The Discourse on Cruelty to Animals in Colonial India: Between Religion and Biopolitics

Abstract:
In this talk I am going to introduce my PhD project which explores the exchange of ideas and concepts concerning the discourse on and the categorization of ‘animals’ in colonial India as well as instances of violence against them. I am interested in the transculturality of animal welfare organizations and their ‘moral’ interventions in colonial South Asia and want to interrogate the influence of ‘indigenous’ South Asian concepts and practices, such as ahimsa regarding the treatment of animals, on the discourse in ‘the West’. These debates on violence against ‘animals’ are, I argue, part of a larger discourse on social and religious reforms in late 19th and early 20th century South Asia and Europe. The actors I am interrogating draw mostly on religious argumentation, while I will also examine the debate in the larger framework of sovereignty and biopolitics in the colony. I would be happy to discuss with you my hypothesis in this early stage of the project.

Datum: 19.11.2013, 18:15 Uhr
Ort: SAI, Raum 316