



ACADEMIC SEMINAR

Honour-based Violence and the history of Emotions: A Prospectus

Abstract

The history of violence, particularly violent acts connected to shared understandings of honour, is full of feeling but little-connected to the historiography of emotions. Over the past decade historians have been drawn to the analysis of emotion as a means to study how "cognitions, cultures, values and social institutions" have informed subjectivity and action in a range of fields, from romantic love to homicidal rage. Unlike neurological scientists who search for universal biological patterns of emotion in response to stimuli, historians are wary of defining emotion in ways that impose ahistorical and culturally-bounded understandings of our historical subjects. This paper presents a prospectus for a way forward. It calls for the integration of recent historiographical interventions to highlight new ways to address two issues: the role that emotions have played in prompting, authorising, justifying and condemning violence; and the emotional registers of honour in the minds of historical actors: perpetrators, victims, witnesses and judges, both legal and social. It opens with a review of the cross-disciplinary development of emotions study (particularly in anthropology and cognitive psychology) and its recent impact on historical research. It proceeds to explore how these insights can help overcome the limits of Western-centric studies that focus on the history of elite duelling and intramale conflict. It ends with examples of studies that explore the emotions of honour-based violence across contexts ranging from Ming China and colonial South Africa to Mandate Palestine.

Speaker: Dr Carolyn Strange

Carolyn Strange is the Graduate Director and Deputy Director of the School of History, Australian National University, Canberra Australia. She was previously Associate Professor of Criminology and History at the University of Toronto. She has published extensively on the history of criminal justice and on gender and sexuality in nineteenth- and twentieth- century Canada, the U.S. and Australia. Her current project examines the history of discretionary justice in New York State, and she is co-editing a collection (with Bloomsbury Academic) on honour, violence and emotion, as well as another collection on policy interventions against contemporary honour-related violence (with Palgrave MacMillan, UK).



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Language English

All are Welcome
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