

GENDERING ASCETIC  
KNOWLEDGE IN  
CHRISTIANITY,  
JUDAISM, AND  
ISLAM

INTRA- AND  
INTERRELIGIOUS  
TRANSFERS AND  
TRANSFORMATIONS

International Conference  
October 22-23, 2015  
Freie Universität Berlin

## Methodological Toolkits

Chair: Blossom Stefaniw

**10.00–10.30** Almut-Barbara Renger, Tudor Sala, Alexandra Stellmacher | Gendering, Ungendering, and Transgendering Ascetic Knowledge: Prolegomena

**10.30–11.00** Björn Krondorfer | Can Late Antiquity and Postmodernity Speak to Each Other? Taking the Leap with Critical Men's Studies

**11.00–11.30** Discussion

**11.30–12.15** Coffee Break

## Gendering and Transgendering Ascetic Knowledge among Jews and Muslims

Chair: Lennart Lehmhaus

**12.15–12.45** Ada Rapoport-Albert | The Integrity of the Female as Body and Its Implications for Ascetic Practice in Rabbinic Judaism

**12.45–13.15** Alexandra Cuffel | Holy/Dangerous Women: Transgendering and Imagining Women's Spiritual Leadership among Jews and Muslims in the Middle East

**13.15–13.45** Discussion

**13.45–15.00** Lunch

## Transgendering and Ungendering Ascetic Knowledge in Late Antique Christianities

Chair: Roberto Alciati

**15.00–15.30** Kate Cooper, Conrad Leyser | The Thecla Tradition and the Transgendering of Ascetic Knowledge: Late Fourth-Century Asia Minor and North Italy

**15.30–16.00** Christiane Zimmermann | Christian Women and Asceticism: A Case Study on Ancient Anatolia

**16.00–16.30** Discussion

**16.30–17.15** Coffee Break

## Public Lecture

Chair: Almut-Barbara Renger

**17.00–18.30** Susanna Elm | Bodies of Knowledge: Augustine and the Extra-ordinary

**18.30** Dinner

## Gendering Ascetic Knowledge in Byzantium

Chair: Roberto Alciati

10.00–10.30 Stavroula Constantinou | Monastic  
“Gynealogy”: The Maternal-Feminine Structure  
of Byzantine Women’s Asceticism

10.30–10.45 Discussion

10.45–11.15 Coffee Break

## Ungendering Ascetic Knowledge in Early and Medieval Islam

Chair: Hannelies Koloska

11.15–11.45 Christopher Melchert | Early Female  
Muslim Renunciants (8th-9th Centuries CE)

11.45–12.15 Sara Sviri | “You and your husband  
are both on the same rung”: Extra-ordinary Women  
in Early Islamic Mysticism, Their Tales, Visions  
and Relationships

12.15–12.45 Discussion

12.45–14.00 Lunch

## Transgendering Ascetic Knowledge in Twentieth-Century Islam

Chair: Almut-Barbara Renger

14.00–14.30 Angelika Neuwirth | Constructions  
of Martyrdom: A Case Study on Mahmud Darwish

14.30–14.45 Discussion

14.45 Final Discussion

Premodern asceticism in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam has traditionally been mapped out with clear-cut boundaries separating religions, cultures, and genders. Processes of intra- and interreligious transfer and transformation have been largely ignored.

**The conference** focuses on the role of gender in personal and impersonal transfers of knowledge between teachers and students, institutions and society, and different religions and cultures, in order to better understand the historical processes of knowledge transformation in asceticism. Invited speakers will apply this rethinking of gendered knowledge, along with the latest theoretical insights from gender and body studies, to crucial examples of asceticism in the premodern world. Our goal is to shed light on the interconnectedness of gender, ascetic training, and the transfer and transformation of religious knowledge both within and among the three monotheistic religions of the Mediterranean world from antiquity to the dawn of modernity.

We will explore these issues as well as how ascetic knowledge changed when it was transferred into different religions and cultures, focusing especially on the continuities, transformations, and discontinuities in how gender was conceptualized. We also ask how and to what degree processes of knowledge transfer and adaptation in these new religious and cultural environments reflect back on earlier traditions and what impact, if any, this reflection had on new traditions.

Seminarzentrum Room L 116  
Otto-von-Simson-Str. 26  
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International Conference of the Collaborative Research  
Center "Episteme in Motion. Transfer of Knowledge from  
the Ancient World to the Early Modern Period"

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Forms and Transfer of Habitualized Knowledge in  
Antiquity and Late Antiquity" (Head: A.-B. Renger)



Sonderforschungsbereich 980  
**EPISTEME IN  
BEWEGUNG**

