

Peer Review

Review of: "Risky Hope: A Proflection Through Abraham's Spiritual Journey"

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The grade I believe to be fair for this paper is 4 because especially in the beginning of it, the shape and writing of the text are very elaborate: almost literary or poetic, I'd say. But as it progresses and goes on, I think it loses a bit of that well-defined structure, to become a little too academic, and lose some of its virtues. Also, certain flaws in the writing, such as misspellings or a few complicated statements, bring a bit of a shade to an otherwise perfect paper.

I'd like, however, to highlight some of the virtues of the essay, as there is a vast and accurately chosen bibliography, and a very valuable development of ideas, along with a rich theoretical framework.

In matters of the deeper construction of the paper, we see first what may be a subtle political understanding of God, related to transcend individual desires, and to go beyond a first approach to the dogma given by impersonal hope; an approach which I believe to be especially innovative and valuable for our time.

Also, the reading of Abraham's journey and the challenges he faced along Sara(h) is remarkably well constructed. Nonetheless, again, in that episode there are certain flaws in writing that do not make clear what the central purpose of what's written is. I'd like us thus to remember how the most difficult notions require the best writing, which is true not only for philosophy and divinity studies, but even for literature, anthropology, and history.

Nonetheless, I'd like to recall again how much I appreciate the way in the beginning there is a wonderful, almost poetic or literary voice, especially valuable as it goes beyond how Abraham's journey projects his insights. But, for instance, when dealing with the notion of a 'city dwaller' (?), I understand there may be a 'trick' in the mean(ing)s of the words as that given in the word(s) 'dwell - wall'. In this context, as I suggest the use of italics in cases such as the word I mention, the further flaws in writing bring a little shade to these valuable but a bit troubled rhetorical figures that may enrich the text if well used.

We see then, for instance, a wonderful use of etymology as a theoretical framework, such as the one presenting Abraham as “the father of many”. However, for instance, the dual use of “Abram” and “Abraham” in the body of the text may constitute a sort of misspelling, or a misuse of a term that, if well and coherently used, may constitute a strong and powerful theoretical framework. The same goes for the “Tower of Babel”, with a new misspelling as “babel”.

Nonetheless, I’d like, however, to highlight the value of how the etymological study of that section directs the study towards hospitality as a willingness to serve God, and being of service to the foreign and the gentile, as what happened with Lot. I believe that is a great message for these times! So, congratulations, because there is much to elaborate on there, maybe in further studies.

Going on with our reading, I find trouble in how, in the second part of the text, the very first statement seems a bit incongruent. Also, as we do not know if there may be a lack of “?” signs, the reader may be missing out on how or to what measure such good language and theoretical framework may be valuable for the addressed topic. That way, we may miss the point of the author in what I believe to be a matter quite interesting in its elaboration.

For instance, when we go through how “Elphis” refers to hope of a better future, a good outcome, or a belief of favorable circumstances, we may find the development of ideas a little confusing. We see then how terminological explanations are rich, and the author demonstrates a deep understanding of them, but the explanations are not always as clear for the text’s purpose, and maybe they could be cleared out by just adding a few sentences and correcting some things here and there.

Then, as we see how the construction of an unusual type of knowledge is remarkable —sincerely, as few academic works I’ve read lately—, for Ewert’s transcription, inaccuracies bring again shade to an otherwise especially remarkable paper; a contribution to knowledge.

In such a stance, when we analyze how, different from the modern mindset, hope and faith are linked for Christians, and optimism is to be understood as a positive illusion, it may be difficult to address a seeming contradiction of what may be again a quite enriching notion for all academies in the humanities.

To address finally a segment of what may be much better if cleared out, I’d like to address this quote, which is the only one I was sincerely unable to decipher:

“Abraham’s hope here, indeed, seems to contrast with the image of himself that is not ideal, to have the condition of experiencing God’s promise naturally. However, here, through Abraham, God contrasted the hope that God had with the hope of the world”.

Finally, my own interpretation of the text is that there is a risk related to impersonal hope, which is perfectly explored. But out of it, God's personal hope leads to a (not) safer stance that is the one path we need to find, as what Abraham found along with his people: because when you find an individual sake for your, involved in that somehow paradoxical individuality provided by God, you to fully recognize God's love and lose grip of the fear involved in the mundane and the worldly desire. And you find a reason for being hopeful, while remaining compassionate and empathetic! Isn't that a beautiful outcome from your paper?

Once again, thank you and congratulations for such original and rich work! I really hope my slight corrections do provide you with means to just polish such wonderful academic work that will enrich our academic knowledge!

Sincerely,

Andrés

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.