

Einladung zum Gastvortrag

## Uranchimeg Orna Tsultem

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### Performativity in Mongolian Buddhist Art

Montag, 28. Nov. 2022, 18–20 Uhr ct.

Raum A127, Kunsthistorisches Institut, Koserstr. 20, 14195 Berlin



When discussing and analyzing Buddhist art, scholars typically rely and depend on textual sources. Moreover, scholars of Buddhist Studies maintain a view that images are meant to serve as “visualization aids” for meditation praxis (i.e. Janet Gyatso 1998, Donald Lopez 2005). This talk will introduce several paintings from Mongolia which amply demonstrate what Dwight Conquergood has termed “text-performance hybridity” (Conquergood 2002, 152), where images were meant to serve as important primary sources of Buddhist practice, often without singular textual dependence. Supporting Religious Studies’ scholar Birgit Meyer’s notion that “religion is a multi-media phenomenon that mobilizes the full sensorium” (Meyer 2015, 333), I will discuss the performative agency of these paintings seen in the

ways they structure the participatory acts of their viewers and shape their mode of seeing to form the sense of their belonging and unity as a community.

**Uranchimeg (Orna) Tsultem** received her Ph.D. in Art History from the University of California at Berkeley in 2009. Prior to Berkeley, she studied art history at Sophia University in Tokyo, Japan, and ELTE (Eötvös Loránd University) in Budapest, Hungary. She received her BA and MA degrees in Art History from the University of Arts and Culture, Mongolia in 1993 and 1995 respectively. Dr. Tsultem is Edgar and Dorothy Fehnel Chair in International Studies and Assistant Professor at Indiana University’s Herron School of Art and Design. Prior to Herron, she was Co-Chair of the Mongolia Initiative Program at the Institute of East Asian Studies at UC Berkeley. She taught Asian art at UC Berkeley, National University of Mongolia, Yonsei University in South Korea and the University of Iceland.

Orna Tsultem’s work was recognized by several important awards, which include American Council of Learned Societies/Robert Ho Foundation Collaborative Research Award in 2014-2016, John W. Kluge Fellowship from the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. in 2013, and Fulbright/IIE Fellowship in 2002-2005. In 2022-23, she was awarded IU Presidential Arts and Humanities Fellowship.

Orna Tsultem's publications include her monograph *A Monastery on the Move: Art and Politics in Later Buddhist Mongolia* published by the University of Hawai'i Press in December 2020 and her edited volume *Buddhist Art of Mongolia: Cross-Cultural Connections, Discoveries and Interpretations* published by the Institute of East Asian Studies at UC Berkeley in 2019, in addition to many exhibition catalogs, peer-reviewed research articles, and 6 non-refereed books. She is also an active curator who has shown contemporary art exhibitions internationally since 1997 at established venues and international biennales, including the 9<sup>th</sup> Shanghai Biennale in 2012 and the 56<sup>th</sup> Venice Biennale in 2015. For her longtime service, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia awarded her the honorary title "Cultural Envoy of Mongolia" in 2016. She is currently working to complete her new book manuscript on Mongolian contemporary art.