

## Buddhism, knowledge, and power: Reflections on the modern fashioning of a tradition, from global to local contexts

Proponents of using the umbrella term ‘Buddhism’ as an encompassing category for an ensemble of traditions developed and preserved by diverse populations in South, East, and Southeast Asia, have long succeeded in establishing it as a full-right member in the family of ‘world religions’. The apparent naturalness of the concept hides the complex processes through which the category itself and its defining features have historically taken shape in different Asian (and now also non-Asian) localities, where ‘Buddhism’ has always been entangled in intricate webs of knowledge and power.



In his presentation, Dr. Casas will re-

reflect on the processes involved in the construction of ‘authentic’ knowledge about Buddhism at different levels, focusing on the case of Sipsong Panna, in southwest China, the site where he has conducted most of his research, and connecting disparate phenomena such as religious reform movements in Japan, Burma, and Thailand, the professionalization of knowledge in Western academia, the ‘scientification’ of Buddhism, and its contemporary commodification in the global markets of tourism and corporate entrepreneurship.

Roger Casas has lived and worked in Yunnan and other areas of China for extended periods since 2001, including as local coordinator of the UNESCO project “Cultural Survival and Revival in the Buddhist Sangha” in Sipsong Panna from 2005 to 2007. He has continued doing long-term fieldwork research in this area, especially during his MA (Chiang Mai University, 2011) and his PhD (Australian National University, 2015).



Dienstag, den 7. November 2017

Zeit: 18:00-20:00

Ort: Raum 122

Universität Hamburg

Asien-Afrika Institut

Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1,

Flügel Ost