

**Call for Papers  
WORKSHOP**

**Religion Inside Medicine.  
Epistemology, Law, and Everyday Experience and Practice  
February 15-16, 2013**

**Organizers:** Prof. Hansjörg Dilger (Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, FU Berlin)  
Dr. Małgorzata Rajtar (Humboldt Fellow, FU Berlin/University of Gdansk)

**Venue:** Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany.

**Keynote speakers: Prof. Helene Basu (University of Münster) &  
Prof. Thomas J. Csordas (University of California, San Diego)**

With the growing resurgence of religious practice and healing in many parts of the world, and the simultaneously ongoing medicalization of different areas of everyday life, this workshop suggests to debate how religious and medical phenomena and practices have become interrelated in emerging assemblages of a globally interconnected world.

While both religious and medical traditions seek to provide wellbeing and health to their believers and patients respectively, the approaches they use in treatment and healing, and the epistemological and legal-institutional foundations on which their ideas and practices rest, are often very different. Furthermore, especially in European and North American settings, the split between religion and medicine goes back to the Age of Enlightenment, resulting in structural and ideological arrangements that have often entered into friction and may appear less reconcilable in nature than comparative research from ‘non-Western’ settings suggests. In recent decades, the various configurations that were established here, have been challenged – and sometimes transformed – by globally circulating technologies, ideas and practices; as well as the transnational movement of people as patients, doctors, and healers; and finally ongoing shifts in relations between government, the commodification and liberalization of healing landscapes, and the parallel imposition of new legal-bureaucratic practices.

Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork in the participants’ various research settings, the aim of this workshop is to creatively engage in discussion on religious and medical entanglements and/or disruptions in the contemporary world. We are particularly interested in papers that address how religious and medical meanings concerning health, mind, healing, and the body are negotiated and acted upon in everyday encounters and practices – including, but not restricted to, the way these encounters and actions make reference to legal-ethical documents, bureaucratic regulations, and/or historical texts. Contributors are invited to consider some of the following themes and questions:

**(1) “Religion” and “science”: Between epistemological friction and convergences.** What is the current place of religion as envisioned by medical scientists and health practitioners in specific settings of biomedical care and research? In what ways are religious issues addressed in clinical practice, and how does this shape the interactions between health staff and patients? How are treatment, medication and technology choices of physicians influenced by their personal religious convictions, and how do they establish evidence for their respective treatment methods? How in turn do religious experts integrate their healing approaches into “scientific” evidence and practice – and how does the potential incorporation (or rejection) of biomedical science contribute to their own reputation, authority and charisma?

**(2) The intersection of politics, ethics, religion, and bureaucracy.** How has the historically grown relationship between religion and medicine been incorporated in legislation and legal texts, and how do bureaucratic and legal-ethical procedures shape the practices and interactions in hospitals and clinics as well as among religious healers and experts? How are legal and ethical barriers and restrictions concerning the relationship between religion and medicine challenged by the considerations of individual medical professionals – as well as the priorities of patients? What is the rationale behind public policy decisions on the introduction and implementation of treatment, medication, technology and health education programs while delegitimizing others? How do new political-bureaucratic arrangements influence and regulate healing choices of people, especially with regard to the religious priorities and affiliations that they may articulate beyond the narrow confines of medical and religious healing settings?

**(3) Shifting boundaries in healing practices.** How are the religious and (bio)medical dimensions of healing practices embedded and embodied in the everyday lives of patients? How is the drawing and

redrawing of boundaries between religious and medical healing experienced and enacted through specific emotional and mental states (such as anxiety or uncertainty)? How are these intersections – as well as the drawing and affirming of boundaries – differentiated by factors such as gender, race, age or educational background? How do doctors and religious healers appropriate symbols, substances, and technologies from the respective “other” healing domain, and how does this appropriation lead to a perceived shift (among patients and healing experts alike) in the properties as well as the efficacy of healing instruments and *materia medica*?

**Abstract submission and deadlines:**

The deadline for abstract submission is October 10, 2012. Accepted abstracts will be confirmed by October 25, 2012. While there is no conference fee for the workshop participants, the organizers are unable to cover costs for travel and/or accommodation. A publication arising from the workshop in form of an edited volume or a peer-review journal special issue is envisioned.

Please send paper title, abstract (no more than 250 words), affiliation, and contact information to:

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