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Horizonte der Islamischen Theologie

Abstract – Sektion 3, Panel 3

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Thema *The need to reconsider the human self (quiddity) in the Islamic philosophy*

The question of Self was associated, in the past, to the theoretical reason, whose horizon was to realize the continuing happiness through the knowledge of metaphysical principles, while the question of self, in Contemporary Arab Thought, is open to the horizon of a changing history by all the components of the human self whether rational, emotional, spiritual etc. The secret of this qualitative change in the question of self in modern times in the Arab world starts from the feeling of inferiority toward the historical progress of the West. This feeling, though it is of a tragic character, can mobilize the self to overcome this inferiority, especially if it is aimed toward the future, and if it showed to be inflexible to all attempts of regression toward the doctrine of perfection and superiority of the Arab-Islamic civilization. So, it is no longer appropriate to answer the question of the Self today only by going back to traditional references. Our liberation from the traditional self is a prerequisite condition to actually enter into modernity. But if we gamble on modernity without any regard to our heritage, this would constitute an obstacle to reach the independence of the Self. Therefore, it is necessary to achieve a double liberation of the self: liberation from legacy and from modernity too in order to rebuild the self on a new basis that would make it able to penetrate history anew.