Universität Münster

Institute of Sinology and East Asian Studies, Institute for Missiology and the Study of Theologies Beyond Europe
In cooperation with the Cluster of Excellence "Religion and Politics" and Asian Studies Centre

CALL FOR PAPERS
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE:
INTERCULTURAL KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER IN (TRANSREGIONAL) ASIAN RELIGIOUS CONTEXTS

13–15th November 2025

Religious traditions have long served as dynamic vehicles for the transfer and transformation of cultural knowledge across societies. In 19th and 20th century Asia, profound political, social, and cultural changes affected interactions between religious actors, institutions, and ideas, fostering unprecedented movements of knowledge within and beyond religious communities. This conference seeks to explore the mechanisms, actors, spaces and outcomes of intercultural knowledge transfer with a particular focus on East Asian and Indo-Persian regions. By examining these processes, the conference aims to deepen our understanding of how religious frameworks influenced the production, adaptation, and dissemination of knowledge across cultures. We invite papers that engage with the central question: **How did religious contexts facilitate the transfer and transformation of knowledge in, about and across Asia from early modern times to the 20th century?**
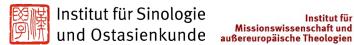
Submission Deadline: 31 March 2025

Contact: knowledgetransfer2025@uni-muenster.de

https://www.uni-muenster.de/
Sinologie/forschung/konferenzen/
knowledge_transfer_2025.html

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Contributors are encouraged to address this overarching question through the following sub-questions:

(1.) Actors and networks: Who were the key actors (e.g., clergy, missionaries, scholars, laypersons) involved in the transfer of knowledge? What educational background did they have? What networks, institutions, or informal structures enabled, influenced or obstructed these exchanges?

(2.) Content and media: What forms of knowledge were acquired and how have they been transferred? Was a distinction between secular and religious/sacred knowledge made and how did it shape the process of knowledge acquisition and its transfer? What kind of knowledge was prioritized and what information was deliberately or unconsciously held back? Were there any censorship measures applied and by whom? Which media were used for knowledge transfer?

(3.) Transfer processes: How were texts, oral traditions, rituals etc. employed as vehicles of knowledge? Who were the recipients of transferred knowledge and how did it shape the mindscape of its recipients? To what extent did these processes lead to innovation, resistance, or syncretism?

Due to our own research focuses, we are particularly interested in the regions of **China/East Asia** and **Indo-Persia** but are open to proposals dealing with other regions in Asia in transregional and comparative perspectives. We welcome contributions from scholars across disciplines, including Anthropology, History, Japanese Studies, Korean Studies, Mission Studies, Religious Studies, Sinology, Theology etc. Early career researchers and advanced doctoral students are particularly encouraged to apply.

Submission Guidelines:

We kindly request the submission of abstracts by 31 March 2025. Abstracts should not exceed 250-300 words. Please include the author's name, affiliation, email contact, and a short biography. The conference language is English. Presentations should be 20 minutes length. Successful applicants will be notified by the end of May 2025.
Unfortunately, travel and accommodation costs cannot be covered. However, for early-career researchers, i.e. doctoral students and postdocs, we are offering up to 10 scholarships providing a maximum of 1000 Euros in support. If such is desired, we kindly request a motivational letter and a CV as part of the application.

Please send abstracts to: knowledgetransfer2025@uni-muenster.de