



University of  
Zurich <sup>UZH</sup>

Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies – Indian Studies



2<sup>nd</sup> Zurich International Conference on  
Indian Literature and Philosophy (ZICILP)

“The Nārāyaṇīya: Reconsidering  
an Epic Text and its Contexts”

University of Zurich, 10–11 June 2016

The *Nārāyaṇīya* stands alongside the *Bhagavadgītā* as one of the most important religious-philosophical texts of the Mahābhārata. Both texts demonstrate not only the complex intertwining of narrative and instructive levels in the epic, but also the Mahābhārata's importance as a document of a crucially transformative period in Indian cultural, intellectual, religious and sociopolitical history. This period, spanning approximately the first few centuries of the common era, from the establishment of the Kuṣāṇa empire to the early imperial rule of the Guptas, witnessed the emergence and/or consolidation of, among other phenomena, new monotheistic religions espousing a devotional religiosity (*bhakti*) which drew upon both Vedic sacrificial norms and the ideals of liberation-seeking renunciant traditions, new forms of worshipping images of god in temples and at shrines, and new ideas of kingship and of Brahmanical hegemony beyond the ritual sphere. Like the *Bhagavadgītā*, the *Nārāyaṇīya* forms an integral part of the Sanskrit *Mahābhārata* but has frequently been extracted from it, and studied as a distinct textual unit. This is also reflected in the fact that, like the *Bhagavadgītā*, it has been considered an authoritative text in its own right for certain medieval Vaiṣṇava traditions.

Nearly twenty years on from the publication of *Nārāyaṇīya-Studien*, which focused on the composition, the textual history, the embedment of the text in the epic, and its relationship to texts such as the *Bhagavadgītā*, this conference aims to rekindle an interest in this important text. It aims not only to reconsider some of the results and issues raised in *Nārāyaṇīya-Studien*, but also to draw together recent research on the text and the contexts within which it was composed as well as on the history of its reception.

**Venue**

University of Zurich  
Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies  
Room RAA E-08  
Rämistrasse 59  
CH-8001 Zurich

**Organizers**

Prof. Dr. Angelika Malinar  
Dr. Robert Leach

**Contact and registration**

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## Day 1: Friday, 10 June 2016

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- 9.30–10.15**     **Angelika Malinar and Robert Leach, Zurich University**  
Welcome  
Introduction: Reconsidering the Nārāyaṇīya
- 10.15–11.15**     **Peter Schreiner, Zurich University**  
Standpoints, Methods, Perspectives in and about the Nārāyaṇīya
- 11.15–11.45**     **Coffee Break**
- 11.45–12.45**     **Angelika Malinar, Zurich University**  
Nārada in the Nārāyaṇīya and the Circulation of Knowledge in the Mahābhārata
- 12.45–14.00**     **Lunch**
- 14.00–15.00**     **Oliver Hellwig, Düsseldorf University**  
Exploring the Distribution of Low-level Linguistic Features in the Nārāyaṇīya and the Śāntiparvan
- 15.00–15.30**     **Coffee break**
- 15.30–16.30**     **James L. Fitzgerald, Brown University**  
Did Śaunaka Really Interrupt Ugraśravas’s Mahābhārata in the Middle of the Nārāyaṇīya? The Case for Belvalkar’s Text of the Śāntiparvan
- 16.30–18.00**     **Round-Table Discussion**  
Querying the Critical Edition of the Nārāyaṇīya
- 19.00**             **Conference Dinner**

## Day 2: Saturday, 11 June 2016

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**09.30–10.30 Nirajan Kafle, Leiden University**

The Textual History of the Nārāyaṇīya Section of the Mahābhārata in the Light of the Composition of the Viṣṇudharma

**10.30–11.00 Coffee break**

**11.00–12.00 Robert Leach, Zurich University**

The Five Knowledges in the Nārāyaṇīya

**12.00–13.00 Marion Rastelli, Vienna University**

The Role of the Nārāyaṇīya in the Proof of the Authority (prāmānya) of the Pāñcarātra

**13.00–14.15 Lunch**

**14.15–15.15 Edgar Leitan, Dresden University / Vienna University**

Badaryāśrama: Approaching its Metaphors, Concepts and Configurations

**15.15–15.30 Coffee Break**

**15.30–16.30 Peter Bisschop, Leiden University**

Rudra in the Nārāyaṇīya versus Viṣṇu in the Skandapurāṇa

**16.30–17.30 Elizabeth Cecil, Leiden University**

Meeting Places: The Interactions and Intersections of Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva Religiosity in Northwest India (4<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> century CE)

**17.30 Final Discussion**