



Asien-Orient-Institut | Abteilung für Indologie

Roberto E. García, El Colegio de México

**Playing with fire: Bodily powers and the domestication of other
bodies in some early Buddhist narratives**

Monday, November 17, 2025 | 6:00-7:30pm CET

This talk examines some early Buddhist narratives where the Buddha or one of his disciples manifests the fire element (*tejodhātu*) from within his body as a way of showing his dominion over the constituents of the corporeal body in parallel of his dominion of the mind. It will highlight how these bodily manifestations form part of a wider discourse of domestication and submission in Buddhist narratives, showing the centrality of the body in some Buddhist discourses of doctrinal authority vis a vis other religious figures.



Roberto E. García is the Robert H. N. Ho Professor of Buddhist Studies at El Colegio de México. He earned his Ph.D. in 2015 from El Colegio de México. His research focuses on domestication and authority in early Buddhist narratives in South Asian languages. His recent publications include the book *The victory of Buddhist dharma: The domestication of monarchs and spirits in ancient Buddhist narratives* [*La victoria del dharma budista. Domesticación de monarcas y espíritus en relatos del budismo antiguo*] (2025), and the article “Śākyamuni Buddha in Post-Revolutionary Mexico. The Legend of the Buddha in Vasconcelos’ *Estudios indostánicos* [*Hindustani Studies*] (1920)” (2025).

This talk is part of the lecture series **Embodiments of Truths: The Body and Ascetic Practices in Ancient Indian Traditions**, jointly conducted by the Department of Indology at the University of Tübingen, the Institute of Philosophy at the University of Buenos Aires, and the Centro de Estudios de Asia y África at El Colegio de México

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