

Paris-Warsaw, March 15, 2023

## SEECHAC

La Société Européenne pour l'Etude des Civilisations de l'Himalaya et de l'Asie Centrale  
The European Society for the Study of Central Asian and Himalayan Civilisations

in collaboration with

THE FACULTY OF ORIENTAL STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW  
and THE FACULTY OF JOURNALISM, INFORMATION AND BOOK STUDIES

organizes

### **The International Conference**

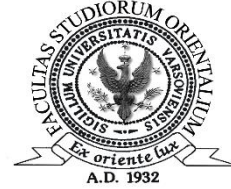
## ***Heaven and Hell and What Lies Between: Representing the Afterlife from Central Asia to the Himalayas***

**Monday 13 to Wednesday 15 November 2023**

**University of Warsaw**

SEECHAC is happy to announce that its next international meeting will be held in Warsaw from 13-15 November 2023. We invite contributions that adopt a multidisciplinary approach to the theme of heaven, hell and the afterlife in art and literature.

Rewards await the righteous and punishments attend the wicked after their departure from mortal life. This is a belief that is shared by all the major religions from Central Asia to the Himalayas and, of course, well beyond these regions. This general formulation embraces a wide spectrum of notions about the nature of heaven and hell: they may be temporary or permanent places or conditions, and may be partitioned into many component territories with characteristics appropriate to the particular forms of goodness or wrongdoing that distinguished the earthly lives of their inhabitants. The routes to these destinations may themselves have an elaborate topography, fraught with predatory demons and other challenges for the recently deceased, often with intermediary stopping places along the way. We know what these places look like thanks to the more-or-less detailed descriptions that are found in the literature, whether the canonical works of the religions in question or the accounts of visionaries who have been permitted to visit them without having to depart their mortal lives forever, often in the company



of semi-divine guides who point out to them the major landmarks and introduce them to the supernatural personalities encountered in the course of their visit.

But literature is not the only medium: heaven and hell, and post-mortem realms more generally, have long been a favourite theme among painters and other artists, featuring especially on the walls of shrines and temples as encouragements and warnings to worshippers, pilgrims and other visitors.

The definitive programme will be announced by **1 October 2023**.

The conference email address is **[seechac.warsaw@uw.edu.pl](mailto:seechac.warsaw@uw.edu.pl)**

On behalf of the Organising Committee:

Prof. Agata Bareja-Starzyńska (University of Warsaw)

Prof. Agnieszka Helman-Ważny (University of Warsaw)

Prof. Charles Ramble (President of SEECHAC)