Summary

"Zurechnungsmetaphysik? Samuel Pufendorfs Begriff der imputatio als Realitätsgrund von Moralität"

by Alexander Aichele

In de jure naturae et gentium, Samuel Pufendorf developed an extensive theory of attribution. This theory is supposed to allow the problematic application of norms to single events, i.e. to allow moral judgements. The theory is based upon the term of entia moralia, i.e. logical entities determining behaviour. These entities are, in turn, the basis for an action theory that, based upon an indeterministic understanding of liberty, defines acts as wilful and at least in principle determinable by rational judgements. However, these acts obtain morality only by being attributed. The term imputatio therefore extends the mere causation of an act by a specific affiliation (pertinentia) between the act and the actor. To establish this, Pufendorf mentions formal and substantive criteria that can, however, only be applied retrospectively. The resulting judgement must include, firstly, a finding of causation, and secondly, also those entia moralia, that state the possibility of determining the actor's free will. Free will and the morality of an act, therefore, becomes manifest only in the attribution that takes place.