



CLUSTER OF EXCELLENCE “RELIGION AND POLITICS”

The Cluster of Excellence has been investigating the complex relationship between religion and politics across eras and cultures since 2007. The 140 researchers from 20 disciplines in the humanities and social sciences focus in this funding phase (2019 to 2025) on the “dynamics of tradition and innovation”. They analyze in transepochal studies ranging from antiquity to the present day the conditions and factors that make religion an engine of political and social change, with their focus being on the paradox that religions often develop their innovative potential precisely by drawing on their traditions. The research network is the largest of its kind in Germany; and, of the Clusters of Excellence, one of the oldest and the only one to deal with the issue of religion. It will receive funding of 31 million euros from 2019 to 2025.

ORGANIZATION

Cluster of Excellence “Religion and Politics”

Dr. Nikolas Funke
Prof. Dr. Eva Krems
Prof. Dr. Ulrike Ludwig
Prof. Dr. Silvia Reuvekamp
Prof. Dr. Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf
Johannisstraße 1, 48143 Münster
Tel: +49 251 83-23376
religionundpolitik@uni-muenster.de
[@religionundpolitik](#) | [X@religionpolitik](#)
www.religion-und-politik.de/en

VENUE

Cluster of Excellence lecture theatre
Room JO 1 (EG)
Johannisstr. 4, 48143 Münster

Registration is not required.

DEMONS

Spirituality – Manifestations – Materiality

22 October 2024 – 14 January 2025



DEMONS

The lecture series is dedicated to the subject of ‘demons’, elusive entities that have haunted people since antiquity and are still present even in the discourse of the modern period. In ancient Greece, the broad term ‘daimon’ could be used as a synonym for ‘theos’ (God), but more often referred to divine power in general. In ancient thought, demons were mediators between God and human beings; they represented, as it were, the bond between the sensual and the supernatural world. In Christian philosophy, demons serve as anchor points for discussions about the origin of evil and its status in the world.

Demons were a reality for people in the early modern period. In principle, it was conceivable for every person to come into contact with demons. After the belief in demons declined in the course of the ‘scientific revolution’, there emerged more abstract concepts of the demonic, as well as the idea of the demonic human. Though often understood metaphorically in modern times, demons have lost none of their power of fascination in art and literature.

In discussing theories and concepts of the demonic and focusing on the changing nature of demonic beings through history, scholars from literary studies, history and art history will shed light on the subject of ‘demons’. Taking an interdisciplinary perspective, the lectures will show how people from the Middle Ages to the present day have dealt in their respective cultural media with the idea that a latently threatening ‘other’ exists that is neither human nor divine. This will be explored in stories of relationships that people enter into with devils, demons, fairies and witches, in the dramaturgical staging of the demonic in the theatre, and in examples of late medieval architecture. A common point of departure is the question of how historical conceptions of the nature of the human being are reflected in the respective notions of the demonic.

PROGRAMME

Tuesday, 22 October 2024

6.15 pm – 7.45 pm

Dämonen im Kontext. Literatur, Religion, Politik und Recht (Demons in context: Literature, religion, politics and law)

Prof. Dr. Silvia Reuvekamp, Münster

Tuesday, 5 November 2024

6.15 pm – 7.45 pm

Kann Architektur Dämonisches verkörpern? Überlegungen zu ikonischer Baukunst um/nach 1500 (Can architecture embody the demonic? Reflections on iconic architecture around/after 1500)

Prof. Dr. Stefan Bürger, Würzburg



Tuesday, 19 November 2024

6.15 pm – 7.45 pm

Die Tiere der Hexen und Zauberer (The animals of witches and wizards)

Prof. Dr. Tobias Bulang, Heidelberg

Tuesday, 3 December 2024

6.15 pm – 7.45 pm

The bodies of witches and demons: Corporality and the origins of the European witch-hunt (Lecture in english)

Dr. Jan Machielsen, Cardiff

Tuesday, 17 December 2024

6.15 pm – 7.45 pm

Zum Lachen? Die Verkörperung von Teufeln und Hexen auf frühneuzeitlichen Theaterbühnen. Eine historische Annäherung (For a laugh? The embodiment of devils and witches on early modern theatre stages: A historical approach)

Prof. Dr. Rita Voltmer, Trier

Tuesday, 14 January 2025

6.15 pm – 7.45 pm

Dämonen der Moderne (Demons of modernity)

Prof. Dr. Martina Wagner-Egelhaaf, Münster



Current information on the
programme of the lecture series