

Vorlesung:

**Violence-enabling Mechanisms within Buddhism**

24. Mai, 19.15-20.45, Hörsaal F2, Fürstenberghaus, Domplatz 20-22.

While there is nothing in Buddhism's fundamental teachings, i.e., the Four Noble Truths and Holy Eightfold Path, which condone violence let alone warfare, institutional Buddhism has, nevertheless, a long history of involvement in warfare. To give but one relatively modern example, during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5, Rinzai Zen master Shaku Sōen wrote Leo Tolstoi as follows: "Even though the Buddha forbade the taking of life, he also taught that until all sentient beings are united together through the exercise of infinite compassion, there will never be peace. Therefore, as a means of bringing into harmony those things that are incomplete, killing and war are necessary."

This presentation will explore those "enabling mechanisms," i.e., doctrines and praxis, that institutional Buddhism has employed to endorse, if not fervently support, violence and warfare not only in Japan in the modern period but throughout Asia, including all schools, both past and present.