CONCEPT

In recent years, research on premodern systems of world order (concepts and practices) and pertinent large-scale categories has intensified: numerous enlightening studies teach us about the perceptions and descriptions of “the world” in premodern Europe and Asia (c. 1300-1600). Many of these studies are valuable and help us to better understand how historical actors or societies constructed and perceived the world they inhabited. However, the question if and how such large-scale concepts that constituted the basic elements of overall world orders were translated into concrete actions or practices, remains underexplored.

In order to analyse and underline the relevance of our insights into the mental representations of “the world”, it seems necessary and fruitful to ask, how theoretical or intellectual models influenced (or even determined) concrete actions on an individual or collective level. The conference “Order into Action” addresses this question and seeks to combine and discuss the perspectives of scholars in European, Arabic and Islamic, and Asian Studies as well as of experts of non-Eurasian cultures. The different papers focus on exemplary case studies from different areas of expertise, which possess the potential to be ‘generalised’ in the perspective of our overarching question.

The conference is organised by project A 27 “World Orders in Transcultural Perspective” of the Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in a Global Context”.

CONTACT

ORDER INTO ACTION
How large-scale concepts of world-order determine practices in the premodern world

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PROGRAMME

Thursday, November 10

13:30 to 14:00
Welcome/ Coffee

14:00 to 14:30
Veit Probst (Heidelberg): Welcome
Klaus Oschema/Christoph Mauntel: Introduction

Panel 1: Religious concepts
Chair: Bernd Schneidmüller (Heidelberg)

14:30 to 15:20
David Max Moerman (New York): The Buddhist World Continent and the European World Order: Transcultural Cartography in Japan, 1300-1700

15:20 to 16:10
Nora Berend (Cambridge): The concept of christianitas: a guide to action?

16:40 to 17:30
Daniel König (Heidelberg): dār al-ḥarb and terra paganorum. On the Practical Implications of Circumscribing the Sphere of the ‘Infidels’

Friday, November 11

Panel 2: Political concepts
Chair: Enno Giele (Heidelberg)

09:00 to 09:50
Michal Biran (Jerusalem): The Mongol World-Order: From Universalism to Glocalization

09:50 to 10:40
Albrecht Fuess (Marburg): Global Historiography and Mirrors for Princes: Concepts of Political Rule in the Near East (15th-16th centuries)

10:40 to 11:10
Coffee Break

11:10 to 12:00
Klaus Oschema (Princeton/Heidelberg)/Christoph Mauntel (Tübingen): Between Universal Empire and the Plurality of Kingdoms – the Influence of Political Concepts in Late Medieval Latin Europe

12:00 to 14:00
Lunch Break

Panel 3: Geographic concepts
Chair: Joachim Kurtz (Heidelberg)

14:00 to 14:50
Christine Gadrat-Ouerfelli (Marseille): Travelling through empires: how Medieval travellers conceived of Asia

14:50 to 15:40
Michael Wintle (Amsterdam): The Advent of the Black Magus: exoticism, court politics and the creation of a continental hierarchy

15:40 to 16:10
Coffee Break

16:10 to 17:00

Saturday, November 12

Panel 4: Outlook: premodern societies in Africa, the Americas and Australia
Chair: Gerrit Jasper Schenk (Darmstadt)

09:00 to 09:50
Mark Horton (Bristol): Beyond Eurasia – the African contribution to the premodern world

09:50 to 10:40
Veronica Strang (Durham): Seeing Through the Rainbow: Aboriginal Australian concepts of an ordered universe

10:40 to 11:10
Coffee Break

11:10 to 12:00
Frauke Sachse (Bonn): Worlds in Words: The Encounter of Pre-Columbian and European Cosmologies in Colonial Missionary and Indigenous Texts from Highland Guatemala

12:00 to 12:30
Final discussion/Concluding remarks