



A Buddhist Protectress for a Hindu King?

Insights from an Unstudied Royal Inscription at the Vajrayoginī Shrine of Sankhu

Speaker: **PONGSIT PANGSRIVONGSE** (University of Vienna)



In this talk, I examine a Sanskrit inscription commissioned by King Jagajjaya Malla (r. CE 1722–1734) of Kathmandu and dedicated to a celebrated form of the goddess Vajrayoginī residing at the hermitage of Sankhu, treating it as a window onto the religious and literary world of the late Malla royal court (CE 1482–

1769). Previously unstudied and untranslated, the inscription served as a pointed religio-political statement of the king's victory over his principal rival. I present the first faithful edition and translation of the inscribed hymn and establish its historical context, before showing how the epigraph opens onto broader questions concerning the Malla socio-religious landscape. For instance, how did a local Buddhist goddess come to be incorporated into Malla Śākta kingship and how did Nepalese monarchs understand the relationship between Tantric Buddhist and Śaiva traditions? I further situate the inscription within a tradition of devotional literature characteristic of royal compositions in Malla-period Nepal, and discuss its significance for the study of Vajrayoginī iconography in the Kathmandu Valley.

Date and Time: 31 July (Fri) 2026, 15:00–16:30 (JST)

Venue: Main Conference Room (3F), Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia, The University of Tokyo (東京大学東洋文化研究所 3 階大会議室)

Moderator: YŪTO KAWAMURA (Associate Professor of Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia, The University of Tokyo)