

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin  
Institut für Asien- und Afrikawissenschaften

Zentralasien-Seminar

# Tibet & Himalaya Colloquium Lecture Series

Lecture No.3 - Monday 10.05.21 – 18:15 CEST via Zoom

Dr. Markus Viehbeck, University of Vienna:

## Textual Treasures and Endangered Manuscript Traditions in the Himalayas

Collections of Tibetan canonical literature – most famously Kanjurs and Tanjurs – constitute a textual heritage of Tibetan Buddhism that is crucial for indigenous Tibetan scholastics and modern academic scholars alike. As representations of the speech of the Buddha, Kanjurs, in particular, are also important symbolic objects. Often, they are produced in lavish deluxe editions and they play an important role in seasonal rituals that ensure communal well-being. While common ideas about the Tibetan Buddhist canon are based mostly upon the mainstream Kanjurs that emerged in the fourteenth century, the recent documentation of manuscript collections in the remote Himalayan regions of Mustang and Dolpo allows for delineating alternative models.



Photo: Jigme Lodrö



Photo: Christian Luczanits

In this talk, Markus Viehbeck will report about these recent documentation and digitization activities conducted within the Tibetan Manuscript Project Vienna, describe the canonical model that such collections constitute and its relation to mainstream Kanjurs, and offer some speculations about the socio-historical context of such manuscript collections.

Markus Viehbeck works as a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Institute of South Asian, Tibetan, and Buddhist Studies, University of Vienna. His research interests address diverse topics within Buddhist philosophy, Tibetan intellectual history, and the interlinkage of religious and social history, with a focus on working with textual sources. His publications include *Polemics in Indo-Tibetan Scholasticism* (Vienna, 2014) and *Transcultural Encounters in the Himalayan Borderlands: Kalimpong as a "Contact Zone"* (Heidelberg, 2017). In a new project he studies Tibetan canonical literature and contributes to building up a comprehensive database at *Resources for Kanjur & Tanjur Studies* (rKTs): [www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/rktsneu/](http://www.istb.univie.ac.at/kanjur/rktsneu/)

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