

## Laval théologique et philosophique



Marie-Anne VANNIER, dir., *Maître Eckhart, lecteur des Pères grecs*. Paris, Beauchesne éditeur (coll. « Mystiques chrétiens d'Orient et d'Occident »), 2020, 233 p.

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mas (*L'espace public*, 1978) qui, en adoptant une approche strictement conceptuelle, parvient à dégager des tangentes de la modernité beaucoup plus saillantes. Il n'en demeure pas moins qu'il est agréable de se plonger dans le verbe ciselé, voire poétique de Riquier. Cette lecture est à conseiller à quiconque s'intéresse aux déclinaisons et aux mutations des rapports entre la croyance et l'athéisme.

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The Eckhart project is part of a collection within the framework of the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme Lorraine, as well as the *Encyclopédie des mystiques rhénans* or *L'apogée de la théologie mystique de l'Église d'Occident* (Paris, Cerf, 2011). It introduces Eckhart's mystical theology of the Western Church, similarly promulgated by Vladimir Lossky in his *Essai sur la théologie mystique de l'Église d'Orient*, one of the major pioneers of Eckhartian studies. Focussing on this study, conducted particularly by the Rhine Mystic Research Team (ERM), this collection is open to research on Christian mystics of the East and the West, who by their extensive experience and their theology, attempt to distill his thoughts. More broadly, this collection embraces research in mystical theology in both the Eastern and Western churches. This volume is based on the symposium *Master Eckhart : reader of the Greek Fathers* within the framework of the ANR FRAL TEAPREA project titled : *Teaching and preaching under patristic authority. Master Eckhart, the link between France and Germany, yesterday and today*. It follows the previous volume, *Master Eckhart, reader of the Latin Fathers*. Vannier begins by asking how did Eckhart reference the Greek Fathers ? She suggests that he did not content himself with templates of select pieces, rather he sought sources freely. The Church Fathers' commentaries on Scripture, in particular the Gospel of John served him well. He borrows and reinterprets certain elements from Origen's commentary on the Gospel of John, to the homilies of John Chrysostome, and on the Latin side, the commentaries by Augustine. He also looked closely at the reflections on divinity by the Damascene and Maximus the Confessor as demonstrated by J. Kakkaramattathl (p. 137-144). However, he did not seem to be aware of the commentary on John by Cyril of Alexandria although he had access to other writings by Cyril. So why did Eckhart reference the Greek Fathers ? He wanted a comprehensive understanding of Scripture employing all possible resources available to him, including Hebraic and patristic commentaries in order to get to the very essence of the text. This positioned him well for inter-religious and ecumenical dialogue. It's not known whether Eckhart had access to Cappadocian texts other than Gregory of Nyssa's *De divisione naturae* as Molac points out in his research (p. 89-108). Eckhart does have a similar view of ἐπέκτασις to that of Nyssa. It is evident that he had read and was inspired by Burgundio of Pisa's translation of Damascene's Ἐκδοσις ἀκριβῆς τῆς ὀρθοδόξου πίστεως (*Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*). This is a new trajectory in Eckhartian studies because it demonstrates that he did not take the apophatic approach of Dionysius but more so the Damascene's view as Getcha demonstrates (p. 177-191). In concert with Damascene, this Thuringian asserts that "God is beyond being" (Lagarigue, p. 193-209). He also reinterprets Damascene, opening the way to a whole study on the concept of image by the two authors. While Eckhart advocates for a reimagining of unnecessary images, and a return to the sole image of the Son, explaining that "the honor rendered to an image passes to its prototype" resuming Damascene's polemics against the iconoclasts who rejected all idolatry. Vannier suggests looking into the *Sacra Parallela* attributed to Damascene, not just because of its rich structure as a florilegium of the Bible but also because the illustra-

tions add new perspective to the text. It is therefore necessary to note that Eckhart appreciated new and rare findings in the works of the Greek Fathers permitting him to not only deepen his understanding of objects of worship (divinization) but to present a Western version for the inception of God in the soul, underscoring his theology on Grace, his reflections on the Image, etc., many topics that require a revisit as presented in this book and of course in further studies.

With the exception of a few typographical errors in the editing, this truly is a remarkably well researched book under the meticulous guidance of Marie-Anne Vannier. The team of expert contributors make this book all the more necessary for Eckhartian studies going forward.

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