



German Anthropological Association (GAA) Conference 2009  
Frankfurt am Main, September 30-October 3, 2009

### **Cultural Appropriation:**

#### **Assimilation – Adaptation - Camouflage**

Global influences have long touched off profound cultural changes in the societies that constitute the object of anthropological analysis. Due to the more rapid diffusion of goods, values and norms, the customary anthropological conception of culture has been called into question: culture and society no longer constitute a single entity. Just as politics, the economy and law are oriented toward the demands of the world market, so global cultural phenomena determine local actions. An anthropology committed to the study of contemporary societies must take this into account. Its particular focus is the continuance of cultural diversity that by no means succumbs to the onslaught of globalization, but rather simply undergoes transformation and is expressed in the articulation of new cultural identities.

While former anthropological paradigms were primarily interested in the forms of resistance to external cultural influences, more recent approaches have focussed on the strategies with which social actors actively engage the challenges of globalisation. These are also to be the focus of the up-coming GAA-Conference dedicated to “Cultural Appropriation”. The term *assimilation* refers to the selective adoption of cultural imports, in which the adopted ideas or things are adapted to customary life ways and accorded with alternating meanings. In contrast to such forms of cultural nostrification, *adaptation* to dominant orders results in a break with a group’s own traditions, which – insofar as this break fails – often sparks attempts at retraditionalisation. Finally, the term *camouflage* highlights a strategy in which external demands are only apparently complied with, so that actors can secure sufficient latitude to pursue traditional goals.

For the up-coming conference of the German Anthropological Association we would encourage contributions that take up this approach in dealing with the manifold forms of cultural and social change and thereby provide answers to urgent questions regarding the assertion and revitalisation of cultural identity in an era of rapidly advancing globalisation.

## **Call for Papers**

Working groups, regional groups and members of the GAA are cordially invited to submit suggestions for workshops to be included in the 2009 conference programme. Please keep in mind this year's theme and include in your submission an abstract outlining the proposed workshop topic (no longer than 3000 characters) as well as the contact information of the submitter(s) of the proposal. The deadline for submissions is January 31, 2009. On the basis of the information provided the organisers will announce a call for papers for your workshop.

All GAA members are also invited to submit proposals for papers dealing with this year's conference theme. As in the past, the organisers will group papers of related content into workshops. In the proposal please include a brief abstract of your paper (no longer than 1500 characters) and the contact information of the person(s) making the submission. The deadline for paper proposals is also January 31, 2009.