

3RD WINTER SCHOOL IN BUDDHIST TEXTUAL SCHOLARSHIP

Chiang Mai, March 2–9, 2026

EFEO, EPHE-PSL, LMU Munich

Sponsored by the Khyentse Foundation

The Winter School in Buddhist Textual Scholarship is an intensive teaching program organized jointly by academics of the École française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO), the École Pratique des Hautes Études (EPHE–PSL, Paris), and the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München (LMU). It is offered to international postgraduate students carrying out research in the domain of Buddhist Studies, and will provide a solid grounding into **philology**, **codicology**, and **epigraphy**. Its focus will be on primary sources transmitted across the Buddhist world, with close consideration of their material dimension, their contexts of production, and their socio-religious functions. The course will introduce students to fieldwork and will allow them to hone their broader methodological approach as well as the skills specific to their area of research. The Winter School has a transregional dimension, with lecturers specializing in **South Asia**, **Southeast Asia**, **China** and **Tibet**.

When

The winter school will take place during the PSL-Week, from **March 2 to 9, 2026**, at the EFEO Center in **Chiang Mai** (Thailand) and offer 8 days of tuition (9 nights stay).

Arrival: Sunday March 1

Winter School: Monday March 2 – Monday March 9

Departure: Tuesday March 10

Costs

Tuition is free of charge, and **the program will cover the costs of the overnight stay (9 nights) and lunch**. The program doesn't cover for the travel expenses, but selected students whose travels demonstrably can't be covered by their institutions can be eligible for one of the two travel grants: one for students travelling from within Asia, and one from overseas students.

Participants

The Winter School is addressed to students in **their second year of a master's degree or at the start of their doctorate**, training in the field of **Buddhist studies**. Participants will be selected based on their applications, within the limit of **20 places available**.

Selection criteria

All courses are taught in **English**. Students are therefore expected to have sufficient knowledge of this language for active participation in the seminars. In addition, modules dealing with specific scriptural traditions (Sanskrit, Pali, Thai, Lao, Khmer, Burmese, Chinese, Tibetan) require a basic level of knowledge of the languages concerned. Participants are therefore required to have sufficient knowledge of at least one of these **Asian languages**. The applicants will also be asked to briefly describe their **research project** and interest in Buddhist textual scholarship.

Application

Call for applications:	November	24	2025
Deadline for applications:	December	5	2025 (11:59 PM, Paris time)
Results:	December	16	2025

Credits

The Winter School is equivalent to a **6 credits (UE)** teaching module within the framework of the MA “**Études asiatiques**” (PSL-EHESS-EPHE-EFEO), and within the MA “**Religion und Philosophie in Asien**” (LMU). Paris-based students also can validate the training they receive during this winter school as a training course.

International students will receive a **certificate of attendance** (45 hours of intensive tuition) to hand in to their university’s administration.

Schedule

The Winter School in Buddhist Textual Scholarship comprises six teaching days and two field trip days.

1. In the morning (9:00–12:00) of days 1 to 5, a **common-core module** (CCM) will introduce students to specific themes: (1) the study and description of the physical characteristics of manuscripts and ancient xylographs; (2) epigraphic practices; (3) textual criticism and editions; (4) the formation of canonical collections, translation and the phenomena of “vernacularization”; (5) the relationship between text and image.
2. In the afternoon (13:30–16:45) of days 1, 3, and 5, three series of **specialized seminars** (S) will be taught by the principal instructors in their individual area of expertise (1h30 each). Each seminar will be devoted to the deciphering, description, and study of written materials in one of the languages of Buddhist Asia (Sanskrit, Pali, Thai, Chinese, Tibetan, etc.). Each student will select one series to attend, based on their specific research area and language specialization.
3. Moreover, two **practical workshops** (W) will be organized in the afternoons of days 2 and 4, led by local experts. They will introduce students to the techniques of traditional palm-leaf manuscript production and preservation, as well as to a variety of epigraphic documentation methods.
4. Days 6 and 7 of the Winter School (Saturday and Sunday) will be devoted to a **field trip** (FT). This will enable participants to examine textual practices and the use of text-bearing objects in Thai Buddhist environments under the guidance of the instructors. Participants will visit different sites (religious, archaeological or museological) characteristic of Northern Thailand.
5. On the last teaching day (day 8), a senior guest lecturer from an institution of the host country will be invited to present his or her recent findings on relevant topics (**guest lecture**, GL) and research students will be given the opportunity to present their research projects (**student presentations**, SP) and receive sustained feedback from their peers and the lecturers.

Program	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday and Sunday	Monday
9:00–12:00	CCM	CCM	CCM	CCM	CCM	FT	GL
12:00–13:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		Lunch
13:30–16:30	S	W	S	W	S		SP
Teaching hours	6	6	6	6	6	9	6

Instructors

Gregory KOURILSKY is Associate Professor in Buddhist Studies at the EFEO, and responsible for the EFEO center in Bangkok (Thailand).

Costantino MORETTI is Associate Professor at the EFEO (Paris), specialized in Medieval Chinese Buddhism and Dunhuang Studies.

Marta SERNESI is Professor of Tibetan Religions at the EPHE-PSL (Paris), and Guest Professor in Tibetan Buddhist Studies at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München (LMU).

Vincent TOURNIER is Professor of Indology and Buddhist Studies, and Chair of the Institute of Indology and Tibetology at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München (LMU).