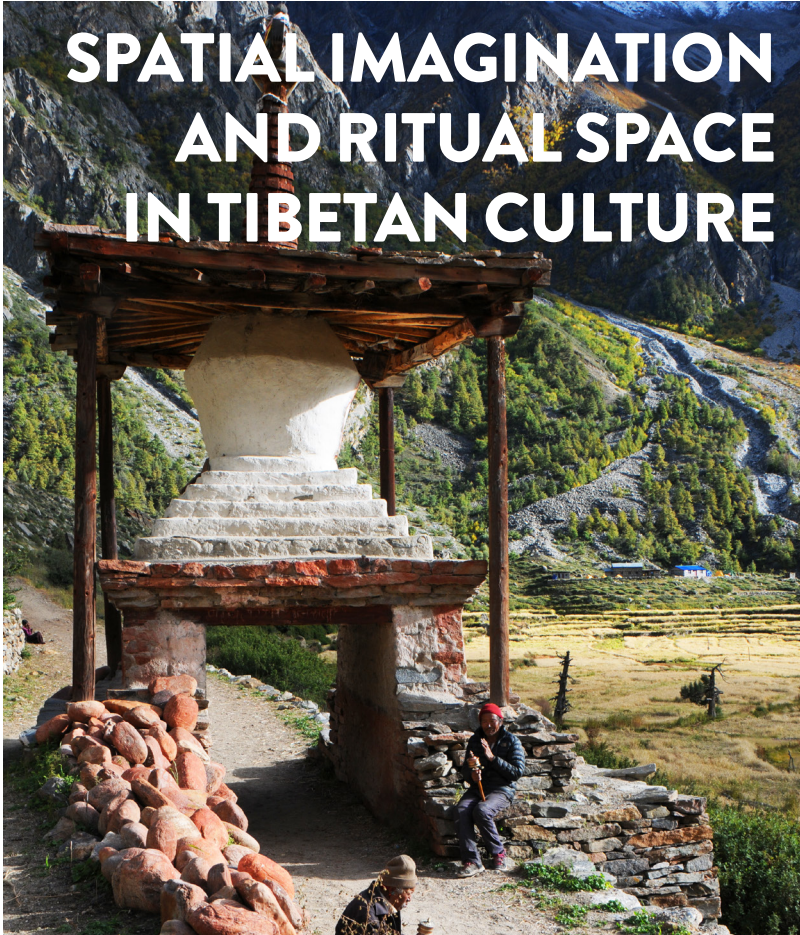


ÖAW

AUSTRIAN  
ACADEMY OF  
SCIENCES

SYMPOSIUM  
OCTOBER 28<sup>TH</sup> 2024, 15:00–18:00  
AND OCTOBER 29<sup>TH</sup> 2024, 08:00–18:00  
AUSTRIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES  
ANTON ZEILINGER SALON  
DR. IGNAZ SEIPEL-PLATZ 2, 1010 WIEN

# SPATIAL IMAGINATION AND RITUAL SPACE IN TIBETAN CULTURE



Waltse Village, Limi Valley, Humla District, Nepal. Photo by: Christiane Kalantari, 2018

**FWF** Austrian  
Science Fund

This project has received funding from the Austrian Science Fund (FWF), titled „Spatial concepts and ritual topography in the Western Himalayas“, Grant DOI 10.55776/P36119.



# RITUAL SPACE

## Spatial concepts and ritual topography in the Western Himalayas

In Tibetan Buddhist cultural areas, landscapes are commonly defined by ritual practices and religious imaginations. As a consequence, space is conceptualised and transformed into „ritualised spaces“, which may widely differ, ranging from the cosmological world to personal spaces. A Tibetan Buddhist view of world geography reflects a religious cosmology. To make Tibet the land of Avalokiteśvara involves the action of ritualising a particular land. Through the ritual practice of circumambulation, particular routes become part of religious practices. Ritualised spaces are also manifested in geometrical patterns that are connected to the conceptualised and ritualised space. These range in scale from the layout of settlement structures to the location of buildings or even the arrangement of everyday artifacts. As ritualised spaces can ideally be constructed, they can also be disrupted, for example, by political decisions, natural environmental and climatic changes, or through shifts in religious beliefs. Disruptions may have significant consequences for the ritualised space.

In this context, understanding conceptualisation, processing, and disruption are crucial steps in defining sacred spaces and getting closer to understanding the nature of culturally shaped landscape that is expressed by ritual topography. In using a multidisciplinary approach addressing different villages in Buddhist cultural regions, this project, titled *Spatial Concepts in the Western Himalayas* (SCWH) based at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, is designed to study how ritual space is defined, constructed, and potentially disrupted in Tibetan Buddhist culture areas.



# PROGRAM

## OCTOBER 28<sup>TH</sup>:

**15:00-16:00** | **Charles Ramble** | École Pratique des Hautes Études-PSL, CRCAO, Paris

*Horizontal and Vertical Space in Two Forgotten Tibetan Rituals*

**16:00-17:00** | **Pascale Dollfus** | French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS)

*House as Ritual Space: The Symbolism of the House and its Protective Systems in Ladakh*

**17:00-18:00** | **Moderation: Hubert Feiglstorfer** | ÖAW ISA

*Discussion*



# PROGRAM

## OCTOBER 29<sup>TH</sup>:

**08:00-08:15** | **Hubert Feiglstorfer** | ÖAW ISA  
*Welcome and Introduction*

### GENERAL SPATIAL IMAGINATIONS IN THE TIBETAN BUDDHIST WORLD

**08:15-08:45** | **Petra Maurer** | Ludwig-Maximilians-University, Munich  
*How Time defines Space. Spatial Organisation in Tibetan Geomancy*

**08:45-09:15** | **Zongwei Xu** | Independent Researcher  
*Tibetan Architectural Space Form Shaped by Religious Thoughts*

**09:15-09:45** | **Rachael Griffiths** | École Pratique des Hautes Études-PSL, CRCAO, Paris  
*Breaking Hard Ground: Earth Rituals and Spatial Transformation*

**09:45-10:15**     *Coffee Break*

### RITUAL SPACES IN BON TRADITIONS

**10:15-10:45** | **Daniel Berounský** | Charles University, Prague  
*Notes on the cosmologies of the Bön tradition*

**10:45-11:15** | **Naljor Tsering** | École Pratique des Hautes Études-PSL, CRCAO, Paris  
*The Center of the World in the Yarlung Valley: A Real and Imagined Fundamental Sacred Landscape in Bon Tradition*



# PROGRAM

## RITUAL LANDSCAPE IN TIBET AND CHINA

**11:15-11:45** | **Anna Sehnalová** | Postdoctoral Fellow at the Research Institute for the Humanities, Chinese University of Hong Kong.

*Space of Ancestral Journeys, Acts, and Remains: Landscape as Kinship and Social Organisation*

**11:45-13:15**    *Lunch Break*

**13:15-13:45** | **Ding Boyi** | Vienna University of Technology

*The Interaction between Ecology and Residence: The Material and Spiritual Space Construction of Niru from the "Dwelling Perspective"*

**13:45-14:15** | **Jusa Drölma Chöekyi** | University of Vienna

*The Construction of Ri Bo Rtse Lnga and Its Belief System in Tibetan Texts: Significance in Tibetan Culture and Society*

## MAKING RITUAL SPACES IN BUDDHIST HIMALAYA

**14:15-14:45** | **John Bray** | Independent Researcher

*Building Christianity in the Overlapping Religious and Social Spaces of the Western Himalaya*

**14:45-15:15**    *Coffee Break*

**15:15-15:45** | **Mélanie Vandenhelsken** | University of Vienna; CESAH-CNRS

*Indigenous Spatial Imagination in the Nepal-Sikkim Borderland Limbu Knowledge, and the Nation-State*

**15:45-16:15** | **Hubert Feiglstorfer, Christiane Kalantari and Tatjana Bayerová** | ÖAW ISA and University of Applied Arts in Vienna

*Interdisciplinary Insights into the Sacred Space of Tabo Tsuglagkhang*

**16:15-16:45** | **Tsering Drongshar** | ÖAW ISA

*Research on Tibetan Literature about Sacred and Ritual Spaces*

**16:45-17:15** | **Lobsang Yongdan** | ÖAW ISA

*The Ritual Practices and Spaces of the "Grain Year" and "Rhupla" Festivals in Shey, Ladakh*

**17:15-18:00** | **Moderation: Hubert Feiglstorfer** | ÖAW ISA

*Discussion and Conclusion*

