



Call for Papers

The Decade of Disenchantment? – The Global 1970s

– November 3rd to 5th, 2021, Max Planck Institute for Human Development (MPIB) Berlin –
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The Global 1970s are often described as an age of crisis, a period of uncertainty, upheaval, depression and malaise. Tony Judt, for example, referred to the 1970s as “the most dispiriting decade of the 20th century”. In the midst of the Cold War, East/West bipolarisation was increasingly challenged by tensions within each bloc and by the emergence of new actors and stakeholders on the international stage, particularly in the Global South. Profound economic, social, political and cultural upheavals to the established order emerged in the decade following the oil crisis, not only in the West but also across Africa, the Middle East, South Asia and Latin America. The world could no longer be interpreted in the same way. In the few studies that exist on the history of emotions during this decade, the prevailing image is one of disillusionment. In different works in the history of emotions across diverse national contexts, the 1970s appear as a decade of nostalgia for the “good ol’ times” (Tobias Becker), a period of increased self-introspection (Pascal Eitler/Jens Elberfeld), pathology (Bettina Hitzer), anxiety (Frank Biess) and disillusionment.

At the same time, however, the 1970s can be seen as a decade of hope. New forms of political action and personal and collective commitment arose in response to the political, economic and social challenges of the decade. In his much-debated 2010 book, Samuel Moyn frames human rights as the *Last Utopia* and highlights the widespread hopes for global justice and equality that emerged in these years. Other “globalists” (Quinn Slobodian) thought that free markets and global cooperation through international organizations would keep dictatorial impulses at bay and lead to a better future.

Considering these two opposing perspectives on the decade, we would like to approach the 1970s as a decade of intense emotions on a global scale, particularly because the sense of crisis was a global phenomenon encompassing the state, social formations and the individual. Curiously, however, the History of Emotions and Global History have largely remained separate. The *Journal of Global History*, for instance, contains only two articles that deal with emotions, while the journal *Emotions: History, Culture, Society* features no articles



that tackle global history at all. In this workshop we would like bring together scholars of the 1970s, from both global and emotions history, in order to discuss how these hitherto separate fields might engage with one another and contribute to a better understanding of the decade. Rather than laying out a particular road map, we encourage participants to reflect on the potential for an emotional history of the 1970s from a global perspective, beyond the Cold War context. We also welcome proposals that adopt a comparative approach to examining emotions across countries, regions, or even continents. What would such a global history of emotions contribute to our understanding of the 1970s?

We invite papers on the following subjects:

- The emotional impact of the economic crisis at a collective and individual level (industrial transformation and deindustrialisation, labour movement crises, etc.)
- Political feelings, new transnational solidarity/humanitarian movements and NGOs (women's and human rights, civil rights and youth movements, ecological movements, de-colonial and liberation movements, dissident movements)
- New forms of acting and feeling as an individual in an increasingly neoliberal society (the therapeutic self, self-improvement, religion and spirituality, etc.)

The workshop aims to create a platform to discuss works in progress in the field of the History of Emotions. Papers will be pre-circulated among all participants. Each panel will feature two discussants to comment on the work. If COVID-19 permits, we plan to hold the workshop in a hybrid format, with attendees participating virtually as well as in person. The event will take place at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin from November 3rd to 5th, 2021. The Institute will reimburse travel expenses incurred by presenters according to the regulations of the Federal Travel Expenses Act (BRKG).

Please submit abstracts (max. 300 words) and a short CV by January 15th, 2021 to the following address: cfp-emotions@mpib-berlin.mpg.de.

Papers (max. 8,000 words) will be due by October 4th, 2021.