



**MORAL SELF-CONSTITUTION:
THE CONSCIENCE IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE 18TH CENTURY**

Frank Grunert (IZEA, Martin Luther-Universität Halle)

Call for papers

The eighteenth century is – besides lots of other attributes – also the century of an intensively practiced moralization: the moral improvement of the individual was not only a question of the effect of external norms, but also an inner mobilization of the good. For both, conscience is the decisive asset of each individual. It is presented as an entity inside the human being that evaluates actions both prospectively and retrospectively. Conscience is considered to be capability, which deals with the knowledge of the moral norm, by connecting this knowledge to the personal motivation and circumstances of a concrete situation and evaluates it on the basis of well-known moral standards. This raises – on the one hand – the question of the origin of the moral norms and, on the other, the question of its internal processing: how does the conscience work?

Since the heteronomous norms and the more and more developing autonomous claims of the individual meet each other, the theoretical attempts of psychological and moral philosophy to determine the conscience lead to the dispute over the autonomy of the individual and the social claims of his closer and more distant environment. The constantly necessary mediation of external moral demands, concrete situations of actions and own (not only moral) claims leads to a cultivation of the conscience, which leads to the moral self-constitution of the individual. Because this takes place within the constantly changing interaction between the outside and the inside of man, this moral self-constitution proves to be an inconclusive, necessarily flexible and permanent updateable process.

The contributions of the panel are intended to reconstruct the moral-philosophical discussions that were conducted in the course of the eighteenth century on the concept and function of conscience. In particular, lectures are welcome that address the tension between subjective moral standards and external normative demands.

Please send your proposal up to December 31th, 2018 to:
frank.grunert@izea.uni-halle.de