Summer School for Ancient Trans-Himalayan Languages (SSATH)

Application Form

The Summer School for Ancient Trans-Himalayan Languages (SSATH), hosted by the **Centre for Asian Studies** at **Trinity College Dublin**, is a two-week long summer school that features courses in four ancient languages from the Trans-Himalayan (Sino-Tibetan) family, and weekend workshops on three more languages. The morning courses will serve as absolute introductions to **Old Tibetan**, **Tangut**, and **Classical Newar**. In the afternoon, courses with different content geared toward those looking for a more intensive course experience will be available for the three aforementioned languages, with an additional course on **Old Chinese** excavated documents and historical phonology. These courses will run for ten days over the course of two weeks. On both Saturdays, there will be additional supplementary workshops on **Yi**, **Old Meitei**, and **Old Burmese**. As a general rule, courses will be open to everyone of all education levels. However, for some of the intensive courses, some background in Sanskrit or another ancient Asian language would be beneficial.

This summer school will be of interest to those in the fields of Historical Linguistics, Descriptive Linguistics, Linguistic Anthropology, Palaeography, Religious Studies, Buddhist Studies, (Asian) History, and Ancient Literature. The instructors will include scholars both from Trinity College Dublin and from other institutions around the world. As such, this summer school will serve as a great opportunity to meet and connect with specialists in the fields mentioned above.

Form due date: April 30, 2025

All payment invoices for online students or accommodation will be sent through email after completion of this form.

The school will run from June 16-28, 2025 inclusive.

Contact

ssathtcd@gmail.com

SSATH
Summer School for Ancient
Trans-Himalayan Languages

Schedule and Timetable

Week days (Day 1–5; 8–12)

   9:00 – 10:00 Old Tibetan course for beginners (Joanna Bialek)

   10:15 – 11:15 Tangut course for beginners (Yue Ji)

   11:30 – 12:30 Classical Newar course for beginners (Liwen Liu)

   12:30 – 13:30 Lunch break

   13:30 – 14:30 Chinese excavated documents and Chinese historical phonology (Nathan Hill and Jinqi Ying)

   14:45 – 15:45 Readings in Old Tibetan (Joanna Bialek)

   16:15 – 17:15 Readings in Tangut (Yue Ji)

   17:30 – 18:30 Readings in Classical Newar (Liwen Liu)

Two Saturdays (Day 6 and Day 13)

   10:00 – 11:30 Workshop on Yi Script (Kazue Iwasa)

   12:00 – 13:30 Workshop on Old Meitei (Josiah Medin)

   13:30 – 14:30 Lunch break

   14:30 – 15:30 Workshop on Old Burmese (Nathan Hill)

   16:00 – 18:00 All four lecturers of core languages meeting with remote learning students online to answer questions

Instructor Profiles

Joanna BIALEK (PhD in Tibetology, Philipps University, Marburg, Germany; Postdoc at Trinity College Dublin) is Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Research Fellow with the project 'Tibetan Obsolete Mortuary practices and afterlife Beliefs' (TOMB) at Trinity College Dublin. She is working at the crossroads of historical linguistics and religious studies. She has published *Compounds and Compounding in Old Tibetan* and *A Textbook in Classical Tibetan*, as well as articles on Old Tibetan, history of the Tibetan Empire, Dunhuang manuscripts, and funerary practices on the Tibetan Plateau.
https://tcd.academia.edu/JoannaBialek
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8542-4272

Nathan HILL (PhD in Tibetology, Harvard University; Sam Lam Professor in Chinese Studies, Trinity College Dublin) researches Tibeto-Burman/Sino-Tibetan historical linguistics. He has published on Old Tibetan descriptive linguistics, Tibetan corpus linguistics, Tibeto-Burman reconstruction and comparative linguistics, the history of Chinese, and the typology of evidential systems. He has led research projects funded by the European Research Council, the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council, and the British Academy.

His books include *The Historical Phonology of Tibetan, Burmese, and Chinese* (2019), *A Lexicon of Tibetan Verb Stems as Reported by the Grammatical Tradition* (2010), and *Old Tibetan Inscrip tions*, co-authored with Kazushi Iwao (2009). His edited books include *Evidential Systems of Tibetan Languages*, with Lauren Gawne (2017).
https://tcd.academia.edu/NathanWHill

Kazue Iwasa holds a PhD in Literature from Kobe City University of Foreign Studies. She is Associate Professor at School of Foreign Languages, Department of Chinese Studies, Nagoya University of Foreign Studies.

https://researchmap.jp/getty/?lang=english

Yue Ji (Department of Linguistics, University of Vienna) is a PhD candidate and DOC Fellow of the Austrian Academy of Sciences at the University of Vienna. His doctoral project, *The Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā in Tangut Translation*, investigates both the philological and linguistic aspects of Tangut by comparative studies on the multilingual parallel texts in Tibetan, Sanskrit, and Chinese. In addition to Tangut, his research interests also include the linguistics and philology of Ancient Chinese and Indo-European languages in the Eastern Silk Road.

https:ucrisportal.univie.ac.at/en/persons/yue-ji

https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2298-7745

https://univie.academia.edu/YueJi

Liwen Liu received her PhD in the Study of Religion from the University of Toronto and is currently a postdoctoral researcher in Newar Studies at SOAS, University of London. Her research focuses on the diachronic development of classical Newar, and she is working on creating a Newar language corpus by digitizing manuscripts to support linguistic, literary, and religious studies. Her broader interests include Newar studies, ritual studies, Sanskrit intellectual history, and Tantric traditions.

https://utoronto.academia.edu/LiwenLiu

Josiah Medin is a PhD candidate in the Trinity Centre for Asian Studies. His project, entitled *A Descriptive Grammar of the Old Meitei Language as Attested in the Numit Kappa and the Cheitharol Kumpapa*, concerns the description of the linguistic features of the oldest attested stage of the Meitei language of Manipur, Northeast India, and of the changes that the language underwent in its development into its modern form. His research combines descriptive linguistics, historical phonology, morphology, syntax, palaeography, epigraphy, and textual criticism to date and describe the contents of manuscripts and inscriptions from pre-colonial Manipur.

https://tcd.academia.edu/JosiahMedin

https://www.linkedin.com/in/josiah-medin-9216b8264/

Jinqi Ying is a PhD candidate in the Trinity Centre for Asian Studies with the project *Reconstructing the Initials of Old Chinese through the Philology of Excavated Documents*. Her research focuses on the phonological reconstruction of Old Chinese, specifically examining the consonant clusters and phonetic components used in ancient Chinese characters. Her work bridges the gap between phonologists and philologists by utilising newly excavated texts to resolve long-standing controversies in the pronunciation of Old Chinese. Her expertise includes Chinese philology and palaeography, with a particular interest in the application of rigorous methodological practices to ancient linguistic data.

* Required fields

Full name* _____

Home University (type N/A if not applicable)*_____

Email* _____

Billing address*_____

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Would you like to apply for subsidies (please circle)? *

    Yes

    No

If you answered yes to the previous question, please state your financial situation and why you will require subsidies to attend the Summer School.

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For online students, which package would you like to purchase (invoices will be sent upon completion of the form)? *

Please circle:

    1 language (200 EUR)

    2 languages (300 EUR + weekend workshops)

    All languages and workshops (400 EUR)

    N/A (on-site student)

For online students, which language(s) would you like to take?

Please circle:

    Old Tibetan

    Tangut

    Old Chinese historical phonology and excavated documents

    Classical Newar

What is your level of education? *

Please circle:

In undergraduate program

Completed undergraduate program

In Master's program

Completed Master's

In PhD program

Completed PhD

Would you like to apply for Trinity College accommodation (June 15th - June 28th)? *

Please circle:

Yes (770 EUR)

No, I will look for my own accommodation

Do you have any special academic accessibility requests or learning Technology requirements?

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