A Critical Assessment of Negative Theology of Dionysus in the Light of Quran and Prophetic Traditions

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Abstract:
The most important aspect of divine names and attributes is their semantics. Human beings’ interpretation of this aspect will have a profound impact on the type of relationship they have with God as it is by these names and attributes that we know God and speak with him. This aspect of Divine Names and Attributes addresses the question that how can we talk about God’s attributes and what is the relationship between these attributes and human attributes?

This essay is a propositional analysis of Dionysius’ approach, the most famous exponent of negative theology in Christianity, based on Quran and prophetic traditions. According to Quran and prophetic traditions the application of names and attributes as to God implies simultaneous denial of agnosticism and assimilation. Through the denial of agnosticism, we know God through creation (human soul, the order and genesis of phenomena) and God presents himself cordially and innately. He also describes himself through his acts and by negating his shortcomings. In the denial of assimilation, every description offered by human individuals fails to touch divine reality as it is.

The findings of the essay show that in Dionysius approach, no attention is paid to cordial–innate parameters and immediate knowledge in positive aspect while these are of paramount importance in Quran and prophetic traditions in Islam. Dionysius reiterates on the inconceivability of God while in Quran and prophetic traditions both aspects (inconceivability of God and the opposition between God and his creatures) are emphasized. Although these two approaches cannot meet each other in mystical discourse through the denial of positive and negative methods.

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