

A Mirror to History: Tibetan-Language Newspapers as Historical Sources

Celebrating the Centenary of Tibetan Journalism since the 1925 Founding of the Tibet Mirror in Kalimpong

November 22–23, 2025

Leipzig University, Nikolaistraße 10 (Strohsack-Passage), 5th Floor

DAY 1: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2025

9:15-9:30	Welcome and Conference Overview Alice Travers, Franz Xaver Erhard, and Nathan Hill
Session 1 Historical Foundations <i>Chair: Alice Travers (Collège de France/CNRS, CRCAO)</i>	
9:30-9:55	Yudru Tsomu (Sichuan University) <i>An Overview of the Vernacular News in Tibetan (Bod yig phal skad kyi gsar 'gyur)</i>
9:55-10:20	Anna Sawerthal (Vienna) <i>Tradition and Modernity: The Tibet Mirror as a Medium of Convergence</i>
10:20-10:45	Kristin Mothe (Leipzig University) <i>The Bilingual Tibetan Vernacular News (Bod kyi phal skad kyi gsar 'gyur) Published in Beijing 1912–1915</i>
10:45-11:05	Discussion
11:05-11:20	Coffee Break
Session 2 Ideology, Policy and Nationalism <i>Chair: Benno Weiner (Carnegie Mellon University)</i>	
11:20-11:45	Matthew Akester (SOAS) <i>The Four Anti-s Campaign Revealed in Newspaper Reports</i>
11:45-12:10	Robert Barnett (SOAS) <i>Signs of Inner-Party Factionalism in 1980s Newspaper Reports</i>
12:10-12:35	Ugyan Choedup (Yale University) <i>Reading in Archival Scarcity: Rang Dbang Gsar Shog as a Window into the Formation of Early Exile Tibetan Nationalist Discourse</i>
12:35-12:55	Discussion
12:55-2:40	Lunch Break

Session 3 News in Exile <i>Chair: Nathan Hill (SOAS/Trinity Dublin)</i>	
2:40-3:05	Josayma Tashi Tsering (Dharamsala) <i>A Brief Introduction of Two Newspapers/Journals Called "Ma 'khyog drang thig and Zla gsar</i>
3:05-3:30	Natalia Mikhailova (Université Laval/SOAS) <i>Framing Historical Sources: Approaching Early Exile Newspapers</i>
3:30-3:55	Woeser Kyi (Dalai Lama Institute for Higher Education) <i>Women and Interracial-Marriage: A Brief Analysis of Exiled Tibetan Women's Situation as Reported in Spyi tshogs me long from 2000 to 2004</i>
3:55-4:15	Discussion
4:15-4:30	Coffee Break
Session 4 Imagining Tibet. Visual Representations of Tibet in Tibetan Newspapers of the PRC <i>Chair: Shamo Thar (Columbia University)</i>	
4:30-4:55	Victoria Liu (Columbia University) <i>Images in Early PRC-era Publications in Tibet</i>
4:55-5:20	Sonam Wangmo (SOAS) <i>Framing Tibet: The Politics of Visual Narratives in Tibetan News Reports, 1950s–1960s</i>
5:20-5:45	Discussion

DAY 2: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2025

9:00-9:30	Day 2 Introduction
Session 5 Digital Methodologies <i>Chair: Ron Schwartz (Memorial University)</i>	
9:30-9:55	Nathan Hill (Trinity College Dublin) <i>Frontiers in Asian Digital Humanities</i>
9:55-10:20	Franz Xaver Erhard (Leipzig University) <i>Digital Preservation Challenges: OCR and Scanning Technologies for Early Tibetan Newspapers</i>

10:20-10:45 Hybrid	Yuki Kyogoku (Leipzig University), James Engels (University of Edinburgh), and Franz Xaver Erhard (Leipzig University) <i>Of Models and Vectors. Digital Approaches to the Study of Tibetan Language Text Corpora</i>
10:45-11:05	Discussion
11:05-11:20	Coffee Break
Session 6 Economy and Society of the "New Tibet" Chair: Sonam Wangmo (SOAS)	
11:20-11:45	Konchok Gelek (SOAS) <i>Territorializing the Frontier: Land Reclamation, Wildlife Hunting, and State Power in Frontier Province Qinghai (1959–1965)</i>
11:45-12:10 Online	Yonten Nyima (SOAS/New York University) <i>Pastoral Policies and Rural Transformation: Tibetan Newspapers as Agricultural History Sources</i>
12:10-12:35	Shamo Thar (SOAS/Columbia University) <i>Constructing Progress or Crafting Propaganda? Newspaper Narratives of Education and Ideology in Tibetan Areas, 1959–1965</i>
12:35-12:55	Discussion
12:55-2:40	Lunch Break
Session 7 Libraries and Archives Chair: Anna Sawerthal (Vienna)	
2:40-3:05	Sonam Topgyal (Library of Tibetan Works and Archives) <i>News in Tibet. Tibetan Language Newspapers in the Holdings of the LTWA</i>
3:05-3:30	Antje Ziemer (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin) <i>Tracing Modern Tibet in Print: Tibetan Newspapers at CrossAsia</i>
3:30-3:55	Alice Travers (Collège de France/CNRS, CRCAO) <i>The Tibet Mirror Project at the Centre d'études tibétaines (Collège de France Paris)</i>
3:55-4:15	Discussion

4:15-4:30	Coffee Break
Final Session and Future Directions <i>Chair: Natalia Mikhailova (Université Laval)</i>	
4:30-5:30	Roundtable Discussion: Future Directions for Tibetan Newspaper Studies Ron Schwartz (Memorial University), Benno Weiner (Carnegie Mellon University), Nathan Hill (Trinity College Dublin/SOAS), Alice Travers (Collège de France/CNRS, CRCAO) Topics: • Collaborative networks and digital humanities initiatives • Establishing shared methodological standards • Funding and institutional support for newspaper digitization
5:30-6:00	Closing Remarks and Next Steps Robert Barnett (SOAS), Franz Xaver Erhard (Leipzig University)
7:00 PM	Dinner