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One: Notes on the Catholic Theology of Mary”; “Part Two: The Possibility of Parallels Between Mary and Fāṭima”. This part includes for instance the question of the intercession and comparative prayers in litany-like forms addressed respectively to Fāṭima and Mary. The A. summarize the main similarities between Mary and Fāṭima: both are mothers of sons who will be killed as martyrs; and consequentially, the mourning and sorrow that characterized their lives because of that; their intercession for the believers. Mentioning, at the same time, the differences between the two figures, due to the different theological backgrounds.

The book contains two noted appendixes of translated Arabic texts: (A) the Names of Fāṭima (pp. 293-307), taken from three Šīʿī sources: *al-Hidāya al-kubrā* of al-Ḥaṣībī (d. probably 346-957); *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib* of Ibn Šahrāšūb (d. 588-1192); *ʿAwālim al-ʿulūm wa al-maʿārif al-aḥwāl min al-āyāt wa al-aḥbār wa al-aqwāl* of al-Bahrānī (d. 1110-1698). (B) The Protest of Fāṭima (pp. 309-324), after the death of her father until her last days, a text from *Kitāb al-iḥtiḡāḡ ʿalā ahl al-liḡāḡ* of al-Ṭabarsī (d. 548-1153).

Adnane MOKRANI

Cottini Valentino, Körner Felix, Sarrió Cucarella Diego R. (ed.), *Raḥma: Muslim and Christian Studies in Mercy* [Studi arabo-islamici del PISAI, 22], Pontificio Istituto di Studi Arabi e d’Islamistica, Roma 2018, 219 pp.

How is mercy understood in monotheistic religions? What are the fundamentals of a theology of mercy which develops its categories out of either biblical or qur’ānic fundamentals, respectively? Could Christian and Muslim ‘theologians of mercy’ enter into a productive and creative dialogue? What are the consequences of a particular theology of mercy with regard to the understanding of God as well as social and individual courses of action? These were questions discussed by Christian and Muslim theologians during the 2016 conference *Raḥma: Muslim and Christian Studies in Mercy* held in Rome during the Jubilee Year of Mercy. The proceedings are now available in an anthology, edited by Valentino Cottini, Felix Körner and Diego Sarrió Cucarella, published within the collection “Studi arabo-islamici del PISAI”. The topic, which in Germany is often connected to the theology of Mouhanad Khorchide, arises regularly in inter-religious dialogues. The aforementioned anthology not only allows for a wider methodological spectrum by incorporating socio-ethical, mystical and cultural-analytic perspectives, but also enriches the study of mercy with the contributions of exegetes and systematic theologians. The volume will be a point of reference in discussions surrounding the notion of mercy for years to come.

The large volume consisting of 22 often dense essays brings with it the danger of losing context because of the multitude of perspectives. The topic could risk losing focus and meandering arbitrarily. However, this danger is averted by the volume’s well-designed external structure. Two opening lectures by Cardinal Walter Kasper and Mouhanad Khorchide outline the topic. These are followed by three personal testimonies of Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald, Professor Adnane Mokrani and Sister Carol Cooke Eid, looking back at their personal experiences in Muslim-Christian encounters. While the two opening lectures explore the notion of mercy in the wealth of their respective traditions, these testimonies are motivated by the spiritual appreciation of the Other and they search for mercy as a virtue of the Other. Finally, the topics’ outline is summarized by the concluding contribution of John Borelli, who reclassifies the particular articles of the volume in the context of papal teachings on mercy. Six sections deepen the general outline and offer perspectives from various theological disciplines and methodologies, ranging from exegesis to spiritual and systematic theology to social ethics and cultural analysis. For the most part, the sections consist of a Christian and an Islamic contribution, which are compared and continued in a third article. Thus, the volume is not just referring to dialogue, but on the contrary manifests a Christian-Muslim discussion, although with a disparity towards Christian points of view.

The well-structured anthology also offers a high consistency in its content. One of the main questions surely is how the topic of mercy is fundamental for the relationship between Christianity and Islam. With

a view to the particular contributions, it should be noted that Christian systematic theology emphasizes the differences between the traditions while Muslim positions tend to emphasize the similarities. Already the juxtaposed assessments of Kasper and Khorchide introduce some of the tensions in the interpretation of Islam and foreshadow the intense disputes that can arise. Moreover, the definition of similarities or differences *itself* differs. However, in this respect the exegetical and systematic contributions render an actual service for Muslim-Christian dialogue. The articles by Dirk Ansorge and David Marshall reflect upon the relation of love and mercy by working out the Trinitarian and Christological anchoring of mercy. The contributions from Islamic Studies and Islamic Theology correct the picture of a mere *iustitia talionis* and of an alleged equivalence of retribution and mercy. On this topic, the articles by Angelika Neuwirth, who approaches the Qur'ān diachronically, and Mustansir Mir, who approaches the Qur'ān synchronically, are extremely helpful. All in all, it is safe to say that the more exegetically and historically an article argues, the more difficult a stark opposition of the religions becomes – in this very case, the article by Dominik Markl is definitely worth reading. A contribution from the perspective of Islamic systematic theology is missing, which is a deficit for which the overview given in Saban Ali Düzgün's article does not compensate.

Another thread running through these articles is how justice and mercy are linked. The question draws attention to the fact that the topic of mercy is interlinked with orientation for action and societal diagnosis. Both Islamic and Christian faith possess performative and transformative qualities of power to shape and change the world. Even at this point the accent is a different one. The Christian articles in the volume, especially the differentiated consideration in Marianne Heimbach-Steins' contribution, try to promote justice as a value in reference to mercy in order to avoid limiting mercy to mere individualistic charity. The concern of the Islamic position, articulated by Mouez Khalfaoui, conversely demonstrates that merciful clemency should neither be underrated nor forgotten in a juridically influenced model of justice. Paul Heck finally underlines the necessity to cultivate moral imagination as a precondition for equitable actions, an aspect both authors, Heimbach-Steins and Khalfaoui, would willingly acknowledge. With this in mind, the connection to mysticism is established and leads to the transformative aspect, as is shown in the focused studies on Julian of Norwich and the Indian mystic Hazrat Inayat Khan. The reflections on the "cultural impact of mercy" by James Corkery and Thomas Michel show that the personal transformation reaches beyond a mere individual dimension. In this volume, mysticism and politics fit together very well and show that mercy is *an active behaviour of compassion*. All things considered, all of the articles support – with a high level of scholarly rigor – the concluding remark of Cooke Eid: "[N]either mercy in the face of the other nor its opposite is typical of any religious belonging. Mercy is a choice, a life-giving resolution" (p. 37).

What are the results of *Rahma: Muslim and Christian Studies in Mercy*? The volume offers three overriding themes. Firstly, the topic of the relation between God and humankind, focusing on the consequences for theological anthropology. Secondly, the hermeneutical question of interpreting Bible and Qur'ān: the studies demonstrate the challenge of reconciling a diachronic with a synchronic approach to each respective scripture and to include at the same time the historical connections between both Bible and Qur'ān. Thirdly, an existential and socio-ethical question: both religions show the intimate connection of *rahma*/mercy with the social dimension of life which cannot be exhaustively addressed through questions of justice alone: in any human action there are reflections of divine mercy. Paul Heck asks pointedly: "What is it that softens our hardened hearts?" (p. 122). At the same time, *Rahma: Muslim and Christian Studies in Mercy* inspires readers not only to take note of the other religious traditions, but to deal with their own particular religious tradition. Two examples should be given. One example is shown by the studies of mysticism: describing *rahma* in an etymological way – the "womb" as the essence of mercy is often and emphatically mentioned in the articles – provides the opportunity to discover feminine aspects of the biblical God. Furthermore, it shows how mercy could have a corrective and liberating potential within gender studies and socio-ethical questions (cfr. Julia Lamm, Erdal Toprakyan, Donna Orsuto).

A second example: Lamm points out that in the last analysis mercy is a question of experiencing grace, a fact which leads to the reflections of Ansorge. He exemplifies that the triune God is not essentially mercy but love. Mercy is not an essential part of God's being: God can act mercifully, but just because God

is love. His argument is strictly structured by a classical Trinitarian theology. He points out that “mercy necessarily implies a sort of hierarchy [...] a dimension of defect” (p. 176).

In this context, the discussions on *rahma* within Islamic theology that revolve around an absolute and a relational side of God could be highly productive within Christian theological discussion: would it be possible to understand the inner-Trinitarian relations of Father, Son and Holy Spirit as an absolute *state of overwhelming mercy*? And would it be possible to understand the actions of the triune God, revelation and mission, as an *act of God's overwhelming mercy*? Could the Qur'anic/Islamic understanding of mercy – the distinction between an absolute and a relative dimension in divine mercy – thus be an interlocutor for Christian theology?

In conclusion, these few thoughts might illustrate how an intensified dialogue within the tradition and with other traditions could be helpful to understand and develop particular traditions and systems of thought. It also points out the shared but differing bases for an inter-religious dialogue.

Tobias SPECKER
Tobias MÜLLER

Cuperly Pierre, *Introduction à l'étude de l'ibādisme et de sa théologie*, Ibadica Éditions, Paris 2018, XV + 372 pp.
—, *L'empreinte de Ses pas*, Ibadica Éditions, Paris 2018, 92 pp.

La personnalité de Pierre Cuperly (1932-2007), si discrète, est aujourd'hui mise en lumière par la parution de deux de ses ouvrages. Les éditions Ibadica ont réuni quantité d'informations sur la vie de ce prêtre très érudit, reprises en avant-propos de la réimpression de son œuvre majeure *Introduction à l'étude de l'ibādisme et de sa théologie*¹ : cette somme incontournable, parue d'abord à Alger en 1984, était depuis bien longtemps introuvable. Ces mêmes éditions publient également pour la première fois les souvenirs du prêtre, intitulés *L'empreinte de Ses pas*². Dans l'avant-propos, Ibadica annonce une collection dédiée aux écrits de Pierre Cuperly, ce dont on ne peut que se réjouir tant a été grande sa contribution au dialogue islamo-chrétien.

L'autobiographie de Pierre Cuperly, *L'empreinte de Ses pas*, est précédée de trois belles préfaces, rédigées par des compagnons de route, Sœur Marie-Sophie de la Fraternité monastique de Jérusalem, Claude Rault, Père blanc évêque émérite de Laghouat-Ghardaïa, et Cheikh Farhat Jaabiri, professeur de civilisation islamique et imam de la mosquée ibadite de Tunis. L'émouvant témoignage du prêtre, écrit à la troisième personne, se compose de cinq livres et transmet au lecteur une foule de souvenirs, ponctués de citations bibliques et parfois coraniques, ainsi qu'une réflexion sur les évolutions de l'Église.

Dans le premier livre, l'auteur se trouve sur un lit d'hôpital, ignorant ce qui l'a conduit là, intubé et incapable de communiquer avec ceux qui lui rendent visite. Il vivra encore onze ans après le terrible coma dont il décrit la sortie. La seconde partie évoque des souvenirs d'enfance, tendres pour la plupart, sauf lorsqu'il se repent toujours, des décennies plus tard, de mauvaises actions commises alors qu'il était habité par une violence dont il ne comprenait pas l'origine. Ce sont ensuite les années de formation au sacerdoce, qu'il nomme les « années glorieuses ».

Le troisième livre est celui de sa rencontre avec l'Afrique : son service militaire coïncide avec la guerre d'Algérie et il décrit ce « passe la mer » comme un déclic, un appel du Seigneur qui lui permet de

¹ Pierre Cuperly, *Introduction à l'étude de l'ibādisme et de sa théologie*, Ibadica Éditions, Paris 2018, XV + 372 pp., ISBN 979-10-94545-05-8. Les livres peuvent être commandés à contact@ibadica.org.

² Pierre Cuperly, *L'empreinte de Ses pas*, Ibadica Éditions, Paris 2018, 92 pp., ISBN 979-10-94545-07-2.