



The Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies at the University of Zurich, in cooperation with the Department of Philosophy of Tehran University and the Asia & Europe doctoral programme of the University of Zurich, invites applications for the following:

## Summer School “Free Will and Determinism in the Islamic Tradition”

**Time:** 17<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> August 2020

**Place:** Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies, Rämistrasse 59, 8001 Zurich

**Theme:** The question whether our behaviour is freely willed or determined has been discussed in the Islamic world from the beginning to the present day. The debate is of particular interest because intellectuals of many persuasions, with various epistemological interests, have contributed to it. Many of them stand in an intellectual tradition that refers back in the first instance to Aristotle, then to Avicenna (d.1037) and, further, to later thinkers like Mullā Ṣadrā (d.1640). Others argued theologically, which could equally encompass a spectrum of standpoints and methodological approaches (rationalistic, tradition-based etc.). Still others came to the question of free will from a Sufi-mystical perspective. Beyond this, the political dimensions of the problematic were brought up time and again. They play an especially important role when one considers the contemporary discourses in the Islamic World.

**Goal:** Participants in the Summer School will become familiar with the various positions held and arguments advanced in the debate, thereby gaining insight into the discursive structures and intellectual contexts in which it has taken place in the Islamic world. At the same time, they will strengthen their intercultural competencies, which, in the context of philosophy, means they will be better able to engage in a grounded and critical manner with questions that reach across the boundaries between traditions. The theme “Free Will and Determinism” is especially suitable in this regard, because it has been dealt with in detail in all intellectual traditions. Islamic perspectives stand in the foreground within the framework of the Summer School, but systematic and comparative aspects shall also be addressed.

**Programme:** The Summer School offers a rich programme of teaching by one or more expert speakers, independent work and presentations by participants, and collective discussion. Original sources, composed from the 7<sup>th</sup> century up to today, will be studied in translation, analysed and contextualised.



**Speakers:** Teaching will be delivered by internationally renowned researchers. In order of the programme, these are as follows:

Islamic Philosophy to 1200: Nader El-Bizri, American University of Beirut

Islamic Theology: Ulrich Rudolph, University of Zurich

Islamic Philosophy from 1200 and Mysticism: Mohammed Beheshti, Tehran University

Contemporary Political Philosophy: Roman Seidel, Free University of Berlin

Comparative Discussion: Raji C. Steineck, University of Zurich (together with those previously named)

**Credits:** Participation in the whole programme including delivery of the individual presentation will be awarded 6 ECTS

**Who can participate?:** Doctoral students of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the University of Zurich; Master's students of the Programme "Philosophie in Asien und der islamischen Welt" and "Islamwissenschaft" of the University of Zurich; Doctoral Students and advanced Master's students in the areas of Islamic Studies and Philosophy at other universities, in particular Tehran University. The number of participants is limited to 17. Admission will be decided on the basis of submitted documentation.

**Fees:** For participants from Switzerland and Europe, a fee of CHF 300 applies.

**Deadline:** The deadline for application is April 1, 2020. Notifications of acceptance will be sent by May 1, 2020.

**How to apply:** Applications, consisting of a CV and letter of motivation, should be sent to: [summerschool@aoi.uzh.ch](mailto:summerschool@aoi.uzh.ch)

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