



FRIEDRICH-ALEXANDER
UNIVERSITÄT
ERLANGEN-NÜRNBERG

PHILOSOPHISCHE FAKULTÄT
UND FACHBEREICH THEOLOGIE

Announcement (preliminary 3.08.2015)

Interdisciplinary Symposium „Notions of dignity and deficiency – Intertextual Approaches to the anthropology of the Qur’an in contemporary Muslim discourse“

17-18th of September 2015, Chair for the Study of Religions, Center for Anthropology of Religion(s) (CAR), University of Erlangen

General frame

In the intellectual and spiritual tradition of Islam the notions of the dignity of man and his moral deficiency have always been some of the principal concepts with which Muslim scholars have sought to interpret the existence of man and his destiny. In recent years, the challenge of relating one’s own theological concept of man and his destiny to secular topics such as the inviolability of human dignity has generated a highly dynamic discourse around the question of how Islamic anthropology can contribute to the cultivation and perfection of the individual self as well as to social ‘humanisation’, especially as compared with the anthropologies of the two other monotheistic religions. Although the modern topos of ‘human dignity’ is not as much the result of a particular image of man but rather the result of a positive legislation, its ‘universality’ will regain practical political relevance only if it is supported by religious symbolizations, which specify the contentual implications of ‘human dignity’.

Specific discourse

In the wider context of a critical analysis of anthropological conceptions of Jewish and Christian theology, and encouraged by new research into the discourse of the Qur’an, these issues now take, more than ever before, the intertextual and processual nature of the Qur’anic proclamation into account. Like other sacred prophetic texts of the late antiquity, the Qur’an engages in a critical colloquy and intertextual debate with the larger Irano-Semitic prophetic tradition (as part of a shared civilization) and provides a new and original synthesis as a way of establishing its own voice. Although there is not yet a comprehensive view of this intertextual relationship, an increasing number of Muslim scholars is trying to take a deeper insight into the specific ways in which the Qur’an references and grapples with earlier sacred scriptures, in particular its interactive, critical and productive reference to anthropological images of the biblical tradition (esp. Gen 1-4 among others). Building particularly on the efforts of classical scholars like Burhan Al-Din al-Biqā’i, who studied biblical texts as a way of understanding the Qur’an, these scholars apply a methodology that is in most cases both literary and historical, and pays special attention to the rhetorical structure of the text itself.

Focus

The special aim of this symposium is to investigate contemporary (Muslim and Non-Muslim) intertextual and reflexive approaches to the way the Qur'an engages with earlier texts, especially with regard to the dignity and deficiency of man, here with the special focus on the primordial myth of Adam and the special figure known as Iblis, which occurs in all three monotheistic traditions. It focuses especially on recent approaches to Qur'anic readings of this myth/narrative from the perspective of religious studies (mythology, understanding difference and otherness), Qur'anic exegesis (intra- and intertextual dynamics) and systematic theology (positionality, scriptural hermeneutics etc.) and aims to bring these perspectives also with regard to recent debates in the field of religious studies (outside-inside, neutrality) into a fruitful dialogue.

Related issues and questions

How are generative paradigms of the Muslim and Qur'anic tradition such as a) the concept of *amāna/emanet* (Q 33.72), b) *k-r-m/şeref* (Q 17.70) or c) *ḥalīfa/halife* (Q 2.30) re-estimated in the light of the interactive and productive referential relations of the Qur'an to anthropologic images of the other monotheistic traditions? In which connection should these references to anthropological questions be seen together with the rather incomprehensible concession of a hermeneutic ambiguity (Q 3.7), which opposes the repeated self-designation of the Qur'an as 'clear writing' (Q 12.1)? How do the Meccan and Medinan suras relate to the growth of divisions between the followers of previous prophets especially with regard to the possibility of multiple interpretations of a sacred scripture? Can reflections on intertextual references to biblical passages provide a balanced appreciation of how the Qur'anic acceptance of religious pluralism relates to its powerful call for conversion? What does this new appreciation of the Qur'anic intertextuality mean for Islamic jurisprudence and the so-called 'intentions of the law' (*maqāṣid*)? To what extent does a new reassessment of epistemological and anthropological paradigms of Muslim theology arise within this framework of a self-reflexive reformulation of an Islamic anthropology? Is it possible to identify a special 'humanistic criterion' in this progress from a more instructive to a more communicative understanding of revelation? In this context the following issues need to be analysed: the positionality of religious rationalities, b) the internal structure of religious anthropologies and c) the tension between the respect for different truth claims on the one hand and the universal validity of the Islamic truth claim on the other hand.

Organization

Dr. Rüdiger Braun, Chair for the Studies of Religions, ruediger.braun@fau.de; Dr. Hüseyin Çiçek, EZİRE Erlangen Center for Islam and Law in Europe, hueseyin.cicek@fau.de; in Cooperation with the Center for Anthropology of Religion(s) (CAR), Faculty of Philosophy and Department of Theology, University of Erlangen.



Program (preliminary 3.08.2015)

17.09.2015

14.00 Greeting and Opening (Dr. Rüdiger Braun, FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg)

Part I: *Holy Scriptures and the myth of man – Approaches to the specificity of the qur'anic discourse*

Chair: Dr. Rüdiger Braun (I-II), Dr. Hüseyin Çiçek (III-IV)

14.15-15.15 Lecture I: Prof. Dr. Matthias Morgenstern (Tübingen)

„Features of theological discussion in the rabbinic Midrash on the Adam-and-Eve-Narrative - Homo imago dei, the fall of man(kind) and the denial of atonement“

15.15-16.00 Lecture II: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Cengiz Batuk (Samsun)

“Anthropology and the religious dynamics of mythologising: Remarks to various interpretations of the Adam myth in monotheistic traditions“ (preliminary)

16.00-16.15 Coffee break

16.15-17.00 Lecture III: Dr. Marianna Klar (London)

„Iblīs and the refused prostration before Adam – Some remarks to a diachronical reading of the qur'anic Iblīs-narratives in the light of late antique imaginations“ (preliminary)

17.00-17.45 Lecture IV: Prof. Dr. Holger Zellentin (Nottingham)

„The story of Adam in the light of qur'anic typology: The reframing and reinterpreting of a primordial myth in the qur'anic discourse“ (preliminary)

17.45-18.00 General Discussion and Evaluation (Chair: Dr. Rüdiger Braun)

18.00 Coffee & Snacks

Part II: *Qur'anic exegesis and the dignity of man – Challenges and perspectives of interpretation*

Chair: Dr. Hüseyin Çiçek (EZIRE)

18.30-19.15 Lecture I: S. Ali Aghaei (Berlin, Corpus Coranicum)

„The life of Adam and Eve - The quest of the Israeliyyat in contemporary interpretations of the Qur'anic Adam narratives“ (preliminary)

19.15-20.00 Lecture II: Prof. Dr. Mustafa Öztürk (Adana) (requested)

„The tragik story of Iblīs – About God, the human and the evil in the hermeneutics of the Qur'an“

20.00-20.15 General Discussion and Evaluation (Chair: Dr.es Çiçek/Braun)

20.15 Reception/Get together



18.09.2015

Part II (9.00-10.30)

Qur'anic exegesis and the dignity of man – Challenges and perspectives of interpretation

Chair: Dr. Rüdiger Braun

9.00-9.45 Lecture III with discussion: Dr. Dina El Omari (Münster)

„Adam and Eve in the perspective of contemporary feminist Exegesis of the Qur'an“

9.45-10.30 Lecture IV with discussion: Prof. Dr. Bilal Gökkir (Istanbul)

“Adam, Eve and Iblīs in the Qur’ān: Re-reading an anthropological narrative in modern time”

10.30-10.45 General discussion and evaluation (Chair: Dr. Hüseyin Çiçek)

10.45-11.00 Coffee break

Part III (11.00-16.00)

Hermeneutics of religion - Human dignity between secular universalism and religious legitimacy

Chair: Dr. Hüseyin Çiçek (I-II), Dr. Rüdiger Braun (III-IV)

11.00-11.45 Lecture I with discussion: Prof. Dr. Muhammad Serag (Kairo)

“Dignity, deficiency and ‘the Other’. Investigations into contemporary Muslim law defining the rights and obligations of Non-Muslims with a special focus on the maqāṣid aš-šarī‘a“

11.30-12.15 Lecture II with discussion: Prof. Dr. Mouez Khalfaoui (Tübingen)

“Human dignity and the creativeness of Muslim fiqh – Reflections on transformations in contemporary Muslim approaches to the challenges of a secular age“

12.15-13.00 Lunch

13.00-13.45 Lecture III with discussion: Prof. Dr. Mehmet Sait Reçber (Ankara)

„Islam, the Enlightenment and the justification of human dignity“

13.45-14.45 Final Lecture IV with discussion: Prof. Dr. Burhanettin Tatar (Samsun)

„Time and historicity of man in the context of his divine destiny: reflections on intertextual anthropology and alterity in the perspective of modern hermeneutics“ (preliminary)

14.45-15.00 Coffee break

15.00-15.45 General discussion & evaluation with all participants (Chair: Dr.es Çiçek/Braun)

15.45-16.00 Closing remarks (edition etc.) and end of the symposium