

Max Planck Institute for Human Development
20.06.2019-21.06.2019, Berlin, Harnack-Haus
Deadline: 31.12.2018

Call for Papers
RELIGION AS EMOTION KNOWLEDGE
Religious Knowledge Systems and Emotions
from the 18th to the 21st Century
Berlin, 20-21 June, 2019

Within the growing field of the history of emotions particular interest has been devoted to bodies of knowledge through which meanings and practices of emotions are produced and circulated. Studies of emotion knowledge range from theoretical discussions on its disposition (e.g. normative, praxeological) and its means of organization and circulation (e.g. law, cinema, children's books), to empirical cases of transformation in particular knowledge systems. Less attention has been given to the ways in which different emotion knowledge systems interact with and affect each other. Additionally, recent years have seen an increasing interest in the relation between religion and emotions. Much debate has been focused on "religious emotions" or on specific emotional states associated with faith and devotion as well as on the role of emotions in religious practices.

Understanding religion as a particular system of emotion knowledge, this workshop follows a different path, concentrating on the ways in which religions cultivate and shape emotions in and beyond the religious, and vice versa, how emotions influence religions over time. Just as other aspects of religious faith and rituals, religious emotion knowledge is by no means uncontested or immune to outside influences and change. Quite the opposite: this knowledge might be transformed in time and space through specific developments, crises, and encounters with other religious, emotional, and socio-cultural contexts and knowledge systems. This workshop aims to explore such dynamics and enhance our understanding of the operation of religion as emotion knowledge. By doing so we hope that the workshop will help to develop tools for the broader study of historical change as an outcome of encounters, conflicts, and mutual influences between different emotion knowledge systems.

On a theoretical and methodological level we are interested in exploring the potentiality of conceptualizing and operationalizing the notion of religion as a system of emotion knowledge. Possible questions that can be derived from these discussions include: Is emotion knowledge inherent to religion? How do religious sources inform and negotiate ideas about and practices of emotions? How do normative and praxeological forms of emotion knowledge production intersect? A second area of questions addresses the issue of goals and interests: are emotions in religion a means to an end or an end in itself? What can we learn from the role of emotions in religion about the concepts of rationality and irrationality? Finally, we should think critically about the notions of religion and secularity in relation to the emotional: should we conceptualize "religious emotions" in contrast to "secular emotions", and if so, how do we deal with this dichotomy and the great variety of its (dis-)entanglement in space, time, and context, particularly when it comes to notions of "modernity"? Do processes of secularization and of

spiritualization affect emotions (e.g. romantic love vs. the love of God)?

Additionally, we are interested in participants' empirical case studies that can shed light on such and related issues. We encourage contributors to place particular emphasis on actors' agency as well as on the interaction of ideas, objects, and practices. Discussions will focus on the period from 1800 to the present and will not concentrate exclusively on Europe but include perspectives from around the globe.

Possible topics that can be addressed include, but are not limited to:

- Religion and economy: How does religious emotion knowledge (e.g. greed, benevolence, asceticism) shape economic ideas and practices (e.g. debt, charity) and vice versa? What role does emotion knowledge play in theological influences on capitalist economic and political thought? How does neoliberal emotion knowledge inform beliefs, practices and ethics of new-age and alternative spirituality institutions and their members?
- Religion and science: How do scientific notions of emotion affect theological writing as well as the thoughts and practices of actors? How does religious emotion knowledge interact with therapeutic cultures concerned primarily with individual emotional wellbeing? How does religion inform market oriented frameworks of emotion management (e.g. yoga or kabbalah classes)?
- Religion and intimacy: What forms of intimacy exist within the religious, what are their boundaries and how are they defined, particularly in relation to diverging concepts? How does religion create a space for intimacy and intimate relations? Which bonds of intimacy exist between the transcendent, the community, and the individual and how are they reflected in other contexts?
- Religion and emotions of fear and hate: Is there a fundamental link between religious faith and fear (e.g. of God, of death)? In which ways do religions cultivate such emotions? What happens to these emotions in the transition or encounter with other socio-cultural contexts? What role do religions play in inciting feelings of contempt, xenophobia, and racism?

This two-day workshop will take place at the Harnack House of the Max Planck Society in Berlin from 20 to 21 June, 2019. Travel and accommodation costs will be covered. There is no registration fee. The conference will be held in English.

We welcome contributions from academics at all stages of their careers with a strong historical impetus from all social and cultural sciences (work in progress is welcome!). Please send an abstract (ca. 300 words) for a presentation that will not exceed 20 minutes and a short academic bio to cfp-emotions@mpib-berlin.mpg.de by 31 December 2018. All applicants will be informed regarding the outcome of their proposals by the end of January 2019. Participants will be asked to hand in their paper by 15 May 2019.

Conveners: Yaara Bengier Alaluf and Julia Lieth