

Call for Papers

Workshop: Tibetanness outside Tibet

Institute of Oriental and Asian Studies, University of Bonn, Germany
January 30th and 31st, 2020

Due to its enormous expansion of and the networks established by the Tibetan Empire between the 7th and 9th century, Tibetan culture, language, and religion spread in a vast territory, reaching from Ladakh in the west to Dartsedo in the east, and covering parts of present-day Nepal (Mustang) and regions today administered by Pakistan (Gilgit-Baltistan). The area where Tibetic languages are still spoken, and where cultural traits which can be identified as being of Tibetan origin persist, therefore goes far beyond the actual Tibetan Autonomous Region and further Tibetan autonomous prefectures currently administered by the People's Republic of China. Thus, scholars often use the term "ethnic Tibet" to define this entire zone to distinguish it from today's geopolitical entity Tibet. But while the term "ethnic" implies a specific belonging to one group, in our workshop we will discuss in detail the various forms of assertion or rejection of belonging to a real or imagined wider Tibetan community among speakers of Tibetic languages outside of today's geopolitical entity Tibet.

We thus invite scholars of different disciplines studying Tibetic speaking groups with various religious affiliations in present-day Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, and Pakistan, focussing on identity (trans)formation processes among these groups, to address, for instance, the following questions: Does the Tibetan past play a role and if so, to what extent for the identity (trans)formation processes among these Tibetic speaking groups? What kind of endeavours to preserve and/or revive Tibetan heritage can be observed? What role do global networks, social media, local and international NGOs, education institutions, and the respective states play? Are Tibetan Buddhism and symbols in general allocated to this integrative elements of the identity (trans)formation processes? What local and global factors contribute to the assertion or rejection of belonging to a wider Tibetan community? How do members of these groups define Tibetanness?

Interested scholars are encouraged to send an abstract (300 words) and a short biography (150 words) to the organisers (listed below) until June 21st, 2019. The organisers are applying for funds to cover travel and accommodation expenditures but are not able to promise those right now.

Organisers: Jun.-Prof. Dr. Carmen Brandt (Department of South Asian Studies, IOA, University of Bonn), Dr. Salomé Deboos (SAGE CNRS UMR 7363, University of Strasbourg), Prof. Dr. Nicola Schneider (Department of Mongolian and Tibetan Studies, IOA, University of Bonn)

Contact: cbrandt@uni-bonn.de, deboos@unistra.fr, and/or nschneid@uni-bonn.de