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LMU Munich  
Doctoral Program in Buddhist Studies



# Buddhism and Language

## A Twofold Perspective: The Role of Language in Buddhist Teachings and the Role of Buddhist Sources in Linguistic Research

October 22–23, 2021, LMU University, Munich, Germany

### Call for papers

**Abstract submission deadline:** *March 20, 2021*

Please send a 400-word maximum abstract and a brief C.V. Send both as Word & PDF files to the e-mail address below.

**Notification of acceptance:** *June 1, 2021*

**Final paper submission deadline:** *September 1, 2021*

This workshop will be conducted in English.

Due to the dynamic situation of the pandemic, the workshop will probably be held in hybrid format (in presence and online). A partial reimbursement of travel costs will only be available for a very limited number of participants. Priority will be given to students.

**E-mail address for abstract submissions and inquiries:**

[buddhist-studies-workshop@lrz.uni-muenchen.de](mailto:buddhist-studies-workshop@lrz.uni-muenchen.de)

**Homepage of the Doctoral Program in Buddhist Studies:**

[www.en.buddhismus-studien.uni-muenchen.de](http://www.en.buddhismus-studien.uni-muenchen.de)





The Doctoral Program in Buddhist Studies at LMU Munich is pleased to announce a call for papers for the upcoming workshop “Buddhism and Language: A Twofold Perspective” to be held on October 22-23, 2021 in the beautiful city of Munich, Germany. Keynote addresses will be delivered by Prof. Dr. Christoph Anderl (University of Ghent) and Prof. Dr. Steffen Döll (University of Hamburg).

Buddhism has a peculiar relationship with language: the transmission of the doctrines throughout the centuries, starting from Śākyamuni’s original predication to today’s digital dimension of the spreading of the dharma has been inevitably dependent on language, either in its oral or textual form. At the same time, however, language has often been seen in Buddhist traditions as an insufficient tool to adequately transmit the truth and, sometimes, even as a direct obstacle on the path towards awakening. Thousands of texts were produced and translated in a myriad of languages in order to propagate the Buddhist teachings. A variety of ancient *sūtras*, commentaries, treatises and so forth have been discovered in a wide geographical area going from Afghanistan to Japan.

The analysis of these Buddhist texts from a linguistic perspective has thus been crucial for the study of a multitude of ancient languages, which in many cases are attested solely in writings of a Buddhist content. On the other hand, language has also been used in Buddhist sectarian circumstances as a tool to fold and unfold diverse meanings of the same text or to give prominence to certain doctrinal interpretations over others. In this context, the dynamics of intertextuality can reveal how a given religious system promoted certain beliefs and how its supporters shaped and re-shaped its authoritative texts.

This workshop is designed to cast a light on language-related issues in the Buddhist context. We welcome contributions on any of the following topics (the list is not exhaustive): philosophical and doctrinal implications of the problem of “language” within Buddhist traditions, the use of Buddhist texts as a source for linguistic investigation and the category of “intertextuality” as a tool for the analysis of the development of Buddhist doctrines.

This workshop will additionally facilitate fruitful exchanges between scholars of Buddhist Studies working on language-related issues in historical, linguistic, and regional manifestations. We encourage abstract submission from early career scholars, especially PhD students, but also from established scholars.

