Religion and the Public from 1989/1991 discusses the displays of increasing religiosity in post-socialist states. The workshop focuses on the question whether the phenomenon of a so-called “religious revival” has actually been provoked by the transition from socialism to post-socialist societies. Departing from questions raised by the early-career researchers attending the workshop, we will commonly seek to trace the multi-faceted public religiosity found in post-socialist countries by placing the renunciation of state atheism in the context of global geopolitical changes after the end of the Cold War.

The workshop is organised by Magda Dolińska-Rydzek, Corinne Geering, Katharina Kühn and the AG Eastern European Identities.

In collaboration with AG Religion and Culture and RA7 Global Studies and Politics of Space (GCSC); the Giessen Center for Eastern European Studies (GiZo) and the Herder Institute for Historical Research on East Central Europe, University of Marburg.

In order to register for this event, contact the organisers at religionandpublic@gmail.com
Religion, Collective Identity and the Public Sphere After Socialism

GCSC KEYNOTE LECTURE

The burgeoning international social science literature on public religion and secularization has paid less attention than it might have to recent developments in postsocialist societies, though these are extremely interesting theoretically as well as empirically. In some countries where religion was formerly repressed severely, it now approximates the role (de facto if not de jure) of a state religion. Some churches seem to be entering into compromises with the new state power reminiscent of those they reached with atheist Marxist-Leninists in the last decades of socialism. Some secular identities conflict with constitutional guarantees and international standards for religious human rights. How should academic analysts approach these issues? The lecture will draw on results of recent projects at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, as well as other recent anthropological projects in Russia, Poland and Hungary.

Chris Hann is professor of social anthropology and director of the Max-Planck Institute for Social Anthropology at the Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg. He has conducted extensive field research in Hungary, Poland, Turkey and China, and he has published and edited multiple volumes on post-socialist societies. From 2003 until 2010, he led the Halle Focus Group on “Religion, Identities, Postsocialism” at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology. His research interests include religion, economic organization, civil society, ethnicity and nationalism.