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CONGRESS

Middle East and Muslim Worlds
Studies

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Panel 6

French research news on Kalām

Person in charge: Amharar Ilyass (IREMAM)

Program

Amharar Ilyass (IREMAM)

Theology and language: the debates on the origin of languages (aṣl al-luġāt) and its multidisciplinary implications.

This intervention will provide the broad outline of one of the many debates between Aš‘ari and Mu‘tazili: are languages the object of tawqīf or are they the result of a waḍ‘? This question, through its different doctrinal or linguistic implications, illustrates one aspect of the complex relationship between theology and language in Sunni Islam.

Bouakl Ziad (CNRS/ Centre Jean Pépin)

The Maqālāt of Abū l-‘Abbās al-Qalānisī

The discovery of new doxographic fragments of Abū l-‘Abbās al-Qalānisī, a contemporary Sunni theologian of al-Aš‘arī, sheds new light on the theological activity of the traditionist circles of the 9th century and allows us to formulate some hypotheses on the circulation and transmission of Kullabi doctrines before the advent of Aš‘arism.

Chaumont Éric (CNRS/ IREMAM)

Why have Maghreb Mālikite lawmakers, theologically, adhered so massively to Ash‘arism?

This intervention will aim to carefully address the question of ash‘arism’s accession to the Maghreb: how did it happen? It is in any case, it seems to me through the usūl al-fiqh, and not the kalām as such, that Ash‘arism has been introduced and imposed in the Maghreb. But this leaves unresolved this other more fundamental (and perhaps inappropriate) question: «Is the close rapprochement between mālikism and ash‘arism in the Muslim West based on substantial affinities of a dogmatic, or theological-legal, nature, or is the answer to this question ultimately more contingent than anything else?»

Gobran Yakota (CERMOMM)

The status of the divine Word and the aš‘ari argumentation in the 5th / 11th century: rethinking the essence of speech as a notion (ḥaqīqatu-l-kalām)

Influential thinking elites in the 5th / 11th century, both in the Abbasid capital of Baghdad and in the regions of Ḥurāsān, the Aš‘ari were involved in one of the major theological quarrels of the time: to define

Fourth Congress of Middle East and Muslim Studies

the divine word and its status. Between the Muʿtazilites advocating a divine word made up of letters and / or «created» sounds and the so-called anthropomorphist Ḥanbali who supported the «uncreated» character of a divine word articulated with letters and sounds, the ašʿari conception wanted to be intermediate. Pleading for an uncreated divine word that could not be a language, a letter or a sound, the Ašʿari theologians opposed to their adversaries a different ontology of the word as a notion.