

Workshop "Law of Possession"

Cluster of Excellence "Religion and Politics in pre-modern and modern Cultures"
Professor Helene Basu (Münster) & Professor William Sax (Heidelberg)

The workshop will address issues around the juristic personality of divinity and ritual and worship as forms of legal practice. For example, what does it mean to imagine temples as legal courts in which the deity receives legal (and other) petitions? In what ways do rituals of divine embodiment (or 'possession') enact and articulate concepts of social justice? How do such concepts of justice reflect and perhaps even subvert the power of secular/European notions of justice and legal practice operational in India? While addressing the phenomenon of divinity and forms of ritualised justice mainly in India, this workshop will also provide wider interdisciplinary scholarship by inviting the participation of scholars from a variety of disciplines (anthropology, psychology, religious studies, sociology).

May 1st, Friday

17.00h Inauguration of the workshop

17.30h "Visual documentation in understanding healing and "possession"
By *Antti Pakaslahti*

20.00h Evening dinner

May 2nd, Saturday

9.00 – 10.00 *Aditya Malik* (Christchurch, New Zealand)
Embodiment, Memory and Justice: Reflections on Ritual and Narrative in the Darbar of Goludev

10.00 – 11.00 *William Sax* (Heidelberg)
Demonic Justice: a case from the court of Pokkhu Devta

11.00 – 11.30 coffee/tea break

11.30 – 12.30 *Helene Basu* (Münster)
Sorcery under trial at the court of Mira Datar

12.30 – 14.00 lunch break

14.00 – 15.00 *Antti Pakaslahti* (Helsinki)
Healing and the Balaji divine court

15.00 – 16.00 *Johannes Quack* (Heidelberg)
"Possession" gets Legally Contested - The "Anti-Superstition Bill" of Maharashtra

16.00 – 16.30 coffee break

16.30 – 17.30 *A. Ramaiah* (Mumbai, India)
Justice through court of law: Experiences of Dalits in India

May 3rd, Sunday

9.00 -10.00 *Eva Ambos* (Heidelberg)
Possession and Justice in the Context of Modernity

10.00-11.00 *Deepra Dandekar* (Pune, India)
The Satvai, her Judgement and Healing

11.00 -11.30 coffee/tea break

11.30 – 12.30 *Ferdinand Okwaro* (Heidelberg)
If your brother wants to kill you, kill him first: social justice in an African Healer's courtroom

12.30-14.00 lunch

14.00 – 15.00 final discussion