FEELING THE KNEELING: THE POWER OF THE BODY

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The main aim of this project is to show how bodily positions can influence human perceptions and emotional states. The experiment focuses on the bodily position of kneeling and subsequent emotional experience of this bodily setting. In different religious rituals a variety of bodily postures is observed, some ritualspecific. When accentuating the importance of embodiedness and extendedness of the cognitive system, those postures have to be considered as crucial elements for understanding how participants perceive and process rituals and their own role in them.

One of those above mentioned postures is kneeling – socially and symbolically this position is associated with submission, respect, reverence and obeisance. In some religions, kneeling is explicitly used as a position for prayer – a position of submission to deity or other superhuman agent.



The maximum effect of the kneeling can be expected when connected to the social setting and context.













Dominant and powerful people tend to over-estimate thei own height (Duguid & Goncalo, 2012). The divergence in estimation of body height is thus seen as possible proxy of feelings of dominance and submission.

Hypothesis:

H3: Participants in prostration and kneeling condition will underestimate their height in comparison with the standing position.



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Preliminary conclusions:

results from hormonal analysis pending (only partial conclusions possible)

- the effect probably quite subtle - no hormonal change in non-social setting



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INVESTMENTS IN EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT