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CONGRESS

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Panel 77

Status of the Quran: From Medieval Debates to Contemporary Debates

The status of the Quran, as a divine attribute, has been at the center of debates opposing the early Sunni leaders to the Muʿtazilites. From the 5th / 11th century, we witness the emergence of a singular doctrine, developed by some ḥanbalite thinkers and immediately condemned by the authorities of Sunni orthodoxy (ašʿarites and eminent ḥanbalites) as a carrier of anthropomorphic seeds. Two centuries later, Ibn Taymiyya, claiming to be ḥanbalism, will be at the origin of a new doctrine on the question. Yet contemporary Wahhabism and Salafism thinkers erect Taymiyan thought about the status of the Quran as the unique and faithful reading of the original Sunni discourse of the Pious Predecessors (Salaf) since they claim, “uncontaminated” by muʿtazilite and ašʿarite rationalism.

The different contexts of these debates, the sources of the divergences and the subsequent politico-religious consequences constitute the various themes addressed by the research project DISCORDIA, entitled: «Dissensions about the status of the Koran between ašʿarites and ḥanbalites in the 12th and 13th centuries. , to the current Wahhabi-Salafist doctrine”, and funded by the BCC as part of the 2020 call for research projects “Islam, religion and society”.

The workshop will therefore present these different fields of investigation before discussing the degree of fideism endlessly claimed by the ḥanbalite camp in its legitimation speeches. In the context of the statute of the Koran, can we indeed still evoke a conservative dimension in the face of shifting doctrines, rethought, even sometimes inspired by currents of thought called into question by the said Salaf?

Person in charge and discussant: Gobran Yakota (INALCO, CERMOM)

Program

Amharar Ilyas (Aix-en-Provence, IREMAM)

The attribute of speech among the Maghrebian mutakallimūn. The case of Sanūsī

This intervention will address the question of the divine attribute of speech as represented by one of the most famous mutakallimīn of the Maghreb, Muḥammad b. Yūsuf Sanūsī and would highlight the variations that can be observed in the way of analyzing the point between Sanūsī and the Via Antiqua of the Ašʿarites.

Chaumont Eric (CNRS, IREMAM)

The impact of the status of the Qurʾan on Sharaic theory and hermeneutics (usūl al-fiqh)

I would base myself mainly on a text, the Qawātiʿ al-adilla of al-Samʿānī (m. 562 H.), treaty of usul al-fiqh which surprisingly - this is a unique case - is introduced by a little treatise on Iʿjāz.

Gobran Yakota (INALCO, CERMOM)

Borrowing from Karrāmism and Mu‘tazilism in the Taymian Doctrine of the Statute of the Quran

Ibn Taymiyya is often presented by Wahhabo-Salafist movements as a champion of traditionalism (rejection of kalām or rationalist argumentation) and a faithful conservative, whose doctrinal orientation would be in accordance with the teaching inherited from the Salaf (the so-called Pious Predecessors). Looking very closely at his doctrine relating to the status of the Koran, however, we discover a strong influence of the Karrāmite and Mu‘tazilite doctrines, two currents condemned by these same Salaf. In this communication, it will be a question of presenting the point of view of this figure attached to ḥanbalism, and of discussing the fideist character that his contemporary followers attribute to his thought.

Thibon Jean-Jacques (INALCO, CERMOM)

Some positions of modern Sufis in debates around anthropomorphism

Through various exegesis, we will seek to identify how certain representatives of Sufism fit into the debates around questions linked to the anthropomorphic attributes of God. We will focus in particular on the exegetical works of Ismā‘īl Ḥaqqī (d. 1725) and Ibn ‘Ajība (d. 1809) and on the treatises of Emir‘ Abd al-Qādir al-Jazā‘irī (d. 1883)) and Aḥmed b. al-Mubārak (d. 1743) recording the teachings of his master ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ḍabbāgh (d. 1719). We will be mainly interested in the question of the session of God on the Throne (mentioned in several verses of the Quran, for example, Cor. 7, 54; 10, 3; 13, 2; 20, 5, etc.) The question is to know if these Sufis convey particular positions and how they fit into the major currents of Sunnism.