

## **Call for Participation / Call for Papers**

Interdisciplinary Workshop with **Katherine Dauge-Roth** (Bowdoin College, Maine, U.S.)

## **RELIGIOUS STUFF: KNOWLEDGE AND EMOTIONS IN EARLY MODERN CHRISTIANITY AFTER THE MATERIAL TURN**

Recent scholarship on Christianity has undergone a seismic shift: a field once dominated by the history of ideas now approaches religion as a set of material practices. Texts, images, objects, and bodies are now seen as so many media through which relationships between heaven and earth were established, cultivated, or contested. Offering a more expansive understanding of religion, this praxeological perspective has made it possible to account for a much wider range of devotional practices, including those that deviated from ecclesiastical norms.

This shift in the study of religion has proved especially fruitful for scholarship on early modern Christianity. By foregrounding the materiality of devotional practices, it has helped us move beyond familiar dichotomies—most notably, the contrast between the text-based faith of the Protestant churches and the material religiosity of Catholicism. As new scholarship has averred, religious practice was mediated regardless of denomination: for Protestants, the Bible functioned as a material object much like images did for Catholics. Similarly, approaches homing in on practices have challenged narratives of “confessionalization” and “social discipline,” revealing instead that both heterodox and orthodox practices were “doings” through which the faithful generated religious knowledge and emotions.

Building on these insights, this interdisciplinary workshop explores how media (ensembles) shaped religious knowledge and emotions in the early modern period, and probes the interconnections between knowledge and affect. Methodologically, we adopt a broad definition of “media,” encompassing texts, objects, bodies as well as collective entities (such as urban communities)—in short, everything that enabled early modern Christians to negotiate and stabilize their relationships with the divine, and to generate religious knowledge and emotions.

### **FORMAT & PARTICIPATION**

We invite early-career scholars at the University of Bern (PhD students/candidates and postdocs in history, art history, literary studies, theology, and cognate fields) interested in these questions to participate in an interdisciplinary workshop to be held on December 15, 2025.

[Katherine Dauge-Roth](#), Associate Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures at Bowdoin College, has kindly accepted to participate in the workshop as a discussant and to deliver a public keynote lecture on her ongoing research on amulets in early modern Christianity.

The workshop can accommodate up to six presenters, though we are happy for additional colleagues to attend as discussants.

Colleagues wishing to present their work are invited to submit an abstract (max. 250 words) and a short biographical note (2–3 sentences) by September 30, 2025. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of the selection process by October 10, 2025. Accepted speakers will be asked to provide a written version of their paper by December 1, 2025, which will be circulated among all participants ahead of the workshop.



## ORGANIZATIONAL DETAILS

<b>Location</b>	University of Bern (Mittelstrasse 43, room 228)
<b>Date</b>	Monday, December 15, 2025 (deadline for papers: Dec. 1, 2025)
<b>Organization</b>	Andreas Berger and Samuel Weber, Institute of History
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstracts</b>	Please submit an abstract (max. 250 words) and short biographical note (2–3 sentences) by September 30, 2025 to <a href="mailto:samuel.weber@unibe.ch">samuel.weber@unibe.ch</a> and <a href="mailto:andreas.berger-gehringer@unibe.ch">andreas.berger-gehringer@unibe.ch</a> .

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