

Oriental Institute, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic in cooperation with  
Chiang Ching-kuo International Sinological Centre at Charles University  
invite you to a lecture on

# Faith and imperial rule: Late Tang representations of Emperor Wu of Liang

by

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In the early sixth century, Emperor Wu of Liang 梁武帝 (r. 502–549) intervened in fraught debates about the nature of the soul by resorting to the language of Buddhist orthodoxy. The continuous survival of the soul allowed for the development of faith and true understanding, so the emperor's argument ran, and that in turn enabled the attainment of buddhahood. Yet Emperor Wu left open to interpretation an understanding of the proper object of faith. So there was some irony when the emperor's own faith in Buddhist doctrine drew criticism from religious and secular communities in the fraught environment of the eighth and ninth centuries. The practical effects of imperial religious patronage, which had dominated earlier representations of the Liang ruler, continued to receive expression; but there was now a focus on moral and metaphysical concerns too. This paper will trace developments in the image of Emperor Wu as a 'Buddhist' ruler during late Tang to shed light on some of the political and sectarian agendas of the time. More broadly, it will explore contemporary views on the relationship between the Buddhist church and the imperial state.

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**When:** Tuesday, 9 December, 2014, 17:00-18:30

**Where:** Charles University, Celetna 20, room 425/C



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ústav**  
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