

Heresy in Cross-Cultural Contact

This workshop aims to address a mode of negotiating cultural difference we propose to call “exclusive similarity.” By this we refer to those acts of othering that work by excluding on the basis of reputed similarity, not difference. We will use the shorthand “heresy” for these forms of othering, a term that is open to deconstruction over the course of the workshop.

“Heresy” was often used to describe a kind of internal diversity. In this sense, the language of heresiography tends to presuppose a perennial truth, which must be guarded from deviation. Charges of heresy therefore work to construct orthodoxies through a process of alienation and repeated self-definition of orthodox (or orthopraxic) systems.

But there is an additional sense of “heresy” that interests us: the way that this kind of exclusion functioned in cross-cultural interaction. In the history of global encounters the other group’s religions were often branded as defective imitations or heresies. In these cases, heresy works to domesticate the other with a familiar kind of alienation.

There is a final use of heresy in cross-cultural contact that interests us. This is when “heresy” is used to render an internal diversity alien through reputed association with a foreign group. For example, one might think of Martin Luther’s accusation that the “Papists” were “Turks.” Similarly, one might think of Hayashi Razan’s charge that his rival Japanese Neo-Confucians were “Christians.” In these cases, the heresiographical language works to assert the equivalence of foreign and domestic heretics. It therefore renders the familiar foreign and alien by juxtaposition with an other that is simultaneously being domesticated.

Friday, 15 July 2011

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| 09.30 h | Introduction
Jason Ānanda Josephson, Bochum / Williamstown, USA |
| 10.00 h | Jews as Heretics in the Eyes of an Arabized Christian Community
Ana Echevarría, Bochum / Madrid |
| 11.00 h | Coffee Break |
| 11.30 h | Borderlines and Accusations of Heresy between Jews, Christians, and Muslims: Late Antiquity to Middle Ages
Alexandra Cuffel, Bochum / Trenton (NJ), USA |
| 12.30 h | Lunch Break |
| 14.00 h | The Threatening Familiarity of Heathenism: Early Modern Catholic Perceptions of Hinduism
Paolo Aranha, London |
| 15.00 h | Coffee Break |
| 15.30 h | Continuities and Discontinuities in Confucian Understanding of Heresy in Chosŏn Korea
Andreas Müller-Lee, Bochum |
| 16.30 h | Coffee Break |
| 17.00 h | The Parallel Bureaucracy: State, Pluralism, and Orthodoxy in Chinese Magical Medicine
Dominic Steavu, Heidelberg |
| 18.00 h | Concluding Discussion |

Organisation & Registration

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DIRECTIONS

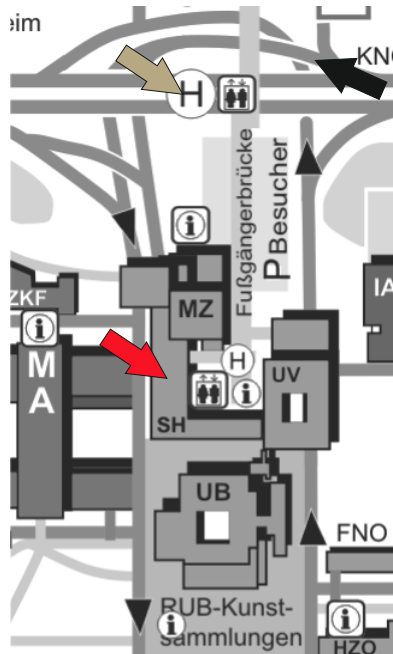
By plane or train:

From Düsseldorf 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.



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Studierendenhaus
Room 187
Ruhr-Universität Bochum

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