



LUDWIG-
MAXIMILIANS-
UNIVERSITÄT
MÜNCHEN



Madame, Monsieur, chères collègues, chères amies et amis

J'ai le plaisir et l'honneur de vous convier à la soutenance de ma thèse de doctorat intitulée :

Yellow Hats, Indian Pandits, and Practice in the Geluk Order

Cette thèse, inscrite à l'École pratique des Hautes Études – Université PSL et à la Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, sous la direction du professeur Charles Ramble et professeur Robert Yelle, sera présentée devant un jury composé de :

Robert Yelle, professeur, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität
directeur de these, examinateur, président de la jury

Charles Ramble, directeur d'études, EPHE
directeur de these, examinateur

Michael von Brück, professeur émérite, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität
examinateur

José Cabezón, professeur émérite, UC Santa Barbara
examinateur

Marta Sernesi, directrice d'études, EPHE
examinatrice

Ulrike Roesler, professeur, Oxford University
examinatrice

Berthe Jansen, maîtresse de conférences, Leiden University,
examinatrice et rapporteuse

Manuel Lopez, maître de conférences, New College of Florida,
examinateur et rapporteur

La soutenance se tiendra le **lundi 7 octobre de 17h00 à 18h30**, en présentiel en salle E 206 à la Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Geschwister Scholl Platz 1, Munich.

Elle sera suivie d'un pot convivial.

Au plaisir de vous voir.
Avec mes plus sincères salutations,

Chandra Chiara Ehm

Dear Sir or Madam, Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends,

I am very pleased and honoured to invite you to the defence of my doctoral thesis entitled:

Yellow Hats, Indian Pandits, and Practice in the Geluk Order

This doctoral dissertation, registered at the École pratique des Hautes Études – PSL University and the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, under the supervision of Professor Charles Ramble and Professor Robert Yelle, will be presented before a jury composed of:

Robert Yelle, Professor, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität
Thesis advisor, examiner, president of the jury

Charles Ramble, Director of Studies, EPHE
Thesis advisor, examiner

Michael von Brück, Professor Emeritus, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität
examiner

José Cabezón, Professor Emeritus, UC Santa Barbara
examiner

Marta Sernesi, Director of Studies, EPHE
examiner

Ulrike Roesler, Professor, Oxford University
examiner

Berthe Jansen, Assistant Professor, Leiden University,
examiner and rapporteur

Manuel Lopez, Assistant Professor, New College of Florida,
examiner and rapporteur

The defence will take place on **Monday 7 October from 5 to 6:30 pm**, in person at Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Geschwister Scholl Platz 1, E 206. It will be followed by a reception.

I look forward to seeing you there,

Yours sincerely,

Chandra Chiara Ehm

Abstract:

The present dissertation analysed the relationship between textual study and practice instructions in Tibetan Buddhism. In line with classical Indian sources, the Tibetan Buddhist tradition understands these two categories of teaching to be in a causal relationship (*de byung 'brel*). Vasubhandu's (4th to 5th century CE) *Abhidharmakośa* states that "the Buddha's teachings are of two kinds: Those in the nature of scripture and those in the nature of realisation. These are upheld only by those who teach them and accomplish them." Concordant with this, yet in contrast with the views of many of his contemporaries, Tsongkhapa (Tsong kha pa, 1357–1419) the founder of the Geluk order, interprets the study of canonical texts as an important preliminary for meditation practice. By way of in-depth philological analysis of Longdol Lama Ngawang Lobsang's

(Klong rdol bla ma ngag dbang blo bzang, 1719-1794) practice manual on the *Abhisamayālaṅkāra (AA)* – the *locus classicus* for Tibetan scholastic interpretations of the Buddhist path – this work has analysed his expositions. It further looked into how the monastic scholar is supposed to utilise his philosophical studies of the *AA* as a means for both spiritual practice and experience on a soteriological path. Considering the exegetical coherence scholasticism in the Geluk order has enjoyed over the centuries, previous academic works exploring these traditions have primarily relied on philological and historical tools in their analyses, simply deducing from these theoretical models and debates how the actual monk would apply them. By inquiring into Buddhism empirically, i.e. by observing the application of Buddhist theoretical paradigms, this work employed participatory fieldwork to enable an accurate analysis of the expressions of experience of those monastic scholars who are pursuing their studies of the *AA*.

This dissertation investigated the relationship between textual study and practice instructions from the *AA* by using a cross-disciplinary research approach: an ethnographic field-based research in the monastic community of Sera Jey Monastery, rooted in a philological analysis of a practice manual on the *AA* and framed by a pertinent theoretical framework.