

Buddhism and Emotion

Edinburgh, 24th-26th June 2026

2026 annual conference of the UK Association for Buddhist Studies
European Regional Meeting of the International Association of Buddhist Studies

(Draft programme, 14th January 2026)

Wednesday 24th June 2026

- from 10:30 Arrival and registration, with tea/coffee (Rainy Hall)
- 11:15-11:30 Welcome and opening announcements (Martin Hall)
- 11:30-12:30 Keynote lecture: “Approaching Emotions in Pali Buddhism”**
Maria Heim, Amherst College
- 12:30-13:30 Lunch
- 13:30-15:30 Panel 1: Early Indian Literature**
- 13:30-14:00 “Udāyin - kāma personified”
Yael Shiri, University of Bristol
- 14:00-14:30 “Rāga for Liberation: The Outcaste Maiden Mātangi/Canḍālī and Her Pursuit
of Enlightenment in the Śārdūlakarṇāvadāna”
Yadi Qu, University of Hamburg
- 14:30-15:00 “Our Boy, the Buddha: Intimacy and awe in the Pāli tradition”
Odeya Eshel, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- 15:00-15:30 “Writing Ajatasattu’s Story: Emotions We Understand”
Vanessa R. Sasson, Marianopolis College
- 15:30-16:00 Coffee break
- 16:00-17:30 Panel 2: Ethnographic Approaches to Buddhism and Emotion**
- 16:00-16:30 “Interdependence, negative emotions and belonging in minority Buddhist
communities”
Erica Baffelli and Jane Caple, University of Manchester

- 16:30-17:00 “No Weeds, Only Flowers: Tending to Emotional Experiences within Caregiving Settings”
Monica Sanford, Harvard Divinity School
- 17:00-17:30 “Modelling More-than-Human Joy with Buddhist-Inspired Technologies”
Daniel White, University of Cambridge
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Thursday 25th June 2026

09:00-10:30 Panel 3: Theoretical Approaches

- 09:00-09:30 “Secondary Vedana as Emotions & the Dynamics of Renunciant Feelings”
Bernat Font, Lanna Centre for Buddhist Studies
- 09:30-10:00 “Never Causing Surfeit: The Role of Spiritual Joy (nirāmisā vedanā) on the Buddhist Path”
Dhivan Thomas Jones, University of Chester
- 10:00-10:30 “Two Approaches to Meditation — and their Attendant Understandings of Perception and the Emotions—in Aśvaghoṣa’s Saundarananda”
Roy Tzohar, Tel Aviv University

10:30-11:00 Coffee break

11:00-12:30 Panel 4: Human-Animal Relations

- 11:00-11:30 “The Revenge of the Cannibal Crabs: Bio-retribution and Emotion on an Indian Ocean Island”
Saskia Abrahms-Kavunenko, Kyoto University
- 11:30-12:00 “Fear and Disgust: Tools for Visualizing Moral Retribution in Human-Animal Relations”
Jennifer Eichman, Independent Scholar
- 12:00-12:30 “The Present Absence: Multispecies Memory and Emotion in a Himalayan Buddhist Community”
Rita Mancini, Ca' Foscari University of Venice and Italian School of Religious Studies, Rangjung Yeshe Institute

12:30-13:00 Lunch

13:00-14:00 UKABS AGM (Martin Hall)
All are welcome, though voting is restricted to UKABS members.

- 14:00-15:30 Panel 5: UKABS Postgraduate Panel**
- 14:00-14:30 “The Representation of Buddhism in KS3 Religious Education in England”
Romana Meereis, University of Oxford
- 14:30-15:00 “The Conflicting Emotions of Conversion to Buddhism in Rāmacandra Bhārati’s Bhakti Śataka”
Shruthi Mathews, University of Oxford
- 15:00-15:30 “Memory, Loss and Emotion within Japanese Buddhist sculptures”
Elodie Pascal, University of Edinburgh
- 15:30-16:00 Coffee break
- 16:00-17:30 Panel 6: Buddhist Caretaking in Sickness, Death, and Afterlives**
- 16:00-16:30 “Love After Loss: Caretaking Ghosts in Vietnam”
Sara Ann Swenson, Dartmouth College
- 16:30-17:00 “Redirecting Anxiety: The Affective Labour of Hòa Hảo Buddhist Volunteers in the Mekong Delta”
Nhung Lu Rots, University of Oslo
- 17:00-17:30 “Virtues as Emotional Practices: How Lay Buddhists in Myanmar Cultivate Feelings of Care through Funeral Encounters”
Mu-Lung Hsu, National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University, Taiwan

Friday 26th June 2026

- 09:00-10:30 Panel 7: Emotion and Karma**
- 09:00-09:30 “Love and Hate: Emotional entanglement in the multi-life story of the Buddha and Devadatta”
Naomi Appleton, University of Edinburgh
- 09:30-10:00 “Karmic Inversions in and of Hell: Reading the Gesar Epic as Religious Horror”
Natasha Mikles, Texas State University
- 10:00-10:30 “Feeling History, Building Heritage: Nostalgia and Community Construction at Yakushiji Temple, Nara, Japan”
Paride Stortini, Ghent University
- 10:30-11:00 Coffee break

11:00-12:30	Panel 8: Women's Grief
11:00-11:30	"Mother-Grief (puttasoka) is a Barb for the Heart" Kristin Scheible, Reed College
11:30-12:00	"Before and Beyond the Funeral: Grief and Succession Among Myanmar Buddhist Nuns" MK Long, Dartmouth College
12:00-12:30	"From Tears to Tonsure: Widowhood, World-Disgust, and Women's Paths to Renunciation in Late Imperial China" Qijun Zheng, University of Cambridge and École Pratique des Hautes Études
12:30-13:30	Lunch
13:30-15:30	Panel 9: Emotion and Crisis
13:30-14:00	"Propriety in Practice: Emotion and Community among South Korean Buddhist Military Chaplains" Hyein Lee, Freie Universität Berlin
14:00-14:30	"Emotions in Crisis: Buddhist Reactions to the 1896-7 Indian Famine" Frederik Schröer, Freie Universität Berlin
14:30-15:00	"Stigma, Shame, and Suicide in Contemporary Forest Monasticism" Prabhath Sirisena, Independent Scholar
15:00-15:30	Coffee break
15:30-17:00	Panel 10: Emotion and the Body
15:30-16:00	"Laughter, tears, congealing life force and alimentary obstructions: external and internal physical manifestations of emotion in early Chinese Jataka material, with particular reference to the Liudu ji jing (LDJJ) 六度集經 (The Compendium Sutra on the Six Perfections)" Janine Nicol, University of Edinburgh
16:00-16:30	"'Their Sorrow and Joy was Gathered Together': Affectivity and Ardor in Medieval Chinese Miracle Tales" Julian Butterfield, Independent Scholar
16:30-17:00	"Evoking Emotions in the Viewing Body in Motion: Circumambulating George Keyt's Life of the Buddha at Gotami Vihara, Sri Lanka" Sujatha Arundathi Meegama, Courtauld Institute
17:00	Closing remarks and departure