



Fachbereich Philosophie

Fachbereichskolloquium
Sommersemester 2017

18:15 bis 19:45, G 307

Im Rahmen des PHILOSOPHISCHEN KOLLOQUIUMS findet am
Donnerstag, 22. Juni, folgender Vortrag statt:

Prof. Dr. Andrew Arlig, Prof. Dr. Christina Van Dyke
Brooklyn College, Calvin College

She Who Wears this Garment is None Other than God: Reflections on Self-“Annihilation” in the medieval Islamic and Christian Contemplative Traditions

In his philosophical tale *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, Ibn Tufayl tells us that early in the Islamic contemplative tradition there were some scholars, “lacking in philosophical acumen and subtle intelligence,” who upon reaching the apex of mystical experience uttered such statements as “I am the Truth” or “He who wears this garment is none other than God.” Such utterances were seen to be at best “inconclusive” and at worst blasphemy. Tufayl and other subsequent expositors of Islamic mysticism in the 11th and later centuries took great pains to avoid making the crucial mistake of identifying the human seeker with God, no matter how hard it could be at the moment of mystical union to discern any distinction between Creator and creature. In the Latin Christian contemplative traditions of the 13th and 14th centuries, we also find individuals such as Marguerite Porete and Meister Eckhart suggesting that, at the height of mystical union, the soul is “dissolved” into God or even “annihilated.” The “Sister Catherine” treatise even contains a human protagonist who seeks complete self-abnegation and finally wakes from a trance announcing, “I am become God!” Such extreme statements were looked at askance in the Latin Christian tradition as they were in the Islamic tradition, but the mystics who said such things were not condemned for making the mistake of identifying God with creature as much as for circumventing proper church authority. In this paper, we explore the philosophical and theological grounding for the differing Islamic and Christian reactions to mystical language that implies that God and seeker metaphysically become one. We suggest that one possible reason for the difference is the Islamic emphasis on the unity and separateness of Allah versus the Christian emphasis on the Trinity and the Incarnation: the idea of literally dissolving into the Godhead is not as objectionable if the chasm between Divinity and Creation is bridged by a god who literally has become flesh.

Alle Interessierten, insbesondere auch Studierende, sind herzlich eingeladen.

nächster Vortrag 29.6.

Prof. Dr. Maria Rosa Antognazza, King's College, London
Truth and Toleration in the Early Modern Period

