

Call for Abstracts: Irreligion and the Critique of Religion
Extended Deadline: 31 March 2019*

“For Germany, the critique of religion has been essentially completed, and the critique of religion is the prerequisite of all critique.”

– Marx, “A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right: Introduction”

This edition of the CRMEP Graduate Conference solicits reflection on two series of questions. Firstly, what was the ‘critique of religion’, in nineteenth-century Europe, and why did it become the axis and fundamental experience of several generations of European philosophers? Given that ‘religion’ itself was a recent invention (and a philosophical construction), what were the stakes of the sudden refraction of long-standing social and spiritual conflicts through its lens? What can we do with these stakes, working today with discourses to which these ‘critiques of religion’ have been tributary?

Secondly, given that irreligious philosophies have crystallized in so many other contexts in the last two millennia, within and beyond Europe, is there any coherence in this larger collection? What borrowings, inversions, and false repetitions traverse it? And, if we cease to identify critique, Europe and modernity, what position does the ‘critique of religion’ occupy within this broader history?

The conference will take place at the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy at Kingston University London on *Friday June 7, 2019*. Two keynotes will speak to this year’s problematic:

- *Étienne Balibar* (CRMEP, Kingston University London and Université Paris Nanterre), author of *Saeculum. Culture, religion, idéologie* (2012) and *Citizen Subject* (2011, English translation 2016). His recent work deals with the question of critique, with special reference to religion and political economy, racism and nationalism.
- *Olga Lucia Lizzini* (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam), author of numerous studies in Islamic philosophy, angelology and political theology, including *Fluxus (fayd). Investigation of the foundations of Avicenna's Metaphysics and Physics* (2012). For *Angeli*, eds. Agamben and Coccia (2009), she contributed, with Samuela Pagani, the section on Islamic angelology. Last year, she wrote an introduction to Avicenna's (or pseudo-Avicenna's) Epistle on Prophecies.

We invite proposals for twenty-minute papers from doctoral students and early career researchers that problematize the philosophical critique of ‘religion’, or that take up philosophical irreligion more broadly, and that do so from a standpoint that may be sensitive, polemical, or ambivalent. Possible topics include:

- Ibn al-Rāwandī’s and Al-Rāzī’s critiques of prophecy, animated by their conviction in the supremacy of thought over the imagination
- Feuerbach's critique of religion as idealism, animated by his contestation of this very supremacy, and by his attempt to rehabilitate sensuality and the imagination

- The atheism of Stirner, Bauer or Marx and the pantheism of Heine
- Benjamin's frequent returns to the topos of 'paganism', inspired by Hermann Cohen, in his discussions of the daimonic and in his draft on capitalism as religion
- Zhang Taiyan's critical writings, at the beginning of the 20th century, on 'religion', zongjiao – a recent coinage that had only been in use for around two decades at the time
- The continuities, inflections, and ruptures in the history of the term 'religion', from Cudworth to the Encyclopédistes, to Kant and Hegel
- Freud's writings on and against religion, spanning three decades, from Totem and Taboo to The Future of an Illusion, culminating in Moses the Man and Monotheistic Religion, which constitute a unified project and, to some extent, his life's work
- Derrida's 'Two Sources of "Religion"' and his notion of 'mondolatinité' as generalized Christianity

Abstracts of under 300 words should be sent to conference.crnep.irreligion@gmail.com by* 31 March 2019*.