Anthropology and Cultural Psychology of Religion(s)
Hermeneutics – Practices – Life Contexts

1st conference of the Center for »Anthropology of Religion(s)«
Erlangen, September 11th to 14th 2011
Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg

Call for Papers

With the implementation of a third ›religion‹ in German universities questions on religion, its theologies and its images of (hu)man are asked anew. In that context ›anthropology of religion(s)‹ means three things: (1) to ask and answer on anthropological questions in the face of one’s own limited position, (2) to ask and answer on religious / theological questions in reflection of other religions and (3) and to examine anthropological and religious issues in their mutual relations.

Ad 1) In German anthropology is an enigmatic term for the attempt to answer the Socratic question of what man is without being able to provide a final answer. Many scientific disciplines have developed an anthropological sub-discipline with research interests into questions about (hu)man. This situation leads to a widespread range of theories and methods (from science and philosophy) to multiply the knowledge of (hu)man. Only the interdisciplinary dialogue ensures that the historical diversity in contact with people and in the (self-) understanding of the human is potentially preserved and will become fruitful in regard to science and practice. The initiation of such an interdisciplinary dialogue is intended by the planned conference. The exemplary research fields ›body and (institutional) representation‹, ›space (and its constitutive) practices‹ and ›norm, normative and norm change‹ should be the main topics of discussion, but also other aspects of human diversity are welcome.

Ad 2) Anthropologies of religions (the various denominations of Christianity, Judaism, Islam etc.) contribute also to a variety of conflicting images of (hu)man. But religious / theological anthropologies go beyond general anthropological questions by questioning – not transcending – the human horizon of knowledge. They remind of the possibility of God’s existence, an idea that Kant considers also as necessary when he positions the idea of God between ens rationis and nihil negativum to base the questions of morality not into the (hu)man. Therefore – corresponding to their image of God – religions also have different images of (hu)man; and these images are reflected in different agenda and actions. The above mentioned three topics can serve – under this perspective – as examples as well.

Ad 3) At this juncture the interfaces are in focus, at which religion and anthropology overlap, whether in the image of (hu)man, in rituals, institutions, meanings, morals, or other life contexts. In that sense religion can serve on the one hand as historical and recent example for comparative anthropological research. On the other hand the inter-theological dialogue on the own agenda, on this agenda in relation to another religion’s, and on the relation of faith and science can be held on the basis of anthropological phenomena and issues.
The conference should focus on all facets and issues in the relationship between anthropology and religion. Desired are empirical, historical and theoretical contributions and research reports, which help to shed light on / or deepen the conceptions and understandings of (hu)man and human existence.

It is possible to submit individual papers and posters; also moderated group formats, such as symposia, are possible. Artistic and aesthetic approaches to the fields of religion and psychology are desired, to enrich the scientific environment in breaks and at the evenings. For planning and scheduling purposes please send an abstract with a maximum length of one page that describes your contribution in form and content (title, author(s), type of contribution, required time frame, necessary tools for visualization and realization) till

April 30th 2011 (individual contributions), May 15th (group formats).

Selection of the contributions will be done by organizers and assigned reviewers. Feedbacks of acceptance will be given by the end of May.

The conference is organized in collaboration with the Society for Cultural Psychology. The society announces its own call for papers that is attached. The final conference schedule will provide an integration of all contributions received on both calls.

Conception and organization of the meeting:

For the Society for Cultural Psychology
Dr. Lars Allolio-Näcke
board member
c/o ZAR
Secretary
Kochstraße 6
91054 Erlangen
lan@plattform-anthropologie.de

For the Center for "Anthropology of religion(s)"
Prof. Dr. Jürgen van Oorschot
c/o ZAR
Director
Kochstraße 6
91054 Erlangen
vo@plattform-anthropologie.de