

RUHR-UNIVERSITÄT BOCHUM

# TWELVE YEARS OF STUDYING RELIGIOUS CONTACTS AT THE KHK: STEPPING BACK AND LOOKING AHEAD

16–18 June 2021 | Online Conference

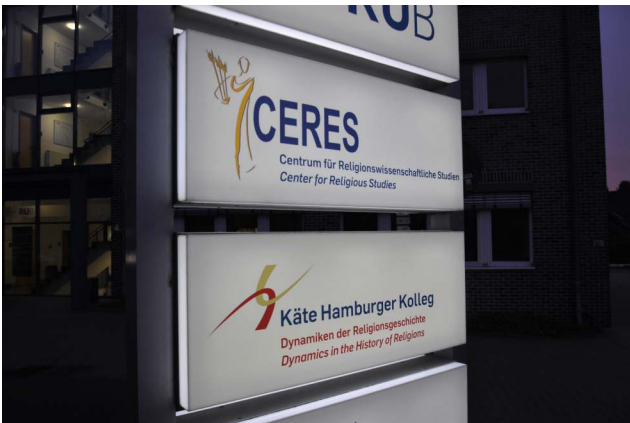


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*Greetings from the  
Center for Religious Studies &  
the Käte Hamburger Kolleg  
in Bochum!*

All KHK final conference sessions will be held using Zoom. Please install the Zoom software on your PC, tablet, or phone in advance to participate if you are not using it already. You do not have to have a Zoom account to join but the service will download an app to your device to give you local control over your camera and microphone and to participate in the chat.

If you need further guidance on how to use Zoom, this video should help:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOUwumKCW7M>

Please check in advance that your audio and camera are working and make sure that you have reliable broadband and Wi-Fi connections. The best performance will most likely be achieved if you are accessing the Internet through a wired network.

### Contact us for Zoom access data:

If you like to join the conference, please contact Maren Freudenberg at [maren.freudenberg@rub.de](mailto:maren.freudenberg@rub.de) for the access data to the Zoom chat room.

## DURING SESSIONS

When you are ready to join a session, click on the link in the program. Please mute your microphone to avoid background noise during the sessions.

Speakers should have their PowerPoint presentation (or whatever format you are using) open on their desktop and be ready to use Zoom's 'Share Screen' function. Please be aware there can be a slight delay between you speaking and a new slide being displayed.

There will be opportunities to raise questions and make comments either by using the chat or by raising your virtual hand and speaking up once you are invited to do so by the Panel Chair.

## IN BETWEEN SESSIONS

For informal networking during the breaks, we invite you to sign up (free of charge) to Element, an instant messaging platform that allows one-on-one communication as well as chats and video calls in various constellations. For instance, you will be able to (video) chat with panel participants and ask follow-up questions about individual papers or related topics. There will also be a Newsroom in which you can post recent publications, calls for papers or upcoming events that might be interesting to participants. You can also chat informally either in the main Coffee Break Room or start individual or small group conversations with others. We hope this will enable a more personal exchange during the breaks.

## TIME

Please note that all times indicated refer to Central European Summer Time, i.e., GMT+1. In case you want to double-check what time it is in Bochum, please visit:

<https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/germany/bochum>

**Please note:**

**All times stated in the schedule are according to CEST (Central European Summer Time)**

CEST +1hr = Jerusalem time | CEST - 1hr = London/Cardiff/Edinburgh/Glasgow time

CEST - 6hrs = Burlington (VT)/South Orange (NJ)/Syracuse (NY)/Toronto & Waterloo (ON) time

CEST - 7hrs College Station (TX) time | CEST - 8hrs = Regina (SK) time

CEST - 9hrs = Berkeley (CA) time

**Wednesday, 16 June 2021**

## INTRODUCTION

01:15–01:30 p.m. **Welcome Address** | Alexandra Cuffel & Kianoosh Rezania (Bochum)

01:30–01:45 p.m. **The KHK: A Very Short History** | Tim Karis (Bochum)

01:45–02:00 p.m. **Break**

## KEYNOTE LECTURE

**Chair:** Martin Radermacher (Bochum)

02:00–02:30 p.m. **RELATIONAL RELIGION: INSIGHTS AND CHALLENGES AFTER 12 YEARS OF THE KHK**  
Volkhard Krech (Bochum)

02:30–02:45 p.m. **Response** | Hubert Seiwert (Leipzig)

02:45–03:15 p.m. **Discussion**

03:15–03:45 p.m. **Break**

## PANEL 1

**Chair:** Jens Schlamelcher (Bochum)

03:45–04:10 p.m. **Transcending Space: Buddhist Travelogues Across Cultural and Other Borders**  
Max Deeg (Cardiff)

04:10–04:25 p.m. **Response** | Carmen Meinert (Bochum)

04:25–04:45 p.m. **Discussion**

04:45–05:10 p.m. ***Cuius regio, eius religio* Reconsidered: Reflecting on the Directionality of Conversion Processes** | Judith Pfeiffer (Bonn)

05:10–05:25 p.m. **Response** | Kianoosh Rezania (Bochum)

05:25–05:45 p.m. **Discussion**

05:45–07:00 p.m. **Break**

## PANEL 2

**Chair:** Maren Freudenberg (Bochum)

07:00–07:25 p.m. **The Future is Female? Religion, Bodies, and Digital Discourse**  
Ruth Tsuria (South Orange, NJ)

07:25–07:40 p.m. **Response** | Bärbel Beinhauer-Köhler (Marburg)

07:40–08:00 p.m. **Discussion**

08:00–08:25 p.m. **Space Aliens and Deities Compared** | Darlene Juschka (Regina, SK)

08:25–08:40 p.m. **Response** | Christoph Uehlinger (Zürich)

08:40–09:00 p.m. **Discussion**

### PANEL 3

**Chair:** Martin Radermacher (Bochum)

11:00–11:25 a.m. **Religion as a Culturo-Immunological System**  
Jesper Frøkjær Sørensen (Aarhus)

11:25–11:40 a.m. **Response** | Knut Martin Stünkel (Bochum)

11:40–12:00 a.m. **Discussion**

12:00–12:25 p.m. **Researching Religious Communities in the Twenty-first Century:  
The Phenomenology of Religion, Local Agency and the Joint Ownership of  
Knowledge** | James L. Cox (Edinburgh)

12:25–12:40 p.m. **Response** | Magnus Schlette (Heidelberg)

12:40–01:00 p.m. **Discussion**

01:00–02:00 p.m. **Break**

### PANEL 4

**Chair:** Maren Freudenberg (Bochum)

02:00–02:25 p.m. **“Religious Experience – Simple, True, and Universal”: A Genealogy and  
Future Prospects** | Jens Schlieter (Bern)

02:25–02:40 p.m. **Response** | Dylan Esler (Bochum)

02:40–03:00 p.m. **Discussion**

03:00–03:25 p.m. **Self-Praise Hymns and Mystical Experiences** | Ophira Gamliel (Glasgow)

03:25–03:40 p.m. **Response** | Licia Di Giacinto (Bochum)

03:40–04:00 p.m. **Discussion**

04:00–04:30 p.m. **Break**

### PANEL 5

**Chair:** Frederik Elwert (Bochum)

04:30–04:55 p.m. **Religious Contact and Exchange on the 'Roof of the World': Case Studies of  
Upper Indus Petroglyph and Graffiti Sites** | Jason Neelis (Waterloo, ON)

04:55–05:10 p.m. **Response** | Jessie Pons (Bochum)

05:10–05:30 p.m. **Discussion**

05:30–05:55 p.m. **In Defense of a New Perennialism** | Robert Sharf (Berkeley, CA)

05:55–06:10 p.m. **Response** | Heiner Roetz (Bochum)

06:10–06:30 p.m. **Discussion**

06:30–07:45 p.m. **Break**

### KEYNOTE LECTURE

**Chair:** Jens Schlamelcher (Bochum)

07:45–08:15 p.m. **IS THERE A FUTURE FOR THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF RELIGION?**  
Luther H. Martin (Burlington, VT)

08:15–08:30 p.m. **Response** | Maren Freudenberg (Bochum)

08:30–09:00 p.m. **Discussion**



## PANEL 6

**Chair:** Frederik Elwert (Bochum)

01:00–01:25 p.m. **From Dynamics in the History of Religions to Dynamics in the Study of Religion** | Eviatar Shulman (Jerusalem)

01:25–01:40 p.m. **Response** | Henrik Sørensen (Bochum)

01:40–02:00 p.m. **Discussion**

02:00–02:25 p.m. **A Computational Future? Distant Reading in the Historical Studies of Religion** | Katrine Frøkjær Baunvig (Aarhus)

02:25–02:40 p.m. **Response** | Thomas Jurczyk (Bochum)

02:40–03:00 p.m. **Discussion**

03:00–03:30 p.m. **Break**

## PANEL 7

**Chair:** Tim Karis (Bochum)

03:30–03:55 p.m. **After Polytheism: The (Im-)Probability of Religious Contact in Ancient Religion** | Andreas Bendlin (Toronto)

03:55–04:10 p.m. **Response** | Christian Frevel (Bochum)

04:10–04:30 p.m. **Discussion**

04:30–04:55 p.m. **How to Cope with Transcendence: A Question for the Historical Sciences? First Approaches of a Historian** | Tim Weitzel (Regensburg)

04:55–05:10 p.m. **Response** | Jens Schlamelcher (Bochum)

05:10–05:30 p.m. **Discussion**

05:30–06:30 p.m. **Break**

## PANEL 8

**Chair:** Tim Karis (Bochum)

06:30–06:55 p.m. **Religion and Materiality: Food, “Fetish” and Other Matters** | Birgit Meyer (Utrecht)

06:55–07:10 p.m. **Response** | Jim Watts (Syracuse, NY)

07:10–07:30 p.m. **Discussion**

07:30–07:55 p.m. **The Dynamic Future of Digital Religion Studies** | Heidi Campbell (College Station, TX)

07:55–08:10 p.m. **Response** | Giulia Evolvi (Den Haag)

08:10–08:30 p.m. **Discussion**

08:30–08:45 p.m. **Break**

## FAREWELL

08:45–09:00 p.m. **Concluding Remarks**  
Alexandra Cuffel & Kianoosh Rezania (Bochum)

## 12 Years of Studying Religious Contacts at the KHK

After twelve fruitful years of exploring, discussing, and classifying religious contact phenomena, the research program of the Käte Hamburger Kolleg *Dynamics in the History of Religions between Asia and Europe* came to its natural end in March 2020.

The KHK's final conference "Step Back and Look Beyond: Studying Religion after 2020" has two aims: First, it provides a platform on which to reflect on the KHK's achievements, the benefits of its contact-centered approach as well as related challenges. Second, the conference brings together an international group of renowned scholars who will take a step back from their current research and reflect upon the theoretical paradigms and methodological approaches that enrich their own research. The conference thus gives a place to ponder about the ways in which these approaches fit into the general study of religion and its rich history. Will these ways continue to shape the field in the future? What other promising ways to do research on religion are on the horizon? How do such new approaches fit into the field as a whole?

Presentations will either focus on one particular approach or paradigm (and its empirical usage) or reflect on the overall state of the field and its possible future.

## The Käte Hamburger Kolleg

The Käte Hamburger Kolleg *Dynamics in the History of Religions between Asia and Europe* is the largest research project at CERES. It commenced its research activities under the direction of Prof. Dr. Volkhard Krech in April 2008. Since spring 2018 it has been led by Prof. Dr. Alexandra Cuffel and Prof. Dr. Kianoosh Rezaia.

In addition to the visiting research fellows, numerous local scholars from Ruhr-Universität Bochum were involved in the institute's research program, which brings together scholars from a wide range of academic disciplines. Its research program focuses on the formation and expansion of religions, the mutual permeation of religious traditions and their densifications into the complex figurations called 'world religions.' Regionally, the research covers these phenomena in Europe and Asia. The academic goal is to establish and test a typology of contacts of religions and an overarching theory regarding the transfer of religions.

### CONVENERS

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