates in the practitioners' liberation from the shackles of their self-inflicted delusions. Most importantly, all this must be based on proper exegesis of the translated *sūtra* and *śāstra* texts. In accordance with the soteriological goal of liberation, understanding the distinction between the two truths on a hermeneutical level recognizes what holds together the diversity of all the doctrines in the *sūtra*s and *śāstra*s—which is the non-duality of the Dharma. The two truths have a sort of double function, according to which a soteriological and a hermeneutical concern coincide.

In his two commentaries on the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra*, especially on the *sūtra* chapter "Entering the Gate of Nonduality," Jizang discusses the "three stages [of the nonduality of speech and silence]" (*sanjie* 三階). Although he believes that nothing real can be found in linguistic representations, he rejects a silence that aims to eradicate language. The kind of silence that aims at the erasure of language merely perpetuates a further duality of misleading constructions produced by language. To free the mind from misguided forms of language, appropriate linguistic strategies must be explored with recourse to the two truths. In his two commentaries, he discusses language and silence in such a way that they are no longer mutually exclusive. The aim is to deconstruct linguistic representations that are mistaken for the ultimate truth, but without erasing the realm of language.

Jizang seems to adopt the term 'three stages' from Fayun's 法雲 (467–529) commentary on the *Lotus Sutra*, but interprets it in the light of his understanding of the inner connection between the two truths and nonduality. He applies the concept of the 'three stages' in most of his works.

This paper analyses the way in which Jizang develops this concept and offers a philosophical interpretation of it.

Guan: Jizang's Entering of the Middle Way

John Zhao (University of Macau)

Jizang (吉藏, 549–623), renowned as the foremost Chinese Madhyamaka philosopher, played a pivotal role in the development of Nāgārjuna's thought in China. The Sanlun school is celebrated for its fidelity to Indian Buddhist thought and Jizang's interpretation is often regarded as an unwavering continuation of the Indian Madhyamaka tradition, marked by a limited level of originality. This paper, however, reveals Jizang's comprehensive and innovative elaborations on Nāgārjuna's concepts, demonstrating that he constructed an interdependent philosophical framework encompassing ontology, epistemology, and hermeneutics (*jing* 境, *zhi* 智, and *jiao* 教 in Jizang's words). The paper primarily delves into Jizang's epistemology, with a focus on his use of the notion of *guan* 觀 as a critical instrument to perceive the Real 实相, the Middle Way.

Guan is originally an ancient Chinese epistemological term, and it is also one hexagram in *The Book of Change*. In the Chinese Buddhist canon, *guan* became a crucial term in various contexts. It is used to translate the Sanskrit term *Vipassanā*. *Zhong guan* 中觀 is often used, moreover, to refer to the Madhyamaka school and its foundational text the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*. *Guan* also plays a significant role in both Sengzhao's 僧肇 and Jizang's metaphysical and exegetical system. In this paper, I highlight Jizang's distinctiveness by demonstrating how he provides subtle interpretations of *guan* as a cognitive means and a particular wisdom 智 for the entrance of the Middle Way/the Real. In Jizang's thought, *guan* is both a verb and a noun, signifying acts of observation, examination,

reflection, and illumination, while also representing an epistemic stance, a perspective, and a particular wisdom. The paper explores how *guan*, in Jizang's philosophy, functions as a bridge connecting the Buddha's and our visions, the ineffable Real and human language, as well as the nondual Middle Way and our contemplative practices. It also underscores Jizang's coherentist view between *guan* epistemology and *jing* ontology. Lastly, the paper posits that, for Jizang, the *jing* ontology and *guan* epistemology are established only for the purpose of elucidating the Real, but ultimately the Real transcends the duality between *jing* and *guan*.