

## **Emotions and the City: Urban Sociability in the European World, c. 1650- c. 1850**

CfP

Dates: **18-19 June 2020**

Urban history and the history of emotions are now both well-established fields of inquiry, but the two fields have rarely engaged in dialogue with one another. This conference invites urban historians and historians of emotion to consider the connections between urban and emotional experiences in Europe during the long eighteenth century (c. 1650- c. 1850). We propose that these connections can best be explored through the lens of the history of sociability.

Eighteenth-century cities were both important spaces for the cultivation of new forms of sociability (e.g., clubs, coffeehouses, restaurants, libraries, academies), while at the same time older, more traditional forms of urban sociability (e.g., guilds, parish and civic governments, households, and the street) continued to play an important role in the lives of city dwellers. Cities were also key sites for new political organizations and experiences: London and Paris played key roles in the English and French revolutions, for example.

The commercial world of eighteenth-century cities also created new forms of sociability, both in the form of lived experience as well as through constructing ‘imagined communities’ of readers and spectators. This new ‘public sphere’ has been the subject of sustained interest as scholars have tried to explore the ramifications of these new ways of living and imagining public life for people in the age of enlightenment. We encourage participants to consider the emotional and/or affective characters and consequences of the urban public sphere.

Further questions that conference presentations may wish to address include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Was there a particularly urban emotional experience?
- Did city life cultivate or privilege certain emotions over others?
- Were there significant variations in emotional experiences amongst the cities of early modern Europe?
- How did modes of urban sociability encourage or enhance certain emotional experiences?
- Did different cities, or different kinds of cities, cultivate different emotional experiences?
- Were there particular ‘emotional communities’ in the cities of early modern Europe?

We welcome submissions in English or French from researchers in different fields (history, history of art, geography, sociology, anthropology, ethnology, literature, architecture, cultural studies, urban studies, post-colonial studies) in order to compare their findings and participate in the writing of a comparative history of sociability in eighteenth-century Europe

Proposals for 25-minute papers or panels of three speakers are welcome from a wide chronological and geographical reach.