

Der Fachbereich Religionswissenschaft präsentiert:

Disability in the Eye of the Beholder, or: Is There Disability in All Religions?

Reflections on the Comparative Study of Religion

Donnerstag, 3. Oktober 2024

16.15 – 18.00 Uhr

Raum S 113, Unitobler



In all societies, some people have characteristics that are considered disabilities today. One can assume that all religions reflect this fact. However, the study of religions has largely neglected this issue. Disability studies, meanwhile, emphasize that disability is a “modern” category, which, in turn, raises the question: Does disability exist in all religions? Have scholars of religions rightly avoided applying this category and thus imposing a “modern” framework on diverse societies? In her talk, Ramona Jelinek-Menke traces the historical development of disability studies and critically examines how the disability category has been related to “modernity”. She argues that despite this critical interconnection, discussing disability in the comparative study of religions is appropriate and can make an important contribution to disability studies. In doing so, she highlights the role of the shift from text to materiality in understanding bodily diversity in religious contexts.

Dr. Ramona Jelinek-Menke is an interim professor of the study of religions at Philipps University Marburg. In 2020, she earned her PhD from the University of Zurich based on a work focusing on how religious welfare institutions shape the social status of people with cognitive impairments. Her current research explores material religion in museums and representations of bodily diversity in religious visual culture.

