

## CALL FOR PAPERS

# HISTORY OF EXPERIENCE: THEORIES, METHODOLOGIES, AND CONCEPTS

---

*March 4 - 5, 2019  
Tampere University, Finland*

# HEX

CoE in the History  
of Experiences

The concept of experience has played a major role in many classic works of history, as those of R.G. Collingwood and E.P. Thompson. Studying the experiences of people whose voice was often silenced became an empowering element in the new social history and in the history from below. This enterprise became heavily criticized in the post-structuralist thinking. Experience as simple or essentialist evidence in explaining history was challenged by many influential historians like Joan W. Scott. In Germany, on the other hand, the history of experiences (*Erfahrungsgeschichte*) answered the challenge of the cultural turn by taking Peter Berger's and Thomas Luckmann's sociology of knowledge (1966) as its point of departure in explaining experiences as social and linguistic constructions. Lately, studies in the history of emotions have made important contributions to enrich historical scholarship, mostly in a constructionist fashion.

The Academy of Finland Centre of Excellence in the History of Experiences (HEX), hosted by Tampere University, is seeking new ways to study experiences and their role in explaining history. HEX studies experiences as lived realities and focuses on three wide-ranging cultural and societal phenomena: lived religion, lived nation, and lived welfare state. HEX covers a great variety of historical approaches, both old and new, in studying experiences as a crucial element of social reality including structures, agency, identities, and emotions. We ask how people make their lives – and their society and history – through experiences. We are seeking for new insights and methodologies to the past. We are open to all ideas from all disciplines which enrich historical analysis of experience – and we aim to show how the history of experiences can also contribute to other disciplines.

The first open international conference of HEX will be held on March 4–5, 2019, in Tampere, Finland. The theme of the conference is *History of Experience: Theories, Methodologies, and Concepts*. Our keynote speakers are Professor Laura Lee Downs (European University Institute, Florence) and Professor Jan Plamper (Goldsmiths, University of London).

Professor Laura Lee Down's research interests cover modern Europe, gender history, history and social theory, and comparative labour history, among others. She is the founder and director of the EUI Gender project as well as the European research network The Quest for Welfare and Democracy. Her publications include the widely read *Writing Gender History* (2nd edition Bloomsbury 2010) and other books and articles on labour history, theories and methodologies of gender history and the history of childhood.

Professor Jan Plamper is a specialist on the history of emotions and experience in the 19th and 20th century Europe with a focus on Russian and Soviet history. His major publications are *The Stalin Cult: A Study in the Alchemy of Power* (Yale University Press, 2012) and *The History of Emotions: An Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2015, German original 2012). He is currently studying the history of migration in post-1945 Germany and the experience of fear among Russian soldiers of the First World War.

We call for papers discussing topics such as:

- What is (historical) experience and how to study it?
- What are the theoretical frameworks for the history of experiences?
- What kind of methodologies and concepts it employs?
- How does the history of experience contribute to historical research at large?

Thus, the papers should focus on the theoretical, methodological, and conceptual dimensions of experience or fruitful cases illuminating these aspects. The discussion is not limited to any specific historical period or geographical area.

Please submit abstracts (approx. 250 words) for 20 minute paper presentations latest by December 20 at the website [https://www.lyyti.in/historyofexperience2019\\_abstracts](https://www.lyyti.in/historyofexperience2019_abstracts). Notifications of acceptance will be sent by January 10, 2019. HEX will cover accommodation costs for the accepted participants.

For further details on HEX and the conference, please see <http://research.uta.fi/hex>.



CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE  
IN RESEARCH