Wednesday 8th November, 2017, 3-5pm

Session 3: Dr Camillo Formigatti
John Clay Sanskrit Librarian, Bodleian Library, University of Oxford

Deconstructing a Critical Edition:
The Anāthapiṇḍadāvadāna from the Avadānaśataka

The Avadānaśataka is considered one of the most ancient collections of Buddhist narrative literature. In its earliest form, it is dated to the early centuries CE. It was translated into Chinese and Tibetan during the first millennium CE, gaining large popularity across Asia. In his seminal work Introduction à l’histoire du Bouddhisme indien (1844), E. Burnouf considered it as one of the most representative of the literary genre of the avadāna. Based on the date of the Chinese translations and the character of the language, the original core of this collection is to be dated between the first half of the 5th century and the beginning of the 6th century CE at the latest.

The Avadānaśataka underwent a redactional process around the 7th century CE in a Mūlasarvāstivāda environment. In this session we will read the short 39th story, the Anāthapiṇḍadāvadāna, in the version published by J. Speyer in his editio princeps of 1902. This edition is largely based on a single Nepalese manuscript dated 1645 CE (CUL MS Add.1611), written and edited by the Nepalese scholar Jayamuni. In order to assess Jayamuni’s editorial work, in the second part of the session we will "deconstruct" Speyer’s critical edition, comparing the version of the story as edited by Speyer with the version transmitted in CUL MS Add.1611, with the version transmitted in older palm-leaf manuscripts from the 13th-15th century, as well as with the 9th century Tibetan translation.

(No knowledge of Classical Tibetan is required to attend the session.)

An audio-recording of the session will be made.

Brief Bio: Camillo Formigatti studied Indology and Sanskrit as a secondary subject when he was studying Classics at the “Università Statale” in Milan. After that he spent ten years in Germany, learning Tibetan and textual criticism in Marburg and manuscript studies in Hamburg. From June 2008 to May 2011, he worked as a research associate on the project: In the Margins of the Text: Annotated Manuscripts from Northern India and Nepal, in Hamburg. From November 2011 to November 2014 he worked as a Research Associate on the Sanskrit Manuscripts Project in Cambridge and later as a collaborator in the project Transforming Tibetan and Buddhist Book Culture. After having briefly taught Sanskrit at SOAS, since February 2016 he is the John Clay Sanskrit Librarian at the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

To book your space, please contact Ruth Westoby:
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