A conference of the Cluster of Excellence “Religion and Politics” of the University of Münster. Some 200 academics from more than 20 disciplines in the humanities and social sciences and from around 14 countries deal with the relationship of religion and politics across epochs and cultures: from the world of ancient gods and Judaism, Christianity and Islam in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period to the current situation in Europe, America, Asia and Africa. It is nationally the largest research association of its kind and of the 43 Clusters of Excellence in Germany, it is the only one to deal with religion. The German Federal Government and the Federal States support the project with 33.7 million euros in the Excellence Initiative’s second funding phase from 2012 to 2017.

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Venue
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Registration
Participation is free of charge to anyone interested. However, registration is required due to the limited capacity. Please send your registration inquiry to: jutta.siepert@uni-muenster.de until 23.10.2015.

www.religion-und-politik.de/en
Bio-political questions are nationally and internationally important and there is profound moral-ethical disagreement about whether such technologies – as embryo research or cloning – should be allowed or forbidden. Among the social groups that strongly shape the character of these debates are many religious organizations and actors. But the legitimacy and the functionality of such religious interventions into the secular state are both politically and theoretically controversial. The controversy centers on the liberal thesis that public debates – in particular decision making processes – should be restricted to arguments and reasons which are in principle accessible, intelligible and agreeable to all citizens. And religious arguments and reasons do not fulfill these standards. Despite this theoretical debate there is a lack of empirical knowledge about the extent, nature and consequences of the use of religious arguments. Therefore, it is of specific interest in what ways religious traditions and actors formulate their bio-ethical positions and which kinds of reasons they give to validate their positions. Moreover: how do religious actors influence politics, e.g. in which ways and under what conditions do religious positions and arguments achieve influence in political decisions?

The Conference deliberations will focus on two themes: First, epistemological and philosophical questions on the role of religious actors and arguments in liberal democracies and second, empirical case studies of the political discussion processes on stem cell research, therapeutic and reproductive cloning as well as preimplantation genetic diagnosis.