



## Call for Applications for the International Summer School

# Problematizing Morality

## Ethnographic Approaches to the Normative Dimensions of Everyday Life

*September 24 - 27, 2019 – Tübingen, Germany*

In recent years, the social sciences have both undergone and propelled a “moral turn”, synchronized to an advancing moralization of public and political discourse and practice. Two main lines of argument infuse this turn: The location of morality and its relation to power. Morality should neither be conceived of as individual predispositions nor as discrete spheres of sociality. Instead, everyday life can be comprehend as imbued with moral valuation and reasoning: The social is ultimately the arena of the ethical. Considering the broad interest in researching morality and the normative dimensions of everyday life, this Summer School aims to provide a platform for early career researchers to contribute to these debates, facilitating international and interdisciplinary dialogue, and highlighting the dimension of morality as objects of study. By emphasizing the articulation of the moral to power and by refining conceptual differentiations (such as the inherent relation between morality and religion), the Summer School aims to sound out and deepen the understanding of the moral dimensions of social life by analyzing their “problematization”. In such problematizations morality comes into being as an object of reflection that can be contested and claimed. At their heart lies the nexus between morality and emotions. Morals are part of and informed by “emotional ideologies” resulting in perceptions which differ significantly and are prone for conflict.

We want to open a space for inquiring into the processes in which moral and ethical claims acquire normative power and how this normativity is contested; the ways actors practice and relate to these claims; how they navigate through moral conflicts; and finally how they envision, strive for and live a life that matters, conceived of as ‘good’ and ‘right’.

To this end, we welcome applications from ethnographers working on questions of morality from different disciplines and at different career stages (**PhD students, postdocs and early-career scholars**). Combining lectures, workshops, and master classes conducted by renowned scholars in the field, the Summer School offers profound theoretical input and different formats for exchange. These include the presentation of participants’ research, theoretical discussion, and time for reflecting methodological matters and research ethics.

## **Arenas of Problematization – Master Classes**

### **a. Power, Critique, Legitimacy: Standing on the right side**

Moral conflicts are driven by and foster antagonal positions – the need to morally stand on the right side –, invested with claims for authority and legitimacy. The ambiguity of positioning in a continuum of possibilities is reduced to a dichotomous moral scheme. In moralized conflicts “legitimate” and “uninhabitable” positions evolve. This cluster seeks to address the normative (political, epistemic, emotional) regimes underlying questions of legitimacy and authority, as well as their contestation, the unfolding conflicts, and processes of hierarchization.

### **b. Cohabitation, Fellowship, Conviviality: Being a good fellow human**

If living is ultimately living with others, imaginaries of the good life contain ideas of proper cohabitation, solidarity and mutual obligation. On this ground, the Summer School asks how togetherness is organized along moral beliefs, thereby constituting social groups, but also disciplining members and creating “moral outsiders”. It inquires how actors position themselves as moral beings within and against their social surroundings, contesting established group-boundaries and opening new spaces of “being-with”.

### **c. Subjectivity, Individuality, Self-Fashioning: Living a good life**

The problematization of morality engenders different forms of ethical subjectivities, distributing differing modes of (individual) agency and responsibility. These processes of subjectivation can be understood as forms of self-governance based on introspection and reflexivity. This cluster seeks to address the ways in which actors navigate the expectations and practices of living a good, meaningful, successful life they are invested in – ranging from striving for happiness, joy, and a sense of purpose, to (alternative) ways of consumption, civic or environmental engagement.

Lecturers and Master Class Teachers

**Prof. Dr. Jarrett Zigon (University of Virginia, USA)**

**Prof. Dr. Moritz Ege (University of Göttingen, Germany)**

**Dr. Tilmann Heil (University of Leuven, Belgium)**

**Prof. Dr. Pamela E. Klassen (University of Toronto, Canada)**

## **Application**

If you want to apply for participating the Summer School, please submit (in English):

- **Letter of Motivation** (up to 1500 words), specifying your interest in the Summer School and its relation to your research profile
- short CV
- short **Abstract** (250 words) of the research project you would like to present, addressing one or more of the Summer School’s topics.

**The deadline for submission is March 10, 2019 - 12 AM CET.**

Applicants will be notified by the beginning of April 2019.

Please submit your application (incl. Letter of Motivation, CV, research abstract) in **one pdf-document** via email to [summerschool@lui.uni-tuebingen.de](mailto:summerschool@lui.uni-tuebingen.de)

## **Practical Matters**

The participation fee of **35 EUR** covers lunch and coffee breaks. The Summer School will be held in English. Participants will be expected to give a 25-minute presentation on their current research in one of the master classes, to contribute to the discussion groups, and to participate in the Summer School in full.

Participants are expected to cover their travel and accommodation expenses. We can, however, offer free accommodation for up to 10 participants. Additionally, we hope to be able to provide travel funding in exceptional cases for a limited number of participants.

Please state in your application if you require any of these provisions, e.g. if your institution will not cover these expenses.

The International Summer School is jointly organized by members of the [Institute of Historical and Cultural Anthropology](#), the [Collaborative Research Center 923 "Threatened Order - Societies under Stress"](#), and the [Department of Sociology](#). It is funded by the [Institutional Strategy of the University of Tübingen \(ZUK 63\)](#) and the University's [Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences](#).

## **Contact**

Helen Franziska Veit  
Institute of Historical and Cultural Anthropology  
University of Tübingen  
Schloss (Burgsteige 11)  
72070 Tübingen (Germany)  
[summerschool@lui.uni-tuebingen.de](mailto:summerschool@lui.uni-tuebingen.de)  
<https://uni-tuebingen.de/en/146559>