

Joint Research Group
Manuscriptology and Digital Humanities

**Regressus, Embryology and Rebirth:
The path of the *yogāvacara* in meditation texts of Laos,
Thailand and Cambodia**



Buddhist Khmer and Thai–Lao practitioners have a tradition of meditation that significantly differs from methods depicted in the Pali texts that are today recognized as authoritative on this issue. Although the root of this method can hardly be found in the canonical or commentarial literature of the Mahāvihāra school of Sri Lanka – the cradle of the “Theravāda Buddhism”, it mainly rests on a technical vocabulary and notions that are borrowed from the Pali scriptures, in particular that of the *Abhidhamma* and Buddhaghosa’s *Visuddhimagga*. Some scholars refer to it as the *kammaṭṭhāna* or *yogāvacara* tradition.

This talk aims to introduce this meditation tradition through texts that have come down to us in the form of manuscripts and the accounts of the rituals and practices associated with them. It will then examine the hypotheses that have been put forward to explain its origins – primarily by François Bizot, who was a pioneer in this field of study – and seek to propose new avenues of investigation.

 **09:15–10:45 Hrs**
(CET Germany) = 12:45–14:15 (IST India)
= 16:15–17:45 (JST Japan)

 **Friday 08.05.2026**

 **Meeting’s Link:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85088149247?pwd=pHfkMsOnMzNb2N9FG19wPyW7WaRkRQ.1>

Meeting ID: 850 8814 9247 Passcode: pothi



Gregory Kourilsky specializes in Thai–Lao Buddhism and his research focuses particularly on how Buddhist populations in Mainland Southeast Asia have maintained religious and cultural identity despite intrusion of non-indigenous doctrines, ranging from Indian classical scriptures to modern Western law. His recent publications center on Buddhist literature in Pali and vernacular languages in Laos and Thailand, on relations between Thailand and France in the premodern era, and on ancient meditation traditions in mainland Southeast Asia. He has previously taught History of Thailand and Laos and Lao Language and Literature at the National Institute of Foreign Languages and Civilizations (Inalco).

Speaker: Gregory Kourilsky

Associate Professor at the École française d’Extrême-Orient (EFEO, France), currently in charge of the EFEO center in Bangkok (Thailand).

