



Tōkyō University Library fragment of excerpts from the *Suhṛllekha* (stray leaf in Matsunami no. 262), https://dzkims.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ut_skt_manuscripts/

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Re-editing the *Suhṛllekha*, attributed to Nāgārjuna

The *Suhṛllekha* attributed to Nāgārjuna is arguably the most famous example of Buddhist epistolary literature. According to the monk-pilgrim Yijing (who was also the third to translate the text into Chinese), it was the first work the educated Buddhist laity would have learned by heart. Secondary literature on the *Suhṛllekha* is vast, but almost all of it is based on the Tibetan translation, as the Sanskrit original has unexpectedly resurfaced only very recently (ed. Dngos grub tshe ring, 2020). While writing a review of this publication, my updated edition and notes grew to a monograph-size publication. In this talk, I would like to share some of my observations regarding the text, its transmission, its effect on dating Nāgārjuna, its literary antecedents and influence, but most of all the challenges and problems re-editing such a text poses. I shall conclude arguing for the validity of a more heavy-handed editorial approach, especially in light of a small fragment of the text discovered at the Tōkyō University Library.

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