

Workshop

May 7-8, 2015

Freie Universität Berlin, Seminarzentrum, Room L116
Habelschwerdter Allee 45, 14195 Berlin

Expressing the Ineffable in South Asian Literary Traditions

Convened by:

**Joydeep Bagchee, Lewis Doney and Hajnalka Kovacs
(Zukunftsphilologie Fellows of Freie Universität Berlin 2014-2015)**

Speakers:

Vishwa Adluri (Hunter College, New York)

Joydeep Bagchee (Zukunftsphilologie Fellow of Freie Universität 2014-2015)

Imre Bangha (University of Oxford)

Thomas de Bruijn (Leiden)

Lewis Doney (Zukunftsphilologie Fellow of Freie Universität Berlin 2014-2015)

Sonam Kachru (Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte, Berlin)

Matthew Kapstein (University of Chicago/EPHE, Paris)

Hajnalka Kovacs (Zukunftsphilologie Fellow of Freie Universität Berlin 2014-2015)

Anand Mishra (Universität Heidelberg)

Francesca Orsini (SOAS, London)

Description

What does it mean to express the inexpressible? Is it possible to talk about what is beyond words? When do we accurately give voice to an emotion or how does one depict the numinous? Many seminal works of literature grapple with these issues or incorporate concepts of the ineffable into their narrative frames, explicit arguments or use of metaphor. The philological work carried out on these texts presupposes notions of the transcendent that may be shared with the works studied, or differ substantially in their worldview. Even within a single tradition, seismic shifts in practice, socio-political conditions or literary style can radically alter how texts from that tradition are read. Furthermore, in European scholarship say, the underlying presuppositions concerning

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the world and its transcendence affect the scholarly distinction between what is real and yet inexpressible and what is merely impossible and falsified, as conveyed in the writing under investigation. In short, changing ideas of the ineffable alter philology, and philological work alters attempts at expressing the ineffable. This workshop will bring together various perspectives to assess the underlying dynamics at work in, and philological issues arising from, various types of language usage and its limitations, as it strains to reach beyond itself.

Schedule:

Thursday, May 7

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| 9.15am-9.30am | Introductions |
| 9.30am-10.30am | Matthew Kapstein (University of Chicago/EPHE, Paris) Interpreting Indian Philosophy: Three Parables |
| 10.30am-11.30am | Sonam Kachru (MPI for the History of Science, Berlin) Proximate Ineffables: Notes on Contested Claims for the Ineffability of Selves, Minds and Perceptual Presence in Indian Buddhist Philosophy |
| 11.30am-11.45am | Break |
| 11.45am-12.45pm | Lewis Doney (Zukunftsphilologie Fellow of FU Berlin 2014-15) Pious Alteration in Tibetan Historiography Concerning Indian Buddhism |
| 12.45pm-2.15pm | Lunch |
| 2.15pm-3.15pm | Imre Bangha (University of Oxford) Naming Kabīr's God |
| 3.15pm-4.15pm | Thomas de Bruijn (Leiden) The hermeneutics of early modern Hindi mystical poetry of Kabir and Muhammad Jayasi |
| 4.15pm-4.30pm | Break |
| 4.30pm-5.30pm | Francesca Orsini (SOAS, London) Shared language, distinct thoughts? |
| 5.30pm-6.30pm | Hajnalka Kovacs (Zukunftsphilologie Fellow of FU Berlin 2014-15) When Meaning Reaches the Tongue": Bedil's (1644–1720) Poetics of the Inexpressible |

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Friday, May 8

- 9.00am-10.00am** **Joydeep Bagchee** (Zukunftsphilologie Fellow of FU Berlin 2014-15)
Philology as Apologetics: Laine Reading Hacker Reading Weber on
Hinduism
- 10.00am-11.00am** **Anand Mishra** (Universität Heidelberg)
Vallabhācārya's reading of the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa
- 11.00am-11.15am** **Break**
- 11.15am-12.15pm** **Vishwa Adluri** (Hunter College, New York)
Beyond Grammar: Indicating the Infinite
- 12.15pm-1.15pm** **Discussion**

*The research program **ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE** supports research in marginalized and undocumented textual practices and literary cultures with the aim of integrating texts and scholarly traditions from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East as well as from Europe itself, by way of a critical recuperation of the practice of philology. The program takes as its point of departure the increasingly growing concern with the global significance of philology and its potential to challenge exclusivist notions of the self and the canon. **ZUKUNFTSPHILOLOGIE** is based at the Freie Universität Berlin and is a research program at the Forum Transregionale Studien. For further information, please visit: www.zukunftsphilologie.de*