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Ghost and Illusion Metaphors Part of Kiblinger's Lecture at Harvard Divinity School

Quick Facts

- In her Oct. 19 lecture about "Caputo's Ghosts, Vasubandhu's Illusions, and Comparative Hauntology," Kiblinger will use ghost and illusion metaphors from two religious thinkers to help her elaborate on her argument and develop a theory of comparative theology as "hauntology."
- Her lecture examines the work of John D. Caputo, a well-known contemporary philosopher and theologian, alongside the work of Vasubandhu, a 4th century Indian thinker who founded the Yogacara School, an important Buddhist school of thought.



Kristin Kiblinger

ROCK HILL, S.C. - Faculty member **Kristin Beise Kiblinger's** upcoming lecture at the **Harvard Divinity School** is timely for the Halloween season.

In her Oct. 19 lecture about "**Caputo's Ghosts, Vasubandhu's Illusions, and Comparative Hauntology**," Kiblinger will use ghost and illusion metaphors from two religious thinkers to help her elaborate on her argument and develop a theory of comparative theology as "**hauntology**."

Kiblinger, an associate professor of religious studies at Winthrop, said her definition of "hauntology" is basically that, in this day and age, when society is more than ever aware of religious competitors and of our own conditioning, it is appropriate that theology be comparative - that is, haunted by other cultures' theologies, which is a haunting that, while unsettling, can also be fruitful.

Her lecture examines the work of **John D. Caputo**, a well-known contemporary philosopher and theologian, alongside the work of **Vasubandhu**, a 4th century Indian thinker who founded the **Yogacara School**, an important Buddhist school of thought.

As odd as the pairing may seem, she said, in different ways both thinkers stress that "we humans and our religious traditions are conditioned in various ways (culturally, historically, linguistically, karmically, etc.), which can limit our ways of knowing and speaking."

The two teach that taking this conditioning seriously is crucial to pursuing the truths, realities and aspirations that are beyond conditioned filters.

"Reading the two together thus allows me to explore the tension of how we can have humility about our religious systems and thus remain open to revision and new learning (including learning from religious others), while at the same time remaining religiously committed," said Kiblinger.

Kiblinger was invited to give the annual lecture for the **Society of Comparative Theology**. The event is sponsored by the **Center for the Study of World Religions** at the Harvard Divinity School.

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