

## The Formation of the Discipline of Religious Studies in Asia

Religious semantics are shaped not just by the actors of the religious field themselves, but also to a considerable degree by non-religious instances. In this regard, the discipline of religious studies has been particularly influential, shaping both the concept of religion itself as well as other religious concepts. While this fact may sound self-evident, it has not been generally acknowledged for religious studies outside of Europe, as the assumption there has long been that the non-European disciplines are merely more or less successful adaptations of the European model, just as is sometimes assumed that the concept of religion was simply taken over from the European example. Yet, both specific cultural dynamics (makeup of the religious field itself; conceptual configuration of the religious field prior to contact with Western ideas, differences in value attributed to the religious field in both society and academia) and political factors (colonial or semi-colonial status, role of the Christian mission within this colonial permeation) have to be taken into consideration when attempting to account for the role of religious studies in different non-European countries, as it took shape roughly between the 1870s and 1930s. Transnational factors do, however, obviously loom large and will thus have to be taken into account, albeit not as a one-way street: Even in the early phase of its formation in Europe, knowledge of Asian religions was instrumental for some of the central notions structuring the academic field. The workshop will therefore include a paper on nineteenth-century conceptions of Asian religions within the budding discipline of religious studies in Europe.

Four topical foci will be central to the workshop:

1. Religious Studies and Religious Policy
2. The Role of the Christian Mission
3. The Place of the Indigenous
4. The Concept of Religion

Friday, 4 February 2011

9.00 h	<b>Welcome and Introduction</b>
9.30 h	<b>The Light of Asia – Buddhism as a “World Religion”</b> Arie L. Molendijk (Groningen/Bochum)
10.30 h	<b>Coffee Break</b>
11.00 h	<b>The Process of Development of Religious Studies in Japan – The Experience of “Religion”</b> Isomae Jun'ichi (Kyoto/Bochum)
12.00 h	<b>Lunch Break</b>
13.30 h	<b>The Basic Trends in the Studies of History of Religion in Turkey (1850–2010)</b> Şinasi Gündüz (Istanbul)
14.30 h	<b>Coffee Break</b>
15.00 h	<b>The Emergence of Religious Studies in Republican China</b> Christian Meyer (Erlangen)
16.00 h	<b>Coffee Break</b>
16.30 h	<b>Religion, Science and Colonialism: Religious Studies in Colonial Korea</b> Jang Sukman (Seoul/Bochum)
17.30 h	<b>Concluding Discussion</b>

## DIRECTIONS

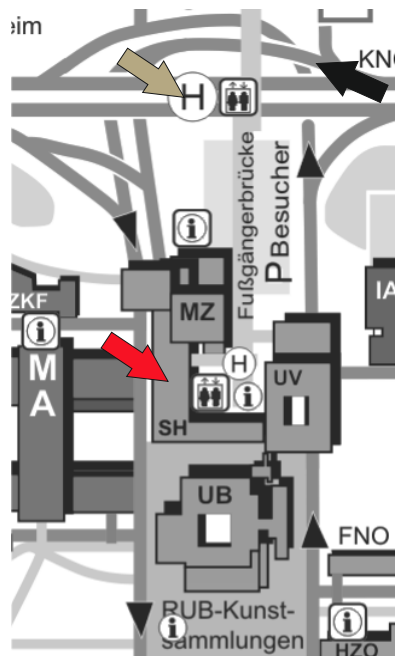
### By plane or train:

From Dusseldorf Airport via, or directly from, Bochum Hauptbahnhof (Central Station) take the U35 towards Bochum Querenburg (Hustadt) and get off at stop »Ruhr-Universität« (➡) (Ticket needed: Preisstufe A).

At the exit to the station turn right and walk about 100 m. Enter the Studierendenhaus (SH) building on your right (under sign for «Kulturcafé»). Go up one flight of stairs and follow signs to KHK «Dynamics in the History of Religions».

### By car:

Motorway A 43, interchange »Bochum-Witten«, exit at »Bochum-Querenburg/Universität« (exit no. 19). Universitätsstraße direction Universität/Zentrum, exit at »Uni - Mitte« (➡), about 2 km. Free parking is sign posted.



Workshop of the Käte Hamburger Kolleg

**DYNAMICS  
IN THE  
HISTORY OF  
RELIGIONS**

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### Conference Organisation

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4 February 2011

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Federal Ministry  
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and Research

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