



Öffentlicher Vortrag (in englischer Sprache) am Max-Weber-Kolleg
**„The Role of Asceticism in the Rejection of Slavery
 and Social Injustice across Ancient Religions“**
**Prof. Dr. Ilaria Ramelli, Catholic University Milan
 & Angelicum**

7. Juli 2014 | 18:00 Uhr | **Veranstaltungsort: AMG, Raum 0012**

Ilaria Ramelli is Professor of Theology and K. Britt endowed Chair at the Graduate School of Theology, SHMS, Thomas Aquinas University (Angelicum), Senior Visiting Professor of Greek Thought (NYU; Harvard), and Senior Fellow in Ancient Philosophy (Catholic University Milan). She has been Professor of History of the Roman Near East, Senior Visiting Professor of Church History, and Senior Fellow in Classics and Theology at Durham University.

Fields of Research include: early Christianity and Patristic philosophy and theology, ancient Judaism, ancient religions, ancient philosophy, imperial and late antiquity.

Selected books include: (1) *Gregorio di Nissa Sull'anima e la resurrezione* (Milan 2007); (2) *Hierocles the Stoic* (Leiden 2009); (3) *Bardaisan of Edessa: A Reassessment of the Evidence and a New Interpretation* (Piscataway 2009; 2012); (4) *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis: A Critical Assessment from the New Testament to Eriugena* (Leiden 2013, *Vigiliae Christianae* S. 120); (5) *Early Christian and Jewish Narrative: The Role of Religion in Shaping Narrative Forms* (coedited, Tübingen 2014).

Lecture: A major theme connected to religious individualisation is the practice of personal piety and more specifically of asceticism in antiquity and late

antiquity, involving not only dietary or sexual restrictions, but also voluntary poverty, service, refraining from oppressing others, etc. In this lecture I will illustrate my ongoing research into the role of asceticism in the opposition to slavery and social injustice across religions (‘pagan’, Jewish, and Christian) in antiquity and late antiquity, within the framework of a monograph. The investigation I am carrying out concerns the position of ancient philosophers and Christian theologians—from early Greek and Hellenistic times to Imperial and Late Antiquity—on the legitimacy of the institution of slavery and of social injustice. It analyses the stance of ancient Greek and Hellenistic philosophers, ancient Jewish ascetics, New Testament theologians (especially Paul), and Christian theologians; it also examines these thinkers’ own practice in respect to slave ownership. Among Patristic theologians, special attention is paid to Gregory of Nyssa; the book will argue for the radical nature of his ethical and theological denial of the legitimacy of slavery. My study will point out how private and group ascetic practice played a substantial role in the rejection of slavery, oppression, and social injustice in antiquity and late antiquity. Discussion will be an invaluable occasion for me to reflect further and improve my work with a view to publication.

Alle Interessenten sind herzlich eingeladen. Der Eintritt ist frei.