
Phil 4105 Seminar in Problems of Philosophy

Spring 2017

Section TR11

RegCode 48296

Tuesday, Thursday 11:00am – 12:15pm

Instructor: Andrew Arlig

Email: aarlig@brooklyn.cuny.edu

This seminar is focused upon a philosophical examination of mysticism. We will ask what mysticism is, and how it is differentiated from other ways of knowing the divine. We will ask whether mysticism is a form of philosophy, or whether it is in some sense a distinct yet complementary, or even superior, way of knowing. We will examine some of the common claims made by mystics, such as that God's nature is ineffable ("beyond words"), or that access to God requires immediate presence and perhaps even "annihilation" of the self. While the course is centered around the concept of mysticism as a form of knowing - and therefore our study will span numerous periods and traditions - many of the readings will be drawn from Ancient, Medieval and Early Modern sources. Possible authors to be studied include: Lao Tzu, Plotinus, Pseudo-Dionysius, Ghazali, Rumi, Marguerite Porete, Julian of Norwich, Meister Eckhart, and Theresa of Avila.

Note: Enrollment in the seminar requires the permission of the Department. However, please be assured that the course will be constructed so that it will be accessible to students from a variety of disciplines, including Classics, History, and English. Please contact Professor Arlig directly with queries about the seminar. A draft syllabus should be available by mid-January.