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- 1 This volume, the third edition of *The Philosophy of Religion: A critical Introduction*, authored by Beverley and Brian Clack is a handbook, a useful introduction to the main debates on analytical philosophy of religion and a sample of methodological clarity. The book explores contemporary arguments for the existence of God shaped under the natural theology framework; then, the main challenges to theism are presented, and radical reviews of theism are put forward. The main stages in the development of this discipline are not examined and no historical narrative is provided, instead classical philosophical references are presented as predecessors of contemporary positions. One can notice the effort to present analytical philosophy of religion as a natural branch of classical philosophy, nevertheless, mixing classical references (Hume, Kant, Freud, Marx) with new voices (John Hick, Pamela Sue Anderson, Don Cupitt) does not yet prove any filiation.
- 2 The book aims to map the philosophical landscape of philosophy of religion. It starts with an inquiry on the definition of religion (Chapter 1) then, three big issues can be noted, even though the authors do not name them.
- 3 First, does God exist and what does it mean for a supernatural being to exist? To answer this question, the first part of Chapter 2 focuses on the natural arguments for the existence of God and the first part of Chapter 4 presents different forms of revised

theisms. A significant importance is given to alternative critical understandings on theism.

- 4 Second, how such a supernatural being is described or used to be described? To inquire this, the second part of chapter II starts with classical divine attributes, then, the chapter presents the revisions of the description of God in face of what the authors consider as failed theodicy. If reason cannot provide any meaningful narrative on evil, then, God's attributes need to be reviewed. New ways to undertake that task are the feminist approaches to religion presented in the third part of Chapter 4. Methodologically built on the *philosophie du soupçon*, this subchapter focusses on the specific identity of subjects that produce narratives about God. This is the only part which deals, to some extent, with the political consequences of religious belief, such as oppression. Additionally, after considering how God is/was described, the problem of religious language arises, first in subchapter 3 of chapter 3, and extensively in the part devoted to Wittgenstein from chapter 4 on. In fact, the entire volume, in line with the analytical tradition, pays more attention to language uses.
- 5 Third, how does the concept of a God-like creature impact on human life? Chapter 5 zooms points on events and circumstances that can be interpreted as divine interferences by focusing on how people experience such events. The authors depict the specific needs that believing in God has tried to address, such as the need for protection or immortality.
- 6 The hidden claim of the book is that, in order to overcome different objections concerning the representation of a transcendent God, religions should change the ways they portrait such a reality. Consequently, philosophy of religion should become somehow more constructivist and would consist in offering fresh new conceptions about spirituality and divinity. However, it can be reasonably argued that the purpose of philosophy of religion is not to propose new ways of portraying a God-like creature, but to understand the reasons behind theological representations of divinity in the plurality of their historical forms. No need to shape new non-transcendent faiths, the task is to understand religious representations that are already present in our societies.
- 7 This objection is best reflected in Chapter 6 intitled "Philosophy of Religion in an Age of Terror" that tries to describe the various issues and problems generated by violence and terrorism. This chapter, added on the second edition of the book, under the shadow on 9/11, proves the authors' effort to engage with current problems, nevertheless, proposing a revised account on religion as a way to overcome terror does not help to address the question of violence, injustice and fundamentalism. Unfortunately, the analytical perspective is not very well equipped to deal with these topics that needs a deeper engagement with the irrational. Underling those violent acts were motives that trigger them both with and without religion; this point can be fruitful for contemporary debates, but that approach to terrorism seems far from providing accurate and useful insights concerning this phenomenon. One can regret that the entanglement between politics and religious is not examined here.
- 8 The book is framed in the Freudian, Feuerbachian tradition. Claims about religion are to be understood as ways to speak about what is human. The book points to the human significance of religious experience explaining how human beings grasp meaning from religious acts, how religion and belief offer ways to engage with the world. Because of such an emphasis on the human dimension of religion a phenomenological touch would have been needed, something missing in this approach, and the volume remains silent

concerning the relationship between analytic philosophy and other contemporary movements in philosophy of religion.

- 9 To sum up, a good deal of the clarifications and descriptions offered in this volume relates to non transcendent religious forms. Such a non-theist preference can be subjected to criticism, since it rises the impression that religious experience is far from being comprehend. Instead of offering narratives making sense of people religious behaviours, the authors prefer to advocate for reviewing methods on thinking about religion.
- 10 A final funny observation. The French reader can be confused by the times that the term God appears. English speaking texts have no problem to use the word God to frame narratives pretty distant from the classical use of the term; on the contrary, French speaking texts try to avoid using the term, even when what is to be described is obviously pointing to that entity.