

Call for Papers

Religion in Social Movements, Rebellions and Revolutions

for a panel proposal to the
Association for the Sociology of Religion
Annual Meeting
Montreal, Canada
August 13-14, 2017

Karl Marx's quotation that religion is the "opium of the people" is frequently taken out of context and misunderstood. In the same passage, he also wrote religion is "an expression of real suffering and a protest against" it. Historically, religion has not only been a source of domination but also an instrument of social change.

A classic example of this is the English Revolution, which was the first political revolution and otherwise known as the Puritan Revolution. However, successful revolutions, as Charles Tilly has pointed out, have only taken place under monarchies and dictatorships. In modern democratic societies, protest against the dominant power structure has often taken the form of social movements.

For this panel, we invite papers that explore the relationship between religion, social movements, rebellions and revolutions. We are interested in both the progressive and reactionary roles that religions have played in: peasant, slave, and plebeian rebellions; successful modern revolutions such as the French, Russian, Chinese, Iranian and Nicaraguan as well as failed ones; and social movements. We are particularly interested in prophetic and messianic movements, heretical sects, religious communism, secular religions, and liberation theology. Priority will be given to papers that aim to make sense of the institutional, organizational, ritualistic, discursive, ideological, and/or framing mechanisms that give religious discourse its contentious structure. The intent of this panel is for papers to be turned into manuscripts to ultimately be published in an edited volume.

Deadline for Proposals: March 15, 2017

Proposals should include name, affiliation, email address, title, and a 300-word abstract describing the paper's research question, methodology, and preliminary results.

Please send them in MS Word by e-mail to:

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