

Workshop

The Grammar of 'God' –

Jewish, Christian and Muslim Perspectives

**11th of December
2021**

Participation is free of charge.

**Please register at:
bafid@fau.de**



Abstract

Engendering an intimate and deep relationship with God is at the heart of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. This relationship manifests, among other things, in worshipping Him with sincerity, talking to (and about) Him, and being conscious of Him in every moment of life. For believers, God himself plays also an active role in pursuing this relationship by, for example, answering prayers and making the believer know and feel His uninterrupted presence.

Many would consider the above as common knowledge about the religions mentioned above. However, only few are aware that the meaning of the above differs significantly based on how one thinks that religious language works. Rather, it is taken for granted that the word 'God' refers to a metaphysical being with personal traits and plays a similar role in structure as words in empirical language. This has several implications such as the

following: God can be talked about in an abstract and theoretical manner; His existence can be subject to inquiry like that of any other being such as planets or unicorns; and calling God good, while creation is obviously full of evil, is a proposition that needs rational justification.

The famous 20th century thinker Ludwig Wittgenstein has famously stated that his goal in philosophy essentially amounts to "showing that things which look the same are really different". By his insistence to pay close attention to the grammar of a word – that is its use in language – he has opened up new perspectives on (not only religious) language that challenges the prevalent view outlined above. The goal of this workshop is to pick up on Wittgenstein's insights about language and religion and to bring them in fruitful relation to the three mentioned religious traditions respectively in an attempt to reassess the grammar of the word 'God'.



UNIVERSITÄT GREIFSWALD
Wissen lockt. Seit 1456



BaFID
Bavarian Research Center
for interreligious Discourses

Saturday, 11th of December 2021

Workshop

10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Welcoming and opening session

Prof. Dr. Georges Tamer, BaFID
Prof. Dr. Mira Sievers, Humboldt University Berlin

10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

The Grammar of 'God': A Jewish Perspective

Dr. Daniel Weiss, Cambridge University

11:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

Coffee break

11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

The Grammar of 'God': A Christian Perspective

Prof. Dr. Genia Schönbaumsfeld,
Southampton University

12:45 p.m. - 13:45 p.m.

Lunch break

13:45 p.m. - 14:45 p.m.

The Grammar of 'God': A Muslim Perspective

Dr. Farid Suleiman, Greifswald University

14:45 p.m. - 15:30 p.m.

Open discussion and concluding remarks

Contact

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Organizers:

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