

Call for Proposals for the Panel

Religion Entangled: Theoretical and Methodological Reflections

This panel challenges the idea of an autonomous religious domain and calls instead attention to the entanglements between religion and other societal spheres such as science, politics, economy, media, medicine or art. In this perspective, the persistence and change of religious institutions, discourses and practices depends on their relations to a broader social environment. Accordingly, the resilience of religious actors confronted with social changes builds considerably on their connection to institutions and discourses in other spheres. Taking this proposition as a starting point, the panel seeks to elaborate on the following questions: How can the entanglement of religion with other social realms be conceptualized theoretically? Which approaches in the study of religion or neighboring disciplines address religion as related and interwoven with other fields? In which way does an approach in terms of entanglements contribute to the analysis of changing or enduring elements of religion? Finally, how can we make such a perspective fruitful within specific case studies? Examples of theoretical and methodological approaches dealing with the question of entanglement include, for instance, socio-anthropological perspectives on "boundary-work", "field theory", "interpenetration", and the "Histoire croisée" approach in the historical science. Most of these conceptions rely on a relational mode of thinking, where religion presents itself not as an essence but rather as reality in the making. The panel welcomes theoretical and methodological reflections as well as empirical applications based on case studies from the 19th to 21st century.

Please, send your proposal to simon.michel@relwi.unibe.ch and christina.wyittenbach@relwi.unibe.ch by 20. January 2021.