
ORGANISATION

Dr. Stephen E. Harris
University of Leiden
Prof. Dr. Perry Schmidt-Leukel
University of Münster

LOCATION

Lecture Hall JO 101
Johannisstr. 1 – 4
48143 Münster, Germany

REGISTRATION

Until 30 April 2023
Register with Mrs. Martina Forstmann
forstma@uni-muenster.de

CLUSTER OF EXCELLENCE “RELIGION AND POLITICS”

The Cluster of Excellence “**Religion and Politics. Dynamics of Tradition and Innovation**” investigates since 2007 the complex relationship between religion and politics across eras and cultures. The 140 researchers from 20 disciplines in the humanities and social sciences analyze in the funding phase from 2019 to 2025 in transepochal studies ranging from antiquity to the present day the factors that make religion an engine of political and social change.

ANNUAL THEME 2022/23: “RELIGIOUS DYNAMICS”

Religions are often driving forces behind processes of social change, and their patterns of interpretation are playing an important role in crises and conflicts today.

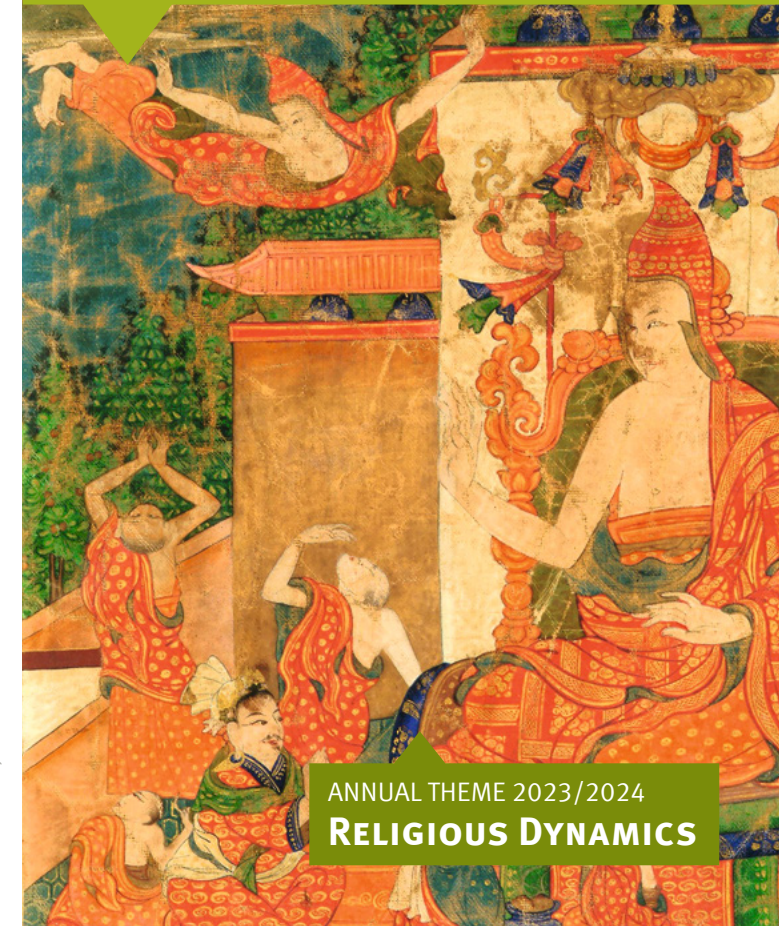
In the third annual theme of the Cluster of Excellence “Religion and Politics”, public lectures, panels and discussion evenings, film screenings, and readings by contemporary authors will focus on religious dynamics from antiquity to the present day. Discussion will focus on how religious dynamics are set in motion, and how religions initiate, accelerate, and promote – but also inhibit – social change.

The annual theme takes up ideas from current interdisciplinary work at the Cluster of Excellence and uses examples to discuss this work.

ŚĀNTIDEVA AND THE DYNAMICS OF TRADITION

25 – 27 May, 2023

Lecture Hall JO 101, JO 1, 48143 Münster, Johannisstr. 4



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ANNUAL THEME 2023/2024
RELIGIOUS DYNAMICS

ŚĀNTIDEVA AND THE DYNAMICS OF TRADITION

The Buddhist tradition is not only one of the oldest among the major religious traditions, but also exerted significant influence over a broad range of Asian cultures. Since the end of the 19th century its presence in the West continues to increase. Today, Buddhism is one of the main forces in the cultural and religious dynamics of global exchange and interpenetration.

“Śāntideva” is the name given by the Buddhist tradition to the author of two highly revered texts: the Bodhicaryāvatāra (an introduction to the way and ideal of a Bodhisattva) and the Śīks,āsamuccaya (an anthology of traditional Buddhist texts closely related to the Bodhicaryāvatāra). Śāntideva’s (c. 8th or 7th ct.) texts reflect a particularly vibrant period of Indian Buddhism. Firmly rooted in the tradition, they simultaneously display a form of Mahāyāna Buddhism that is at the threshold of undergoing significant transformations such as the growth of its Tantric and Pure Land variants.

In subsequent centuries Śāntideva’s writings became rather influential in large parts of the Buddhist world, especially in the Tibetan cultural realm. The 14th Dalai Lama has repeatedly referred to the Bodhicaryāvatāra as one of the main sources of inspiration for his personal life. Today, Śāntideva attracts an extraordinary measure of global interest, both in the areas of philosophical ethics and of lived Buddhist spirituality. By now, the Bodhicaryāvatāra is among the most often and most widely translated Buddhist text ever. In terms of religious dynamics, it represents a prime example of a long-living and particularly powerful manifestation.

The conference brings together a group of renowned researchers within the international field of Buddhist and Interreligious Studies with a particular focus on Śāntideva. They will look at three crucial aspects of religious dynamics discernible in Śāntideva’s work: How is his presentation of Buddhism to be seen within the larger context of inner-Buddhist developments, including its relevance for pressing contemporary issues? Which social dynamics are visible in his writings and what do they reveal about Śāntideva’s understanding of human beings? And finally, what kind of dynamics may his writings trigger within the contemporary global process of inter-religious encounter?

PROGRAMME

Thursday, 25 May 2023

15.00 Welcome/Coffee

SECTION I Inner-Buddhist Dynamics

15.30–16.30 Śāntideva’s Idea of the Yogic and Non-Yogic Worlds: Its Possible Antecedents and Descendants

Dorji Wangchuk

16.30–17.30 A Mādhyamika in Mind Only: The Rebirth of Śāntideva in Contemporary Yogācāra

Barbra Clayton

Public Lecture (JO 1, Johannisstr. 4)

18.15–19.45 The Continuing Relevance of Buddhist Tradition: Śāntideva in the Twenty-First Century

Stephen Harris

Friday, 26 May 2023

09.00–10.00 Revising Mādhyamika Wisdom: Śāntideva in Conversation with Candrakīrti

Amber Carpenter

10.00–10.30 Coffee break

SECTION II Social Dynamics

10.30–11.30 Hierarchy versus charisma: Śāntideva’s hagiography as an exemplar of the tension in Buddhism between ecclesiastical status and spiritual attainment.

Andrew Skilton

11.30–12.30 The Invisible Hands of Non-Violence and Altruism in Śāntideva’s Bodhicaryāvatāra

Douglas Duckworth

12.30–15.00 Lunch break

15.00–16.00 Sarcastic Humour in the Bodhicaryāvatāra

Perry Schmidt-Leukel

16.00–16.30 Coffee break

16.30–17.30 The Bodhicaryāvatāra from a Feminist Buddhist Perspective

Carola Roloff

SECTION III Interreligious Dynamics

17.30–18.30 Śāntideva and Śāṅkara on Consciousness and Ultimate Reality

Fabian Völker

Saturday, 27 May 2023

09.00–10.00 A Comparative Analysis of Zayn al-‘Ābidīn’s Treatise Makārim al-akhlāq (‘noble character traits’) and Śāntideva’s Bodhicaryāvatāra

Reza Shah-Kazemi

10.00–10.30 Coffee break

10.30–11.30 Learning to Be Empty: Śāntideva’s Wisdom on Creaturely No-Self

Mark Heim

11.30–12.30 Concluding Discussion

SPEAKERS

Amber D. Carpenter is Associate Professor at Yale NUS College, Singapore, specialized in ancient Greek and classical Indian philosophy.

Barbra Clayton is Associate Professor at Mount Allison University, New Brunswick, Canada, specialized in classical Indian and contemporary Buddhism.

Douglas Duckworth is Professor of Religion and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Religion at Temple University, USA, specialized in Tibetan Buddhist philosophy.

Stephen E. Harris is Lecturer for Indian and Comparative Philosophy at the University of Leiden, Netherlands, specialized in Buddhist moral philosophy.

S. Mark Heim is the Samuel Abbot Professor of Christian Theology at Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School, USA, specialized in comparative theology, theologies of religious pluralism, and systematic theology.

Carola Roloff (Jampa Tsedroen) is a Tibetan Buddhist nun and Professor of Buddhism at the Academy of World Religions, University of Hamburg, Germany, specialized in inter-faith dialogue and gender studies.

Perry Schmidt-Leukel is Professor of Religious Studies and Intercultural Theology at the University of Muenster, Germany, specialized in interfaith-studies, comparative theology and religious pluralism.

Reza Shah-Kazemi is Senior Research Associate at the Institute of Ismaili Studies, London, UK, specialized in comparative religion and Shi’i Islam.

Andrew Skilton teaches Pali and Sanskrit texts at the University of Oxford, UK, and is a Senior Researcher in the College of Religious Studies at Mahidol University, Thailand. He was editor of the journal ‘Contemporary Buddhism’ for 10 years. His interests include meditation in Theravada and Buddhist narrative literature.

Fabian Völker is Lecturer (Post-doc University Assistant) at the University of Vienna, Austria, specialized in intercultural and interreligious philosophy with an emphasis on Hinduism and Buddhism.

Dorji Wangchuk is Professor of Tibetan Studies at the Department of Indian and Tibetan Studies, Asia-Africa Institute, Faculty of Humanities, University of Hamburg, Germany, specialized in classical Tibetan studies.