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REVUE DE THÉOLOGIE ET DE PHILOSOPHIE, 150 (2019), P. 409-410

ENGLISH SUMMARIES

S. TRIGANO, The Divine Attributes: A Hebraic Perspective, RThPh 2018/IV, p. 301-314.

The question of anthropomorphisms first arose at the intersection of Hebrew and Greek languages. In Hebrew, an attribute is a sort of apposition since if it is in the present tense – and it cannot be else –, it cannot be really expressed since the verb "to be" is never conjugated in the present. The question becomes more complicated when one takes into account the fact that the name which designates the Divine is built on the radical form of the verb "to be". The problem which the attribute poses to Hebrew monotheism is that it implies a form of divine corporeity, even as the Divine is believed to be beyond all representation and any spatial inscription. Jewish philosophy has articulated many different solutions to the question raised by categories such as body, presence, gaze, God's image, language, voice and speech. This article, by playing the Divine and the human in a reciprocal equilibrium, concludes by stating that for a Hebrew consciousness the world is unfinished, embryonic, and thus it cannot be the object of attributing to being which is in becoming – except for the attribute of rahamim, *the mercy of the womb, insofar as it carries the being to be.*

O. BOULNOIS, The Divine Names: Negation or Transcendence?, RThPh 2018/IV, p. 315-333

If we have to think within the limits of language, and if God is beyond these limits, how can we aim at God? The theology of "divine names" is an attempt to meditate on this difficulty. Despite certain distortions inflicted to it by the history of metaphysics, Dionysius' teaching seeks to articulate together affirmative and negative statements concerning God, and then to exceed them, so as to think God's transcendence beyond position and negation. And so it aims at God through language, but also beyond all language. It is therefore vain to try to reduce this way of thinking to a pure, or a secret affirmation – just as it is not a simple denial. It is, rather, a path and a spiritual exercise.

M. TERRIER, Divine Names and Divine Human Beings in Imamite Shia Gnosis (14th-17th cent.), RThPh 2018/IV, p. 335-356.

In the Qur'an, the one God makes himself known through multiple names which express God's attributes. More than the attributes, it is the divine names which have inspired theological and philosophical reflections within Islam, among others by the Soufi Ibn 'Arabī (d. 1240) and, in his footsteps, among Imami Shī'is. This article analyses the doctrine set forth by gnostic Shī'is between the 14th and the 17th cent. (8th-11th cent. anno Hegirae*). Relying on a complex taxonomic and hierarchical system, they developed the idea of a theophany of divine names in order to account for the world, for what lies beyond it, and for human beings, before converging with Shī'i imamology through the idea of the perfect Man as manifestation of the supreme Name.*

J. SOSKICE, Why Names Are Not Attributes, RThPh 2018/IV, p. 357-371.

For many decades, even several centuries, philosophical treatments of God's nature have been dominated by discussion of the so-called "divine attributes" – omnipotence, omniscience, and so on. This article suggests that this tradition is bankrupt and that

we need to recover these predicates in their earlier context as "divine names" – the standard locus for the discussion of the divine nature through the early modern period. This, in turn, takes us back to the doctrine of creatio ex nihilo *and the understanding of Philo and theologians of the early Church that, strictly speaking, God is unnameable, the I AM from which all things have their being, and revelation the source of our naming. Christ is this "I AM".*

A. CHUKURIAN, Descartes' Approach of the Divine Attributes, or How the Indifference of the Infinite and Providential God Gives Rise to Love, RThPh 2018/IV, p. 373-392.

The article explores Descartes' views on the divine attributes in order to show its promise for the relation between philosophy and theology. As a philosopher whose thinking rests on the idea of God, Descartes considers incomprehensible infinity as the heart of God's nature. All the other attributes flow from it. The originality of his argument lies in his way of bringing together thinking about God (and avoiding anthropomorphisms by stressing the unity of the divine essence) with the view of an authentic relation between the human subject and God. In discovering God's providence, the philosopher comes, through the use of his reason, to a genuine love of God, a love which takes the form of a passion. An indefectible pretention to truth suffuses Descartes' rational approach of God, but without any meritorious dimension: refusing to trespass the limits of reason, Descartes leaves out the question of grace and of salvation, which belongs to the realm of theology.

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