

## Empires of Faith: South Asia as Field of Global Religious Interaction - Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Islam from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages

From the global perspective, South Asia is seen as a source of Buddhism and, at a slightly later date, of Hinduism. Of Jainism little is known outside specialist circles despite its considerable influence on India proper. The approach to all these religions has been essentialist and inward looking: defined a priori as unchanging, South Asia matters historically only to the degree that religions have come from there or, inversely, that Christianity and Islam have managed to take root there. Interactions between traditions, fundamental to the development of distinct identities, is a subject being in its infancy, most especially between the first century BCE and the eleventh century CE.

Although Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism are certainly distinct, they developed in synchrony and shared doctrinal features such as the doctrine of karma. The coeval codification of canonical literature and the simultaneous emergence of temples, endowments and image worship across traditions in the fourth and fifth centuries CE are also noteworthy. Despite these commonalities, religious interaction is not well understood, mainly because the practice of rhetoric in early India normally precluded direct polemic attack. Moreover, the fragmentary nature of the evidence often means that the views of those involved in religious debates are only partly known. While many historical difficulties are bound to remain, problems can be addressed through a contextual study of literature and inter-textuality, the use of archaeological and epigraphic data, and the application of landscape archaeology to understand how religious dispensations defined and occupied sacred space. This workshop is dedicated to an exploration of some of these issues.

### Monday, 15 April 2013

Chair: Derek Kennet (Durham)

- 09.30 **Welcome Address**
- 10.00 **Lakuliṣa in the Early History of Pāśupata Śaivism**  
Elisabeth Cecil (Leiden / Providence)
- 11.00 **Rāmagiri: Locating Early Hinduism in the Archaeological Landscape of Central India**  
Harriet Lacey (Durham)

- 12.00 **Complexity at the Periphery: Results of the Banavasi-Gudnapura Regional Survey**  
Uthara Suvrathan (Ann Arbor, MI)
- 13.00 **Lunch**
- 14.30 **A Śiva Temple at Ahicchatra and Monumental Terraced Brick Structures of the Gupta Period**  
Laxshmi Greaves (Cardiff)
- 15.30 **Aspiring to Buddhahood in 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Century South Asia: Remarks on the Epigraphic Evidence**  
Vincent Tournier (Leiden)
- 16.30 **Buddhist Lañkā: Collective Identities Between Local Self-Assertion and Translocal Promotion**  
Sven Bretfeld (Bochum)
- 17.30 **Discussion**, followed by dinner

### Tuesday, 16 April 2013

Chair: Michael Willis

- 10.00 **Sanskrit Manuscripts from Central Asia in the British Library: New Discoveries and Reflections**  
Sam van Schaik (London)
- 11.00 **A Vākātaka Literary Monument: Pravarasena's *Setubandha***  
Paul Dundas (Edinburgh)
- 12.00 **Last Days of the Gupta Empire**  
Hans T. Bakker (Groningen)
- 13.00 **Lunch**
- 14.30 **Vallabhadeva's Commentary on the Raghuvamśa: „We Do not Fully Understand the Poet's Intention in not Composing a Twentieth Canto“**  
Csaba Dezső (Budapest)
- 15.30 **Invoking the Powers that Be: The Śivadharmā's Mahāśānti**  
Peter Bisschop (Leiden)
- 16.30 **Copper-Plate Charters: Distribution Patterns and the Religious Geography of the Gupta Age**  
Michael Willis (London)

## DIRECTIONS

### Public Transportation:

Take the U35 towards Bochum Querenburg (Hustadt) from Bochum Hauptbahnhof (Central Station) and get off at the stop »Ruhr-Universität«. From there you turn right and cross the pedestrian bridge keeping left while you pass the university library. The FNO building is on your left-hand side.

### By Car:

The quickest route is via the motorway junction Bochum/Witten, where the A43 and A44 meet. Simply take the exit Bochum-Querenburg, follow the signs "Ruhr-Universität" and then the (electronic) information boards.



## CONFERENCE CONCEPTION

Michael Willis (British Museum, London)

## CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION

Gwendolin Arnold

Ruhr-Universität Bochum

Käte Hamburger Kolleg »Dynamics in the History of Religions between Asia and Europe«

FNO 02 / 72

Universitätsstr. 150

44801 Bochum

Phone: +49 234 32-23341

Email: gwendolin.arnold@rub.de



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