

	<p><i>Ateliers</i>  <b><i>Anthropologie comparée du bouddhisme</i></b>  <b><i>2013-2014 : le champ religieux</i></b>  <i>Bénédicte Brac de la Perrière (CASE) et Nicolas Sihlé (CEH)</i></p>	 <p>CENTRE D'ÉTUDES HIMALAYENNES</p>
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Dossier Dropbox<sup>1</sup> : <http://bit.ly/PCfbbS>

Atelier n° 1 :

**Le monachisme dans le champ religieux bouddhique**  
**Monasticism in Buddhist religious fields**

20 décembre 2013 (9h15 – 18h)

Centre d'études himalayennes, bâtiment D, salle de conférences (rez-de-chaussée)  
7, rue Guy Môquet, 94800 Villejuif  
(station Villejuif Paul Vaillant-Couturier, ligne 7 en direction de Villejuif)

9h15 :

**Nicolas Sihlé** (Chargé de recherche, Centre d'études himalayennes, CNRS)

**Introduction and general discussion: the notion of religious field**

10h :

**Florence Galmiche** (Maître de conférences, Université Diderot–Paris 7)

**The ambivalent position of monasticism in contemporary Korean Buddhism**

Buddhism in twentieth century Korea has been characterized by the crossing and occasional confrontation of two major concerns: the quest for modernization and social integration on the one hand, and the overhaul and reaffirmation of its monastic legitimacy on the other. By tracing some characteristics of the recent development and transformation of Buddhism in Korea, this presentation aims at questioning aspects of the contemporary relationship between calls for greater engagement with the world and aspirations to restore and rejuvenate monastic asceticism. Like the debate it traces, I would like to organize this paper in a somehow dialectic logic. Firstly, I will focus on a movement from the mountains to the cities that has occurred all along the twentieth century. Reform projects aimed at reorganizing a criticized “monastic tradition” in accordance with conceptions of a “modern religion” and, in particular, advocated the necessity for Buddhist institutions to establish more active forms of proselytism. These reform movements went with major changes in the role and status of both monastics and laity. Secondly, I will present another side of the picture and try to describe how contemporary Buddhists are also putting an emphasis on the monasticism's aspects of asceticism and world withdrawal. Through another detour in recent history, this presentation will explore the complexity of the contemporary monastic reforms and try to understand how world withdrawal is valued today in South Korea.

[11h15 – 11h30 : pause]

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<sup>1</sup> Précision technique : les liens fournis ici permettent à quiconque de parcourir le dossier en ligne Dropbox dédié à ces ateliers, et d'accéder au choix de documents PDF placés dans ces dossiers. Si vous désirez installer ce dossier sur votre ordinateur comme « dossier partagé » synchronisé (ce qui en rend l'usage encore plus simple, et permet de bénéficier automatiquement de tout ajout ou modification), prière de contacter Nicolas Sihlé (nicolas.sihle [at] gmail.com) à ce sujet.

11h30 :

**Jane Caple** (Postdoctoral fellow, University of Manchester)

**The position of celibate monasticism within a local Tibetan religious field**

Celibate monasticism is not the essential determinant of religious authority in Tibetan Buddhism. In the area of Amdo (northeastern Tibet) / Qinghai (western P.R. China) where I work there is a strong tantrist tradition (non-monastic specialists of tantric rituals), not to mention the presence of other religious specialists, notably the *lhawa* (spirit mediums). Nevertheless, prior to Chinese Communist Party control the area was a ‘monastic polity’ and a large proportion of the population were monks (14 per cent in 1954 according to Chinese statistics). The post-Mao Tibetan Buddhist resurgence included a revival of celibate monasticism on a mass scale, but its position appears to be increasingly precarious. Some of my interlocutors even predict its complete disappearance in the not too distant future.

The aim of this presentation is to discuss the position occupied by celibate monasticism within this local context and to attempt to relate this back to our understanding of the dynamics of the local religious field. Rather than providing an objective account of the functions of monks in relation to other religious specialists, the starting point is to explore how people (monks and lay people) themselves perceive the role of monks and monasteries. What are the logics in the ways in which people respond to the idea of the existence (or disappearance) of large numbers of celibate monks? In other words, what are the values attached to monastic Buddhism? In order to understand the position of celibate monasticism, is it sufficient to consider monks only in relation to other ‘religious specialists’? Who do monks relate themselves to when they differentiate their role from others either explicitly or implicitly through their narratives? Certainly, the precariousness of celibate monasticism in contemporary society — at least celibate monasticism on a mass scale — needs to be understood within the broader context of monks’ relationships to and interactions with actors and institutions (e.g. the family, schools) that fall beyond the scope that the concept of ‘religious field’ delimits. Therefore, the key question this paper will present for discussion is whether, to understand the role, authority and perceived efficacy of specialists within a local religious field, we need to look beyond it.

[12h45 – 14h : pause repas avec buffet]

14h :

**Maria Turek** (Postdoctoral fellow, University of Bonn)

**Hermitages instead of Monasteries? A Bird’s-Eye View on the Current Religious Scene in Eastern Tibet**

Monasteries (*gompa*) are widely seen as the most important centers of Tibetan Buddhist religious culture/s and are traditionally credited with the continuation of religious transmission over generations. Scholarship of the pan-Tibetan hermitic culture, on the other hand, has been neglected as a perhaps marginal, if necessary component of the monastic landscape. It has therefore been assumed that hermitages (*ritrö*/other) are inevitably inherent in that landscape and as such, their social and religious functions are self-evident. With this presentation, I would like to outline several important distinctions, which make hermitages stand out as autonomous venues for ritual and social empowerment, vital for the perpetuation of both the elite and the popular forms of Tibetan Buddhism. The historical importance of the *ritrö* will be discussed with the example of the Eastern Tibetan (Khampa) religious “tradition” as codified in the 19th century by the lamas of the nonsectarian Rime movement, known for establishing a network of hermitages rather than monasteries, where they coined, legitimized and disseminated their ideology, doctrines and practices. Nowadays, in the former sphere of influence of the Rime movement, in today’s cultural heart of Eastern Tibet (the former Dege and Nangchen kingdoms in, respectively, contemporary Sichuan and Qinghai provinces), and within all Buddhist schools oriented towards meditation as opposed to study, monasteries are again being substituted by hermitages in many ways. In the field in 2007 and 2008, I have observed this tendency to be a factor increasingly influencing the entire state of affairs of Buddhist practice outside the Tibetan Autonomous Region. Many types and styles of hermitic

practice are revived today, as numerous newly-founded and reconstructed hermitages appear across Sichuan and Qinghai. Especially “meditation schools” (*gomdra/ritrö/other*), i.e. venues for group training of mostly ordained monks or nuns, are, for several reasons taking over the traditional local and supra-local functions of the monastery as a field of merit, source of guidance, moral and ritual support, as well as the place for the preservation of tradition and religious education. I will explore the possible causes for the success of group hermitages, as well as their cooperation with and/or in/dependence from the more fixed monastic institutions. Furthermore, the discussion will be placed within the wider framework of Chinese religious policies, especially with regard to Tibetans as a minority whose religiosity has the potential to become an instrument of sensitive nationalist claims and actions. Finally, the mentioned instances of Eastern Tibetan hermitic centers shall be considered in the context of a larger hermitic movement, spreading throughout Kham, which not only influences local religious centers, but also co-exists with international networks of Tibetan Buddhism as a global religion.

[15h15 – 15h30 : pause]

15h30 :

**Justin McDaniel** (Professor, University of Pennsylvania)

**Manuscripts and Monastic Education: Textual Anthropology in Laos and Thailand**

Although the Buddhist ecclesia in Thailand has grown in wealth and institutional stability since 1902, there are still deep fissures in Thai Buddhism that existed before 1902 and persist today. Looking at the 1902 Sangha Act and other institutional reform tells us little about the actual history of monastic education on the ground outside of the capital and some strategically located royal monasteries and monastic universities. More often than not, individual abbots and teachers outside of Bangkok have ignored these reforms over the last 100 years. Despite this fact, scholars have still studied the history of Buddhism in Thailand and Laos primarily through the structural mechanisms of reforms, edicts, laws, standardized texts, and canons. In this paper, I will show why this approach is no longer tenable. We need to turn to a closer examination of the “proximate mechanisms” of knowledge change and continuity in local communities by looking at pedagogical methods, rhetorical styles, text choices, liturgies, and the formation of informal local curricula. In this way, Lao and Thai Buddhist teachers are not simply the supine receivers of modernization who choose to profit from it or be overrun. Their efforts to define their own forms of Buddhism in their particular locales have largely been ignored. Approaching the problem through textual anthropology, I hope to show how vernacular and classical manuscripts and modern texts (and increasingly websites and television programs) are used in daily education in both rural and urban Thailand. Time permitting, I will also show the importance of textual, bodily, and architectural aesthetics in modern monastic education.

[16h45 – 17h : pause]

17h – 18h :

**Discussant and final discussion: David Gellner** (Professor, Oxford University)