



Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR)

Sponsored National Seminar

on

Guru Padmasambhava of Odḍiyāna: Philosophical and Tantric Traditions in the Historical and Philosophical Landscape of Buddhism in Odisha

22nd - 23rd January, 2027

School of History, Gangadhar Meher University, Sambalpur, Odisha

First Circular

Odisha occupies a distinctive place in the religious and intellectual history of India as an important centre of **Buddhism, Vajrayāna and Tantric traditions**. Its archaeological remains, textual traditions, sacred landscapes, artistic heritage, and continuing religious practices offer significant material for understanding the development and transmission of Buddhist thought in eastern India.

Guru Padmasambhava, revered in Tibetan Buddhism as a fully enlightened master and traditionally regarded as a principal transmitter of Vajrayāna Buddhism to Tibet in the eighth century CE, occupies a particularly important position in this historical landscape. His traditional association with **King Indrabhuti of Sambala**, the identification of **Dhanakośa** and references found in tantric literature and Tibetan canonical and biographical traditions have generated sustained scholarly interest in the possible relationship between **Odḍiyāna**. The question of Odḍiyāna is therefore of considerable significance for the reconstruction of the intellectual and religious geography of Vajrayāna Buddhism. At the same time, the subject calls for careful engagement with textual, historical, linguistic, archaeological and comparative evidence, as well as with differing scholarly interpretations.

A particularly significant and comparatively understudied dimension of Padmasambhava's tantric legacy is his wrathful manifestation, **Senge Dradog** (Guru Lion's Roar / Samye Dorje), one of the traditional eight manifestations of Guru Padmasambhava. This form represents the fierce, protective, and transformative dimensions of Buddhist tantra and may be interpreted philosophically in relation to the overcoming of ignorance, destructive mental states, harmful forces, and obstacles to the realization and preservation of Dharma. Recent archaeological and art-historical discoveries, including the reported **Senge Dradog** sculpture at Pujharipali in Odisha, have further stimulated interest in the cultural memory and visual representation of Padmasambhava traditions in the region. Likewise, linguistic and historical discussions concerning the relationship between **Odḍiyāna**, **Uḍḍiyāna**, and Odisha invite renewed interdisciplinary investigation. Despite the richness of these materials, an integrated philosophical study bringing together **Odisha's Buddhist heritage, the origins and tantric legacy of Padmasambhava, and the metaphysical, ethical and**

soteriological significance of Senge Dradog remains an important area for further research.

THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

A. Buddhism in Odisha

- Archaeological remains and Buddhist sites of Odisha: Udayagiri, Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri, Langudi, Baudh, Ganiapali, and newly explored or excavated sites.
- Contributions of Odisha to Buddhism from the Mauryan period to the medieval era.
- Buddhist monastic, scholastic, artistic, and ritual traditions in Odisha.
- The role of Atavikas and Vidyādhara in Buddhist and tantric narratives.
- Buddhist networks and intellectual exchanges between Odisha and other regions of India and Asia.

B. Oḍḍiyāna: Textual, Historical and Linguistic Perspectives

C. Guru Padmasambhava: Life, Legends and Philosophy

D. Nyingma Philosophy and the Kāma–Terma Lineages

E. Senge Dradog (Guru Lion's Roar): Philosophical and Symbolic Dimensions

F. Continuity of Padmasambhava Traditions in Eastern India

CALL FOR RESEARCH PAPERS

Research papers are invited from scholars, faculty members, researchers, doctoral scholars, postgraduate students, independent researchers and practitioners working in relevant fields. Papers may address any of the above themes or other closely related aspects of Buddhism, Vajrayāna, Tantra, Guru Padmasambhava, Oḍḍiyāna, Nyingma traditions, Buddhist archaeology, philosophy, art, history, anthropology, linguistics and religious studies. Original and research-oriented papers based on primary sources, archaeological evidence, textual analysis, field studies, comparative philosophy, art-historical investigation, or interdisciplinary approaches are particularly encouraged.

Note: Only selected and relevant research papers that are closely aligned with the theme and objectives of the Seminar will be considered for presentation.

About the University

Gangadhar Meher University, one of the oldest and largest institutions of higher education in Odisha, traces its origin to 1944, when it was established as Gangadhar Meher College through the strong initiative, determination, and tireless efforts of visionary members of the Trust Fund. Recognizing its long-standing academic legacy and growing contribution to higher education, the institution was upgraded to a State

University in 2015. Over the decades, Gangadhar Meher University has made remarkable progress and has emerged as a premier centre of learning in the state. The University continues to scale new heights of academic excellence through quality teaching, innovative research, and community engagement, thereby contributing significantly to the intellectual, cultural, and socio-economic development of the region.

The university offers quality teaching and research facilities at the Undergraduate, Postgraduate, and Research levels across a wide range of disciplines. Within a relatively short span, it has made a notable mark in the academic arena by imparting quality education, organizing national and international seminars and workshops, and encouraging regular publications in reputed impact journals. In recognition of its strong teaching and research performance, the institution has been accredited with an **‘A’ grade by NAAC**.

School of History

The School of History is one of the oldest academic units of this prestigious institution, with its origins dating back to 1944. Since its inception, the School has played a pivotal role in fulfilling the academic and intellectual needs of students from Western Odisha in particular and the state of Odisha at large. Over the decades, it has evolved into a vibrant centre of teaching and research, contributing substantially to historical scholarship and heritage studies. At present, the School offers Undergraduate (U.G.), Postgraduate (P.G.), and Doctoral (Ph.D.) programmes, along with a Certificate Course in Tourism and Heritage Management. It envisions its growth as a centre of excellence at the national level through the adoption of a critical and reflective pedagogy of history.

The School of History places strong emphasis on experiential learning and regularly undertakes archaeological explorations, excavations, and heritage tours, providing students with hands-on training in the reconstruction and interpretation of the past. It also organizes national and international seminars, workshops, and invited lectures, fostering academic interaction and scholarly exchange. Recognized as a centre of scholarly distinction, the School has nurtured generations of students from Odisha and across the country. Its academic approach integrates global historical perspectives with a sustained focus on the regional history and cultural heritage of Odisha, including studies of art and architecture, inscriptions, numismatics, social traditions, and economic life. Students gain practical experience through archaeological excavations, ethnographic studies, field surveys, and heritage documentation. Major excavation projects were carried out at Barpali Asurgarh and Purunagarh, Rairakhol, after obtaining due permission from the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), New Delhi.

Registration fee:

Kindly submit your registration fee along with the duly filled registration form, abstract of the research paper and your itinerary (clearly indicating the date and time of arrival and departure) on or before 25th December, 2026, to enable us to arrange your accommodation and schedule the presentation of your research paper in the academic programme.

Registration Fees:

- Teaching Faculty: ₹1000
- Research Scholars: ₹ 700
- Students: ₹ 500

Please send your filled in registration forms to Dr Atula Kumar Pradhan, Convener of the Seminar. The bank account details with QR code given below.

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Registration form
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School of History, Gangadhar Meher University, Sambalpur, Odisha

To,

Dr Atula Kumar Pradhan

Convener

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Surname... ..: First name(s)... ..Title... ..

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