



Religion and Modernity in a Secular City

Katholische Akademie in Berlin

16 – 18 September 2010

Call for Papers:

Writing from Vichy, France in early 1940, Walter Benjamin articulated what many theologians secretly feared in his *Über den Begriff der Geschichte* by portraying theology as the hunchback that must keep out of sight. However, Slavoj Žižek has recently suggested that it is time to reverse Benjamin's first thesis on the philosophy of history: "The puppet called 'theology' is to win all the time". This startling reversal reveals that the extent to which Enlightenment secularization imagined it could map the rational world onto a manipulable grid, manifested in the global spread of political, economic and social structures that have attempted to inscribe the sacred within a strictly private sphere, is increasingly being called into question by the continuing public presence of political theologies. However, the question of what this new visibility of religion might mean in the context of the supposedly secular city remains less than clear. We invite proposals for papers, to be delivered in no more than 30 minutes, that address this broad theme from theology, philosophy, political theory, economics, sociology, as well as cultural and biblical studies. Our keynote speaker will be Professor Graham Ward.

Further Particulars:

The language of the conference will be English. Abstracts of no more than 300 words, together with a CV, should be sent simultaneously to both the conference organizers via email no later than 30 April 2010. Notifications of acceptance will be sent by 14 May 2010. The conference will take place in the centre of Berlin at the Katholische Akademie. Generous grants are available for presenters to cover the costs of registration, accommodation and meals. For further information please contact the conference organizers at the following addresses: Martin Knechtges (knechtges@katholische-akademie-berlin.de) and Kyle Gingerich Hiebert (kyle.gingerichhiebert@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk). Details about the conference can be found online at: <http://www.katholische-akademie-berlin.de/de/arbeitsfelder/philosophie/tagungen/index.php>.

Co-sponsored by the Katholische Akademie in Berlin, the Program on Religion, Politics and Economics at Humboldt University and the Centre for Religion and Political Culture at The University of Manchester.