Concluding meeting of the NordForsk network
Social and Cognitive Perspectives on Early Judaism and Early Christianity

Social and Cognitive Sciences in the Analysis of Texts and History.
Special Theme: Sermon on the Mount.
Helsinki, January 8-10, 2014

Venue: Faculty of Theology, Fabianinkatu/Fabiansgatan 24, 5th floor (Faculty room and room 532). Entrance from courtyard.

Keynotes 60min. + 30min. discussion
Papers 30min + 15min. discussion

Wednesday 8.1.
18.00 Opening reception.

Thursday 9.1.
   Coffee break 10.30-10.45
2) 10.45-11.30 Lauri Thurén, Parables in the Sermon on the Mount – a Cognitive and Rhetorical Perspective

   Lunch break 11.30-13.00
4) 13.45-14.30 Niilo Lahti, 1 Corinthians: The Usefulness and Effectiveness of Pragma-Dialectical Theory
   Coffee break 14.30-15.00

   18.00 Dinner

Friday 10.1.
6) 9.00-10.30 Keynote 2: Colleen Shantz, The Eye as a Lamp on Cognition: Matt 6:22-23 as Embodied, Embedded, and Extended Cognition
   Coffee break 10.30-10.45
7) 10.45-11.30 Elisa Uusimäki, Matthew’s Beatitudes in Their Early Jewish Context: The Evidence of 4QBeatitudes

   Lunch break 11.30-13.00
8) 13.00-13.45 Anne Katrine de Hemmer Gudme, “Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and will be repaid in full” (Prov 19:17): Patterns of Indirect Reciprocity in the Book of Proverbs and in the Sermon on the Mount
9) 13.45-14.30 Rikard Roitto, Cooperation Style and The Perception of Risk

Coffee break 14.30-15.00

10) 15.00-15.45 David Chalcraft, Sociology and the Sermon on the Mount
11) 15.45-16.45 Conclusion
   Petri Luomanen, Review and Prospects (15min.)
   Rikard Roitto, Presentation of Conference volume (15min.)
   Discussion (30min)

18.00 Banquet
ABSTRACTS

David Chalcraft, University of Sheffield, *The Sermon on the Mount in Sociological Perspective.*
The basis ideas are: The paper will explore the way in which sociologists have interacted with the Sermon on the Mount and considered aspects of its cultural and social significance in the modern world. Central here will be consideration of the work of Max Weber and Talcott Parsons, who reflected on the realism of the ethic of non-violence and its apparent economic passivity. The second part of the paper, building on the first, will consider the Sermon using sociological ideas to grapple with the interactions in the text between a way of being that is both public and private, and one in which traditional and proverbial knowledge appears to co-exist in the text with a charismatic demand for a radical re-orientation to social relationships. Hopefully, these sociological approaches will constructively interact with approaches guided by other social science perspectives.

Ole Davidsen, Aarhus University, *Love of Enemies and Hate of Friends Generic Categorization in Matt 5:38-48 and 7:12*
Semantic categories as 'friend' and 'enemy', deeply related to 'love' and 'hate', are conventional categories used in our basic construal of our social reality. Besides their cognitive status in a narrow sense, these categories involve emotion and conation (motivation for action). It may be that such a social classification has deep roots in humankind’s struggle for life, but it is quite astonishing to see the recognition of these human conditions and inclinations presented in the form of a commanding rule: “You shall love your friend and hate your enemy.” And it is even more surprising, when we meet a challenge of the conventional category structure in “Love your enemies” (here supplemented with the latent alternative “Hate your friends”). Fascinated by these “blends” of a kind I shall present some ideas about generic categorization based on narrative theory in a cognitive perspective, especially focusing on the concept of role. It all leads up to a brief discussion of The Golden Rule.

Anne Katrine de Hemmer Gudme, “Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and will be repaid in full” (Prov 19:17): Patterns of Indirect Reciprocity in the Book of Proverbs and in the Sermon on the Mount
The idea in Proverbs 19:17, cited in the title of this paper, that benefitting the poor will result in being owed by God is a forerunner of the concept of a reward in heaven in exchange for alms, which is expressed in Matthew 6:1-4. In terms of gift giving, Proverbs 19:17 and Matthew 6:1-4 are both examples of ‘indirect’ or ‘generalized’ reciprocity and as such they are often described as altruistic or, in the words of evolutionary psychology, behavior that reduces the fitness of the individual. In this paper, I wish to discuss three points: 1) A comparison between the worldviews of the Book of Proverbs and the Sermon on the Mount with regard to reciprocity in general and indirect reciprocity in particular, 2) a critical consideration of whether indirect reciprocity can really be said to be altruistic from the point of view of the individual, and finally 3) an analysis from the point of view of evolutionary psychology of the value of indirect reciprocity, specifically the kind of indirect reciprocity that involves a deity not just as a party that monitors the exchange but as an active and interested party in the exchange itself.

Niilo Lahti, *1 Corinthians: The Usefulness and Effectiveness of Pragma-Dialectical Theory*
The point of the paper is to show the usefulness and effectiveness of pragma-dialectical theory when studying Paul’s argumentation and to reveal some of his tactics and goals. Pragma-dialectics is the forerunner within the field of argumentation studies and it has been applied in other fields of science extensively. However, in theology and in biblical studies the application of the method has been very limited. The paper presents argumentation analysis of a section in 1 Corinthians.
Jan Nylund, Lund University: Coherence and Prominence in the Sermon on the Mount: A Systemic-Functional Approach

Language is a social phenomenon used for communication and to convey messages from one individual to another. The systemic-functional approach embraces the linguistic expression of the Sermon, the co-text, as well as its paralinguistic reference points, the context. The Sermon on the Mount is probably the most well-known passage of text in the New Testament and is a structured discourse with far-reaching social implications. The interdisciplinary potential of the systemic-functional approach appeals to various cross-disciplines, such as psychology, linguistics, literary theory and sociology. In this paper, though, I will restrict myself to how co-textual, linguistic elements relate to the social realities of the text.

My analysis seeks to demonstrate how the various levels of text — ranging from the word and phrase levels to the levels of the sentence, the paragraph and the entire discourse — interplay to create coherence as well as marking features of prominence, or, to put it differently, to answer questions such as: How do the various parts of the Sermon relate to each other? What is it that makes them hang together? Are there features of the text that are more emphasized than others and, in that case, how do we know that?

Rikard Roitto, Cooperation Style and The Perception of Risk

Portions of the Sermon on the Mount alters the perception of risk. How does that relate to the risky cooperation style advocated in the text?

Lauri Thurén, Parables in the Sermon on the Mount – a Cognitive and Rhetorical Perspective

Jesus’ most famous speech consists to a great extent of parables. In Matt. 5–7, there are at least 16 clearly distinguishable parables, viz. non-historical, metaphorical narratives appealing to an audience. Their interpretation is typically compromised by theological and historical biases. They are used as bedrock for Christian doctrine or as sources for historical Jesus. They are interpreted by adding to them historical information, allegedly necessary for understanding them, or by reconstructing their original versions. However, the audience to which these parables were originally written was unaware of these exigencies and changes. In order to find out how the actual hearers of the Sermon on the Mount, viz. the audience implied by “Matthew,” were supposed to understand the parables, a different approach is needed. The stories must read as they stand, cleansed from all additions and alterations. Instead, we need a cognitive and rhetorical perspective. We must ask what emotions (pathos) and thoughts (logos) these parables were designed to produce among their recipients, and how their behavior was supposed to be modified. Moreover, it is vital to recognize the parables’ role in the narrator’s argumentation. These questions can be answered with modern approaches to persuasion and argumentation.

The aim of this paper is to produce a comprehensive analysis of the parables in the Sermon on the Mount, focusing on their persuasive functions. The results will hopefully contribute to historical and ideological studies of these texts as well.

Elisa Uusimäki, Matthew’s Beatitudes in Their Early Jewish Context: The Evidence of 4QBeatitudes

The collection of beatitudes or macarisms, which belongs to the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5:3–11), is not one of a kind in its ancient context, but several lists of beatitudes are known from early Jewish and Christian literature. The purpose of this paper is to examine the beatitudes included in the Gospel of Matthew in relation to the wider tradition of beatitudes series in Jewish and Christian antiquity. In particular, the aim is to compare Matthew’s series of nine macarisms to another series of five (extant) macarisms known from 4QBeatitudes (4Q525), a late Second Temple wisdom text found at Qumran and published by Émile Puech
in 1998 (DJD 25). It will be seen that the lists known from 4Q525 and Matthew share striking structural similarities. Moreover, it is intriguing that both series are located at the beginning parts of the compositions. It will be suggested that the placement reveals aspects of their social function which pertains to the construction of in-group identity, because macarisms are evidently related – although not identical – to blessings.