

Editorial: “New Currents on the Neva River”

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and Maria Smirnova

We are pleased to offer *New Currents on the Neva River*, the proceedings of the Fifth International Seminar of Young Tibetologists (ISYT)¹ held at Saint Petersburg University on September 3–7, 2018.

Ever since the first ISYT in 1977 convened by Martin Brauen and Per Kværne in Zurich and reinstated by Brandon Dotson and Tim Myatt in London in 2007, this conference has been growing consistently, establishing itself as one of the largest gatherings for Tibetan Studies scholars around the world. The Seminar promotes the advancement of international collaboration and exchange among doctoral students as well as early-career academics from various disciplines working on Tibet and its related cultures.

In 2018, the ISYT became the first major international Tibetological event to be held in Russia. Saint Petersburg University was honored with the responsibility to host this seminal meeting of young Tibetologists on the banks of the Neva River where eminent Russian institutions for the study of Tibet are located: the Faculty of Asian and African Studies of Saint Petersburg University, the Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, also known as the Kunstkamera, the State Hermitage, and the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences (OIM RAS).

After a rigorous double-blind peer review, 69 papers out of a total of 209 applications were accepted. Along with five additional observers, attendees hailed from 23 countries across Asia, Europe, and North America at the Fifth International Seminar of Young Tibetologists. The presentations covered a broad spectrum of materials, ranging from philosophical treatises, library catalogs and rare manuscripts to linguistic, historiographic, and religious works, including genres of classical Tibetan literature such as *gter ma*, *dkar chag*, *chos 'byung*, *rnam thar*, *rgyal rabs*, *gdung rabs*, *'das log*, or *zhus lan*, thus revealing a new trend of reconnecting with our discipline's deep philological roots. Although mostly based on a textual approach, the

¹ For details on the ISYT's history and statutes, its previous and upcoming seminars as well as the books of abstracts, see <http://www.isyt.info>.

majority of papers incorporated theoretical developments in neighboring disciplines, including feminism and gender studies, ethnography and anthropology, Manchu, Mongolian, Tangut, and even Uyghur studies, legal, narratological, and environmental research, discourse analysis, and computational linguistics. Thus, the papers presented and these proceedings reflect the latest interdisciplinary currents in the field of Tibetan Studies.

We are very grateful to all those who participated in the Fifth International Seminar of Young Tibetologists, its abstract and article peer reviewers, the staff of Saint Petersburg University, the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, the *Kunstkamera*, the State Hermitage, and the volunteers from the Department of Tibetan and Mongolian Studies of Saint Petersburg University for their invaluable help and contribution to making our Seminar a great success:

Jean-Luc Achard, Kirill Alexeev, Robbie Barnett, Kenneth M. Bauer, Daniel Berounský, Yusuke Bessho, Jeannine Bischoff, Trine Brox, Polina Butsyk, Volker Caumanns, Olaf Czaja, Lewis Doney, Brandon Dotson, Cécile Ducher, Bruce Elleman, Franz Xaver Erhard, Kati Fitzgerald, Ruth Gamble, Emanuela Garatti, Holly Gayley, Elena Golovchenko, Alina Gribkova, Rachael Griffiths, Agnieszka Helman-Ważny, Yana Khramova, Kalsang Norbu Gurung, Paul Hackett, Jörg Heimbel, Isabelle Henrion-Dourcy, Nathan Hill, Dan Hirshberg, Theresia Hofer, Dmitry Ivanov, LamaJabb, Berthe Jansen, Matthew King, Alexandra Kolesnikova, Karénina Kollmar-Paulenz, Yuliana Kornilenko, Anna Kramskova, Per Kværne, Ekaterina Lekhno, Rory Lindsay, Cuilan Liu, William McGrath, Konstantin Mikhaylov, Ksenia Mikheeva, Natasha Mikles, Martin Mills, Bembya Mitruev, Jake Nagasawa, Max Oidtmann, Ilya Orlov, Mikhail Piotrovsky, Fernanda Pirie, Jarmila Ptáčková, Charles Ramble, Ksenia Rastorgueva, Françoise Robin, Alexey Rodionov, Ulrike Roesler, Arkadiy Ryabov, Jonathan Samuels, Nicola Schneider, Anastasiya Shin, Elena Shutova, Nicolas Sihlé, Camille Simon, Alla Sizova, Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, Emilia Sulek, Olga Tikhomirova, Tashi Tsering, Nikolay Tsyrempilov, Anna Turanskaya, Maria Turek, Vladimir Uspenskiy, Sangseraima Ujeed, Sam van Schaik, Markus Viehbeck, Nicole Willock, Daniel Wojahn, Natalia Yampolskaya, Alexandr Zhukov, and Alexander Zorin.

We also want to thank Saint Petersburg University and the Russian Foundation for Basic Research (RFBR) for their financial support of the Seminar. Moreover, we thank Jean-Luc Achard who made

possible the publication of these proceedings in the special issue No. 55 (July 2020) of the esteemed *Revue d'Études Tibétaines* (RET).² Being identical with the RET online publication, this printed volume was made possible owing to the supportiveness and flexibility of the publisher Edition Tethys and the fortuitous availability of limited funds at the Institute of South and Central Asian Studies of Leipzig University.

During the ISYT business meeting on September 6, 2018, a new president and board members were elected. As of September 7, 2018, the President of ISYT is Natalia Moskaleva (Saint Petersburg University) and the Secretary-General is Natasha L. Mikles (Texas State University). The ISYT Board of Advisers consists of the following eight scholars:

Maria Coma (University of Barcelona)
 Nyima Woser Choekhortshang (Charles University, Prague)
 Cécile Ducher (École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris)
 Franz Xaver Erhard (Leipzig University)
 Lucia Galli (École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris)
 Emanuela Garatti (Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich)
 Karma Tso (College for Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarah)
 Lobsang Thapka (Banaras Hindu University)

The ISYT Board has chosen the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia, as the venue for the upcoming Sixth International Seminar of Young Tibetologists to be held on August 9–13, 2021. We would like to congratulate the conveners of the Sixth ISYT—Jue Liang and Andrew Taylor—and wish them all the best for the exciting seminar ahead!

We want to dedicate the proceedings to our respected colleague and dear friend, Pavel L. Grokhovskiy, who is deeply missed. Pavel was an irreplaceable advocate for Tibetan Studies and a luminary scholar of the Saint Petersburg school of Tibetology, without whom the Fifth International Seminar of Young Tibetologists would not have been possible. Pavel was one of the conveners of the Fifth ISYT and was supposed to be the editor of the present proceedings volume, but he unexpectedly and untimely passed away on December 17, 2018, leaving us no chance to express our gratitude in person.

Pavel was born in Leningrad on April 11, 1972. He graduated with honors from the Faculty of Asian and African Studies of Saint Petersburg University in 1994, after which he enrolled in a Ph.D.

² The RET special issue can be accessed and downloaded at <http://www.digitalhimalaya.com/collections/journals/ret/index.php?selection=0>

program there. In 1998, he was appointed as a lecturer in the Department of Mongolian and Tibetan Studies.

In 2000, Pavel defended his Ph.D. thesis entitled “*Samādhirāja Sūtra* as a Literary Monument of Buddhist Canonical Literature.” In 2001, he was promoted to Associate Professor in the same department, where he continued to teach most of the courses on Tibetan philology until his final days. Being a curious, open-minded, and passionate scholar interested in the research on virtually every sphere of Tibetology, Pavel managed to successfully combine his academic activity with administrative duties. He served two terms as the Head of the Department (2003–2009 and 2016–2018) and as the Vice-Dean (2000–2004 and 2012–2018) and chaired the Academic and Methodological Commission of the Faculty for six years (2012–2018), thus actively shaping the institutional foundation of Asian and African Studies at Saint Petersburg University.

In recent years, Pavel spearheaded novel projects in corpus linguistics and encouraged new endeavors in the largely unexplored area of Tibetan natural language processing. His scholarly oeuvre is preserved in more than 20 publications and lives on in the numerous research projects he initiated. In addition, Pavel was a scrupulous academic advisor for many undergraduate and graduate students.

As a committed, energetic, and caring person, Pavel put significant effort into preserving the academic traditions of the Department of Tibetan and Mongolian Studies and ensured the excellence of its teaching. He succeeded in further reinforcing Saint Petersburg University as a well-known and distinguished center of Tibetology. Outside Russia, Pavel was a regular and highly welcomed visitor to libraries, research institutions, universities, and academic conferences, where he actively promoted international exchange and cooperation.

Whatever his goal, Pavel worked tirelessly to achieve it. Memories of him as a devoted Tibetologist, a talented leader, an inspiring teacher, a wise academic advisor, a kind person, and a dear friend with a fine sense of humor will be cherished by his grateful students and colleagues. We hope that this volume will carry Pavel’s legacy to all those who knew him and those who did not alike.

The Faculty of Asian and African Studies of Saint Petersburg University was officially established in 1854 and ever since has stood as a citadel for the academic study of Asia. The Saint Petersburg school of Tibetan Studies has commonly been known as a center for classical Tibetology. Vladimir L. Uspensky’s keynote address in the present issue further illustrates the unique history of Tibetan Studies in Russia and Saint Petersburg. However, in recent years, the diversification—initiated by Pavel—has made research more

interdisciplinary. The results of this diversification were presented at the Fifth International Seminar of Young Tibetologists by Pavel's students.

This unique character of Saint Petersburg is also present in these proceedings with the inclusion of research firmly grounded in the classical Russian tradition of Tibetology, such as Alla Sizova's research on the Tibetan birch bark manuscript held at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Anna Kramskova's comparative study of Tibetan musical and linguistic terminology, and Polina Butsyk's article on traditional Tibetan vocal music. New interdisciplinary directions such as the study of the Tibetan linguistic picture of the world using natural language processing by Maria Smirnova alongside Natalia Moskaleva's discourse analysis of the early periodical *The Tibet Mirror* reflect the latest interests of Pavel Grokhovskiy. These new currents of Tibetological research in Saint Petersburg thus have provided a fascinating ground for international exchange, interdisciplinary debates, and contemporary advances.

The editorial process of this volume—across three continents, all possible time zones, and working under the pressures of a global health crisis—was a challenging but rewarding task, and we hope our readers will share the satisfaction we felt in producing *New Currents on the Neva River*. Moreover, we hope that the Fifth International Seminar of Young Tibetologists and these proceedings will give our readers a glimpse of not only the multifarious nature of Tibetan Studies, but the far-reaching scope of one of its preeminent figures, Pavel Grokhovskiy.

We wish you inspiration in your research and look forward to seeing you at the Sixth International Seminar of Young Tibetologists!

The Editorial Team of
the Fifth International Seminar of Young Tibetologists

