

## Call for Papers

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### ‘Chinese Buddhist Philosophy: From Three Treatises to Five Schools’ Vienna, 7-8 August 2025

As part of a Starting Grant funded by the European Research Council devoted to the study of Chinese Buddhist philosophy, I am pleased to invite proposals for participation in a workshop on ‘Chinese Buddhist Philosophy: From Three Treatises to Five Schools’. This will be held at the Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia (IKGA), part of the Austrian Academy of Sciences (OeAW), in Vienna on 7-8 August 2025. It is timed so as to immediately precede the XXth Congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies scheduled to be held at Leipzig University in Germany on 10-15 August 2025. Participants in the workshop are very welcome to also present papers at the congress.

The research project of which this workshop forms parts is titled *The Ethics of Empty Beliefs: Chinese Buddhist Philosophy in the ‘Period of Disunity’* (CHINBUDDHPHIL: <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101077136>). Centrally concerned with the Sanlun 三論 school most closely associated with Sengzhao 僧肇 and Jizang 吉藏, the project intends to study Sanlun’s contributions to Chinese Buddhist philosophy in historical and systematic manner, with an especial focus on the ethics of belief. In so doing, the project hopes to transform the conventional understanding of philosophically valuable traditions by demonstrating that Chinese Buddhist philosophers merit consideration not only as historical artifacts but as genuinely interesting and insightful contributors to live philosophical problems. It likewise aims to redress the preponderant exclusion of Chinese perspectives from philosophically oriented scholarship in Buddhist studies, and to do so in a manner that bridges it with philologically oriented Buddhology.

Three workshops will be held as part of the overall project. These will be devoted to Sanlun in conversation with its Indian antecedents, its later elaborations within Chinese Buddhism, and its analogues in Western philosophy respectively. The first workshop having already been held in August 2024, the aim of this second workshop is to study the extent and manner in which Sanlun ideas and arguments persisted into later Chinese Buddhist philosophy. As such, paper proposals are invited which aim to unearth and evaluate the influence of Sanlun thought upon the Chan 禪, Huayan 華嚴, Jingtu 淨土, Tiantai 天台, and Weishi 唯識 systematic schools of Chinese Buddhist thought and practice following the hitherto largely assumed effective demise of Sanlun at the death of Jizang. Since the project overall takes belief (howsoever understood) as its primary concern, papers that explore belief overtly, especially from an ethical perspective, are particularly welcome. Nevertheless, paper proposals are welcome on relevant topics in Sanlun philosophy from diverse disciplinary approaches.

It is foreseen that confirmed speakers will be allotted 40 minutes each, with at most half of that time devoted to individual presentations and the remainder to responses and discussion. Accepted

speakers will be very welcome to pre-circulate draft papers among workshop participants so as to facilitate informed discussion and debate. An edited volume comprised of chapters based on the workshop papers is planned, and potential speakers should keep in mind that they will be encouraged to submit a written chapter based on their presentation before the end of 2025.

Those interested in taking part are welcome to send 1) a paper abstract of circa 500 words, and 2) a CV or link to a professional profile, to [rafal.stepien@oeaw.ac.at](mailto:rafal.stepien@oeaw.ac.at) by the 15<sup>th</sup> of November 2024. Requests for further information are also welcome. In a dedicated effort to counteract long-standing discrimination, women and members of other identity-groups still under-represented in academe are especially encouraged to apply. Accommodation in Vienna for participants will be funded by the organizers, and funds are also foreseen to be available to offset travel costs to and from Vienna for those participants with no alternative sources of funding.

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## **Rafal K. Stepien**

Research Associate  
Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia  
Austrian Academy of Sciences

Principal Investigator  
‘The Ethics of Empty Beliefs: Chinese Buddhist Philosophy in the “Period of Disunity”’  
European Research Council

