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Collaborative Research Centre 1136 Education and Religion in Cultures of the Mediterranean and Its Environment from Ancient to Medieval Times and to the Classical Islam

The Collaborative Research Centre investigates constellations of education and religion in Greco-Roman religion, Judaism, Christianity and Islam from the 5th century BCE to the 13th century CE. Research is guided by the assumption that investigating the relationship of education and religion will provide deeper insights into cultural, social, and religious dynamics which were fundamental in these cultures and religions; moreover, this research agenda will also be instrumental in revealing the historical roots of contemporary debates about education and religion. 'Education' will be conceptualized by differentiating processes of socialization, education and the development of critical reflection on God, the world, and the self. 'Religion' comprises discourses, practices, and institutions which are based on the presupposition of the relationship to a being beyond human everyday experience. These concepts allow for an analysis of phenomena and constellations, employing typological as well as genealogical comparisons. This will be pursued within four project areas:

A – Storehouses of education

investigates institutional aspects paradigmatically by focusing on libraries and compendia, and their entanglement with cults and religious practices.

B – Interpretations

deals with the exegesis of scriptures considered holy with regard to its hermeneutical principles and methods and their cross-cultural application.

C – Communications

analyzes teaching processes and didactic aims of religious education with a special focus on questions of agency and gender.

D – Discourses

investigates the discursive establishment and refinement of conceptions of God, the world, and the human self, referring to education and to other cultures of religions.

The tableau of academic disciplines involves Classics, Christian exegesis and Church History as well as Religious Studies and Islamic Studies, Christian Oriental Studies, Medieval History and Pedagogics of Religion.

Picture credits:

„Jesus as teacher“, fragments of a Roman sarcophagus, inv. n. 67607, courtesy of the Ministero dei beni e delle attività culturali e del turismo – Soprintendenza Speciale per il Colosseo, il Museo Nazionale Romano e l'Area archeologica di Roma

Front of the Celsus Library in Ephesos, photo: J. Bergemann

Peshar Nahum (Qumran), detail, courtesy of The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library; IAA, photo: Shai Halevi

Augustinus, detail, mosaic at the Sancta Sanctorum chapel in Rome

Miniature from „The Writings of Louder Brothers“, Iraqi painter of 1287, Library of the Süleymaniye Mosque in Istanbul



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Collaborative Research Centre 1136 "Education and Religion"





Project Area A – Storehouses of Education



A 01
Archaeology of Ancient Libraries: Religion, Representation, Storerooms of Knowledge
Johannes Bergemann

A 02
Education and Religion in Christian Libraries in Late Antiquity
Heinz-Günther Nesselrath

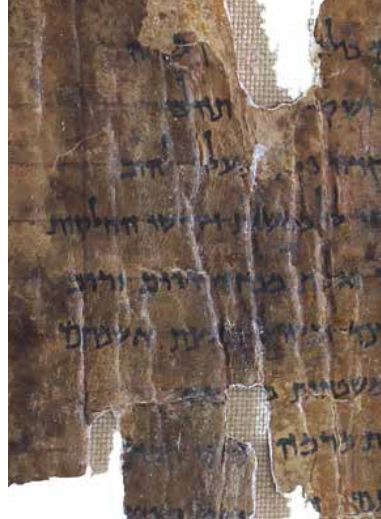
A 03
Pagan Religion and Philosophy in 'Virtual Libraries': Late Antique Compendia and Encyclopaedic Works
Ilinca Tanaseanu-Döbler

A 04
Religious Reception and Christian Transformation of Non-Religious Knowledge in the Carolingian Era
Hedwig Röckelein

Ancient and medieval libraries as well as late antique compendia (virtual libraries, as it were) are institutionalized storing processes, thus selecting and organizing religious as well as profane knowledge. Selection criteria indicate what knowledge was deemed relevant, while organizational principles point to the ways in which religious and profane bodies of knowledge served cultural or religious policies. The proximity to cultic institutions produced architectural, sociocultural and reflexive connections between cult and the transmission of knowledge that vary in closeness. Within such ensembles, storehouses of education could represent religion-based authority or communicate relations of medicine and cult, that is, healing and salvation.



Project Area B – Interpretations



B 01
Scriptural Exegesis in the Dead Sea Scrolls (Qumran)
Reinhard G. Kratz

B 02
Scriptural Exegesis as Educational Process in Paul's Letters
Florian Wilk

B 04
Scriptural Exegesis and Religious Polemics in Syriac Texts in Late Antiquity
Dmitrij Bumazhnov

B 05
Scriptural Exegesis and Educational Traditions in Coptic-Speaking Egyptian Christianity in Late Antiquity: Shenoute, Canon 6
Heike Behlmer

Many religious communities relate their practices to scriptures considered holy. Nonetheless, these texts require interpretation, and which methods to choose can become precarious as soon as the legitimacy of non-religious techniques of interpretation is called into question. In the Mediterranean, interpretive methods of Hellenic origin coexisted with Jewish and Christian hermeneutics. Encounters, conflicts and efforts of demarcations lead to new or more defined text genres, forms and methods of interpretation, which could indeed culminate in new syntheses. In this process, dealing with holy scriptures called for educated authors – as well as addressees who themselves already required a certain amount of education in order to be able to receive this kind of religious teaching.



Project Area C – Communications



C 01
Enlightened Men – Superstitious Women? Religion, Education and Stereotypes of Gender in Classical Athens
Tanja S. Scheer

C 02
The Ancients in Mind: Religious and Antiquarian Transfer of Knowledge in the Educational Compendia of the Second Century CE
Ulrike Egelhaaf-Gaiser

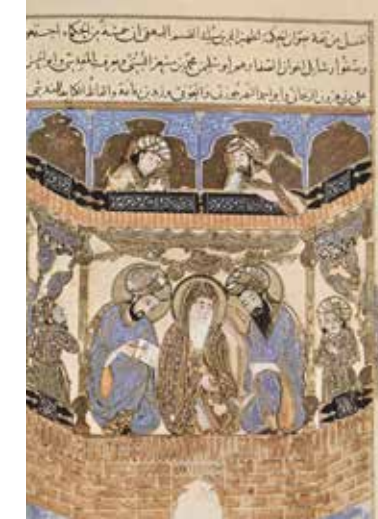
C 04
Communication of Education in Late Antique Christianity: Teachers' Roles in Parish, Family and Ascetical Community
Peter Gemeinhardt

C 05
The Christian Catechumenate from Late Antiquity to Early Medieval Times and Its Reception in Modern Pedagogics of Religion
Peter Gemeinhardt, Bernd Schröder

Education requires communication: teachers communicate education to individuals willing to learn, or to persons predestined for education on social or religious grounds. In pre-modern times, this took place in institutions with different degrees of organization (like families, open communities, schools or literary traditions) and was carried out by a wide variety of agents, teachers as well as students. How men and women participated in acquiring and communicating religious education is of special interest. This also raises the question of what religious education or the acquisition of religious knowledge was aiming at. The observation of educational processes in society and religion prompted contemporary reflections on pedagogy that might have also been adapted later.



Project Area D – Discourses



D 01
Religious Knowledge in Discourse: Cicero's Dialogues on Philosophy of Religion
Peter Kuhlmann

D 02
Religion in Educated Discourse: The Evangelist Luke and the Orator Dion of Prusa
Reinhard Feldmeier

D 03
Ethical Instruction as Educational Discourse: The Muslim Moral Philosopher and Historian Miskawaih (d. 1030) between Reception and Transformation
Sebastian Günther

D 05
Profiling Religious Identity in Learned Discourses. The Role of Education in References of 12th-century Christian Authors to Jews and Muslims
Tobias Georges

Conceptions and images of men, world and god were frequently constituted with recourse to other religious cultures: through interreligious or intrareligious discourses and by drawing on educational content that originated in non-religious contexts or different religious denominations. Such processes call for investigation with regard to occasions and mechanisms, including discursive constructions of alterity and identity. Aims and concepts of religious education were communicated among religions and at the same time transformed. Often, nonetheless, traces of origin remained identifiable and are therefore accessible to investigation. The continuing effects of Greco-Roman education in Judaism and Christianity can in this way be understood as a process of demarcation and transgression of boundaries that gathered momentum anew by the rise of Islam.