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FAKULTÄT FÜR KULTURWISSENSCHAFTEN  
DEPARTMENT FÜR ASIENSTUDIEN  
INSTITUT FÜR INDOLOGIE UND TIBETOLOGIE



## GUEST LECTURE IN INDOLOGY AND TIBETOLOGY

Mittwoch, 21. Juni 2023, 16–18 Uhr c.t., Ludwigstr. 31, 427

Old Tibetan Versions of the *Sūtra of Limitless Life*

Prof. Dr. Brandon Dotson (Georgetown University)

### Abstract

The *Sūtra of Limitless Life* (Skt. *Aparimitāyuh-sūtra*; Tib. *Tshe dpag du myed pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*; Ch. *Wuliangshou jing*) is ubiquitous in Mahāyāna Buddhism. Its appeal as a tool for longevity, as well as its imbrication in the Buddhist “cult of the book” largely account for the thousands of copies of the *Sūtra of Limitless Life* found in various formats and media across the Buddhist world. This talk introduces the various Tibetan versions of the sūtra found among Old Tibetan texts from Dunhuang and other central Asian sites, with some reference to Chinese, Khotanese, and Sanskrit versions. It also considers the context of the sūtra's translation and its copying.

### About the speaker

Brandon Dotson is Associate Professor and Thomas P. McKenna Chair of Buddhist Studies at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. Besides Georgetown, he has taught and researched at Oxford, SOAS, UCSB, and Ludwig Maximilians University of Munich. He has also enjoyed research stays in China and Tibet. His work concerns ritual, narrative, and cosmology and the interaction of Buddhist and non-Buddhist traditions in the Tibetan cultural area. In particular, he works closely with Tibetan Dunhuang manuscripts to explore the history and culture of the Tibetan Empire (7th to 9th centuries CE).