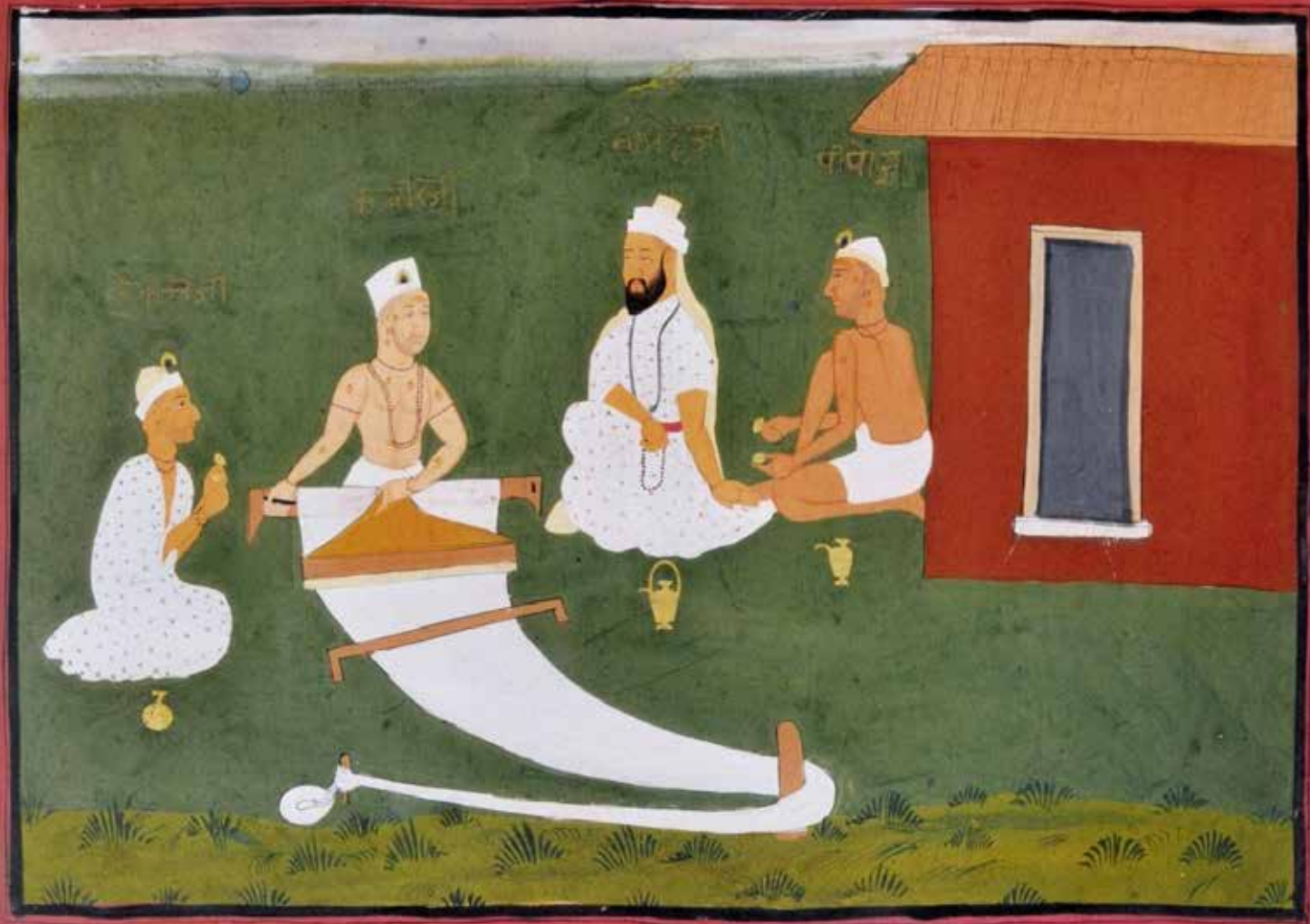




Foto: Max Weber (© BAdW München)



## Organisation:

**Prof. Dr. Martin Fuchs** | Max-Weber-Kolleg Erfurt

**Dr. Rahul Bjorn Parson** | Max-Weber-Kolleg Erfurt

**Conference held under the auspices of the Research Group “Religious Individualization in Historical Perspective”**

**Picture:** Saint Kabir with Namdeva, Raidas and Pipaji. Jaipur, early 19th century, National Museum New Delhi (<https://commons.wikimedia.org>)

[www.uni-erfurt.de/maxwe](http://www.uni-erfurt.de/maxwe)

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UNIVERSITÄT ERFURT

## Bhakti and Self

Conference at the Max-Weber-Kolleg Erfurt  
21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> June 2016

Venue: Collegium Maius (Michaelisstr. 39, Erfurt)

Bhakti represents a major and long-term strand of Indian religions. An aspect that stands out is the element of creativity and innovation characteristic of this religious strand. Over long stretches of Indian history, bhakti was recurrently renewed, exemplifying new forms of experience and inventing new modes of articulation. Bhakti exhibits potentials for religious individualization that many (though not all) forms of bhakti have tapped into and that differ from the forms of individualization represented by the figure of the renouncer. Particularly characteristic for bhakti is the emphasis laid on the relational aspects of human experience, manifested in (imageries of) continual interactions with the divine, or the divine's representative, as well as in continual interactions with other bhaktas. It is this kind of inner social dynamics that lends itself to an exploration of the inter-relational dimensions of self/selves, and of individual identity and personhood as they have been or still are articulated by different formats of bhakti. As lived religion(s) this perspective on bhakti provides an angle different from largely philosophical or theological debates over concepts of selfhood, soul or atman. The conference will explore notions of selfhood, individualization and inter-subjectivity articulated in bhakti contexts in different periods and regions. It is part of the on-going discussions of the research group "Religious Individualization in Historical Perspective," housed at the Max Weber Centre of Advanced Cultural and Social Studies, University of Erfurt.

## Programme

### Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2016

#### Arrival of Participants

19:30 | **Get-Together (Mercure Hotel, Lobby Bar)**

### Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2016

09:30 | **Reception**

10:00 | **Introductory Note – Martin Fuchs**

11:00 | **Coffee Break**

11:30 | **Karen Pechilis (Drew University, Madison):** Extra/Ordinary People in the Bhakti Imaginary: Between the Singular and the Everyday

12:30 | **Lunch**

14:00 | **Anne Feldhaus (Arizona State University, Tempe):** The Divine Self

15:00 | **Christian Novetzke (The University of Washington):** The Liberal Bhakta: Jnandev, the Jnaneshwari, and the Social Politics of Bhakti, c. 1290 CE

16:00 | **Coffee Break**

16:30 | **Purushottam Agrawal (Delhi):** Kabir: The Weaver-Poet as Himself

19:00 | **Dinner**

### Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016

09:00 | **Vasudha Dalmia (Professor Emerita, University of California, Berkeley):** Early Modernity and Bhakti Individualization

10:00 | **John Stratton Hawley (Columbia University, New York):** Lyric, Network, and Bhakti Selfhood

11:00 | **Coffee Break**

11:30 | **Vasudha Paramasivan (University of California, Berkeley):** The Poetic Self in the Work of Tulsidas

12:30 | **Lunch**

14:00 | **Jon Keune (Michigan State University, East Lansing):** Untouchability and the Self after Bhakti: Representations of Low-Caste Subjectivity in Early Modern Marathi Literature

15:00 | **Till Luge (Orient Institut Istanbul):** Selves in Transformation: Constructing Social Relations and Spiritual Practice in a Poetic Genre of Sant Master-Disciple Instruction

16:00 | **Coffee Break**

16:30 | **Guided City Tour**

19:30 | **Dinner**

### Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> June 2016

09:00 | **Heidi Pauwels (University of Washington, Seattle):** Journey to Finding the True Self: A Bhakta's Auto-Biographical Pilgrimage Report from the Mid-Eighteenth Century

10:00 | **Anshu Malhotra (University of Delhi):** Expressing and Empowering the Self: Piro and Bhakti's Cultural Imaginary

11:00 | **Coffee Break**

11:30 | **Denis Matringe (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris):** Lilian's Self-Realization: The Bhakti of a French 20th Century Indologist

12:30 | **Lunch**

14:00 | **Rinku Lamba (Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi):** Cultivation of Disposition: An Analysis of the Links between Bhakti and Modern Indian Political Thought

15:00 | **Kumkum Sangari (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee):** Converging Selves, Contingent Selves

16:00 | **Coffee Break**

16:30 | **Final discussion**

19:00 | **Dinner**