



Numata Zentrum
für Buddhismuskunde

Christianity and the Refashioning of Theravada Buddhism in Nineteenth-Century Siam

A lecture by **Prof. Dr. Sven Trakulhun**, Universität Konstanz
The lecture will be held on **Tuesday 24 May 2016**, 18:15 - 19:45 h at Hamburg University, Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1, East Wing (ESA O), Room 124.
The lecture will be held in English. The entrance is free.

*In cooperation with the Department of Thai Studies at Hamburg University
and the Hamburger Gesellschaft für Thaiistik*



Bild: Sven Trakulhun

In the presentation Prof. Dr. Sven Trakulhun will examine the interplay between knowledge transfer and the Christian mission in nineteenth-century Siam. From c. 1830 onwards, discussions on religion became a central arena of conflict between rival regimes of knowledge, confronting 'traditional' Thai Buddhist views on nature and man's existence with the ideals and practices of science and rationality transmitted from Europe and the USA. He will argue that the Christian doctrine played a crucial role for the transformation of Siamese Buddhism into a 'rational' faith compatible with modern science, while the Christian mission was a failure in terms of conversions. 'Modern' Buddhism then not only became an important source for cultural self-assertiveness in the face of Western colonialism, but also a central ideology for pushing Siamese claims for religious leadership in the Theravada Buddhist world.

Sven Trakulhun teaches modern history at the University of Konstanz. He has published widely on the history of Thailand and its relations with Europe. He is the author of *Siam und Europa. Das Königreich Ayutthaya in westlichen Berichten* (2006) and *Asiatische Revolutionen: Europa und der Aufstieg und Fall asiatischer Imperien in der Frühen Neuzeit* (forthcoming in 2017).