

How can we conceptualize the relationship between the cosmos, the experience of transcendence, and the human individual? Do standard models like monism or theism, and standard alternatives like personalism and impersonalism provide us with an appropriate understanding of this relationship? From a Christian perspective it is already possible to understand the concepts of personality and impersonality as extreme demarcations within an analogical way of thinking. The Semitic, European and Asian traditions provide us with concepts and imaginative models for characterizing religions and their respective concepts of transcendence. Many opposing classifications and many of these systematic concepts (e.g. all-encompassing unity, monism, pan-en-theism, theism) emerged out of a European context from the point of view of the European scientific tradition. The relations between God/divine, world and human are being more differentiated, plural and complex than the statements of the European discourse seem to suggest if they assume simple oppositions of theistic duality and monistic identification or personality and impersonality. Thus, the main question of the conference is how religious transcendence is exposed in different modes, and how this plurality of modes can be compared between different religious systems/galaxies of meaning? Is Hindu thinking about *brahman* as expressed in monistic traditions necessarily apersonal? In which sense do *nirvāṇa* or *śūnyatā* denote an ultimate reality? Which concepts of relationality of transcendence in Indian theistic traditions (Kāśmīr Śaivism and different theistic traditions of Vedānta) are developed?

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Twin-Conference II

Thursday, 30.06.2016

17:00 Lecturer meet-and-greet

18:00 Dinner

I. Opening

19:00 *Marcus Schmücker*: Welcome to the conference: Concerns in dialogue and interests in research

19:40 *Bernhard Nitsche*: Types of identity and difference in Christian thought

20:00 *Francis Clooney*: Karma and true religion: When Is God (un)necessary?

21:00 Discussion

21:30 Open meeting

Friday, 01.07.2016

08:00 Breakfast

II. Identity (*abheda*) and difference (*bheda*) in so-called Indian monism

09:00 *Brad Bannon*: Moderation

09:10 *Godabarisha Misra*: Ontological interpretation of Śaṅkara and the question of monism

09:50 Comments

10:00 *Anantanand Rambachan*: Gnoseological interpretation of Śaṅkara. The relationality of *saguṇa brahman* and *nirguṇa brahman*

10:40 Comments

10:50 Coffee Break

11:20 *Gary Tubb*: Śaṅkara und Bhāskara. Personal vs. impersonal aspects of the self against the background of Bhāskara's doctrine of identity and difference

12:00 Comments

12:10 Panel discussion in plenary

13:00 Lunch

III. Theistic concepts of the Kāśmīr Śaiva tradition

14:30 *Marcus Schmücker*: Moderation

14:40 *John Nemeč*: Śiva's claim to identity: Can personalism in a theistic tradition of a strict identity survive? (Kāśmīr Śaivism)

15:20 Comments

15:30 Coffee and cake

16:00 *Timothy Cahill*: Aesthetic experience (*rasa, camat-kāra*) as mediator between personal and impersonal transcendence

16:40 Comments

16:50 *Michelle Voss Roberts*: Shades of difference: Limitation, individuality and transcendence in Abhinavagupta's Śaivism

17:30 Comments

17:45 Break

18:00 Fishbowl discussion in plenary. Starting with critical remarks from a Christian perspective by *Fabian Völker*

19:00 Indian Buffet

Saturday, 02.07.2016

08:00 Breakfast

IV. Theistic concepts of Vedānta

09:00 *Florian Baab*: Moderation

09:10 *Marcus Schmücker*: Difference and inseparability as key concepts for the relation of a personal God to his world according to later Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta

09:50 Comments

10:05 *Steven P. Hopkins*: Theology in poetry: Divinity, humanity, and the natural world in Veṅkaṭanātha's Haṃsasandeśa and its Śrīvaiṣṇava commentaries

10:45 Comments

11:00 Coffee Break

11:30 *Noel Sheth*: The Bhedābheda (difference and non-difference) of Nimbārka

12:10 Comments

12:25 Discussion

13:00 Lunch

14:30 *Daniel Rumel*: Moderation

14:40 *Robert J. Zydenbos*: Madhva's concept of divine personality/personalism

- 15:20 Comments
 15:30 Coffee and Cake
 15:50 *Gérard Colas*: God and soul as persons: Similar, nevertheless different
 16:30 Comments
 16:40 *Christine Büchner*: How can Christian theology be in resonance with Hinduist theologies
 17:10 Comments
 17:20 Plenary Discussion
 18:00 *Francis Clooney*: A Review of the conference: Insights from and perspectives for comparative theology
 18:20 *Marcus Schmücker, Bernhard Nitsche*: Thanks and leave-taking
 18:30 Dinner / End of Twin-Conference

Tagungsleitung:

Prof. Dr. Dr. Bernhard Nitsche, Universität Münster
 Dr. Marcus Schmücker, IKGA, Wien
 Dr. Ulrich Dickmann, Katholische Akademie Schwerte

Tagungssekretariat für diese Tagung:

Manuela Siepmann, Telefon: 02304 477-153,
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 Montag bis Donnerstag, 08:00–12:00 Uhr
 Freitag, 08:00–11:30 Uhr

TG.-NR.: U05SCRR012

Ihre Anmeldung erbitten wir auf elektronischem Wege über den Programmbaustein unserer Homepage unter www.akademie-schwerte.de

Anmeldeschluss: 16. Mai 2016

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Die Begleichung des Teilnahmebeitrags erfolgt durch Lastschriftverfahren. Der Beitrag wird erst nach Tagungsbeginn eingezogen.

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Kooperationspartner und Förderer:



INTERNATIONAL TWIN-CONFERENCE II

God or the Divine

Religious Transcendence beyond Monism and Theism,
 between Personality and Impersonality

June 30–02 July, 2016

In cooperation with
 Seminar für Fundamentaltheologie und Religionsphilosophie,
 Katholisch Theologische Fakultät, Universität Münster
 and
 Institut für Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens (IKGA),
 Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften

