

FEAR
Emotion and Migration in the Early Modern Age

WG2 Ideas in Motion
Workshop 1

March 31st 2020
University of Geneva, Switzerland

Global Studies Institute, University of Geneva,
room 3G1, 10, rue des Vieux-Grenadiers,
1205 Geneva

The first of a series of four workshops organized by WG2 Ideas in motion is associated with the festival Histoire et Cité, which takes place the first days of April, 2020 in Geneva and is dedicated to “Fear.”

WG2 is interested in developing a better understanding of genealogies of concepts and categories in a decentered perspective, asking in which ways cultural entanglements, displacements and encounters contribute to such genealogies. In our four workshops we will shed new light on various forms of cultural transfer, translation and appropriation that have fashioned the Mediterranean world and its real or imagined communities and geographies. A critical objective of our project is indeed to question the way in which the emotional experience of exile, distance, displacement, challenges traditional modes of thinking or religious traditions, transforms cultural perceptions and impacts the history of ideas.

The first workshop will be centered on the question of how migration, displacement or, more generally movement affects **ideas about fear**. Fear is part of the human evolutionary equipment to survive, to assert ideals, to do politics. Is fear useful or is it an instrument of subjection and tyranny and of rejection and separation? What narratives exist about it? What decentered perspectives, what modes of theorizations? How and which have been the historical metamorphosis of this concept?

Fear is connected with social structures and laws in different epochs and countries. What are the anxieties and fears related to the movement of people and ideas? What are the strategies of coexistence and appropriation or conversely of rejection and prejudice that result from such movement? How are various emotional communities established or transformed as a result of displacement? We will here consider in particular how fear emerges as a topic of discussion both for displaced people and for the communities in which they enter. **The fear of God** might be an avenue of investigation, against the background of migration, conversion, religion and emotion. A second might relate to **the figures of fear** such as enemies, monsters or more general Others. A third to **the fear of nature** and the elements: the sea, storms, foreign landscapes. Yet another avenue is that of **bodily fears** provoked by physical contacts, food, and diseases. And finally, **fear as a political instrument** is a central topic. The workshop will revolve around a series of case studies seeking to address how fear affects migratory movements or is caused by the movement of people and communities. Though the focus lies on the early modern age, we also welcome studies dealing with later (and earlier) periods.

We welcome abstracts of max. 300 words and a brief bio (100-150 words). They should be sent to the organizers of the workshop by 31 December, 2019. Please include your name, contact and Work Group.

A selection of papers presented in Geneva will be chosen for publication. For this reason, we wish to circulate all papers one week before the workshop.

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