

# ABSTRACTS / PAPERS

**MIRELA ADASCALITEI**

## ***On the Language of the Beyond: An Exercise in Multiple Paradigms***

Despite any continuous, and indeed unavoidable, efforts to make language denote, i.e., establish one-to-one correspondences between res and verba, the concepts we come up with are 'always already' approximations. Whether or not we accept the strong presupposition that language has transcendent roots, the process of signification always rests on a tension between what can be named and what cannot.

Possibly the best chance we have of coming to terms with this 'tense' nature of language is through an analysis of metaphor (not as a stylistic device, but in its much wider, sometimes occult, uses within any paradigm of knowledge). My paper will thus review several influential theories – classic, modern, postmodern – on metaphor as well as several theories on the collateral issue of an implicit transcendence of language. This will further serve as an apparatus for an applied study of texts coming from different paradigms of knowledge and from literature, an analysis that shall attempt to reveal the "Ghost in the machine". (For the purposes of this paper I shall only take into account the situation in which that which is otherwise inexpressible and therefore hidden bears upon the human experience of the sacred.)

As far as philosophical inquiry is concerned, the story of the acknowledging the metaphorical nature of its language seems to follow the well-known "return-of-the-repressed" plot. From the classical stage (in which the straightjacket of 'salient' concepts bracketed away large domains of experience), through the late modern awakening brought by questions regarding existence, up to the most recent streaks of phenomenology and postmodern thinking, thinking seems to have become aware of its precarious (weak) roots, and therefore, of its metaphoricalness. The paper will follow some streaks of that vast process, in view of metaphor as a gateway to transcendence.

**GEANINA FILIMON**

## ***The Invisible in the Icon and the Religious Painting***

The theme of my work is a comparison between two types of Christian religious representations, i.e. the icon and the religious painting. My intention is to show both the differences and the similarities between them, as well as the implications these images have at an existential level. Mostly, we can say about the icon that it is never considered out-of-date. It is never the mechanical copy of the model, but the proof of a new encounter with the mystery of this Being. The icon is the human limited means of knowing God, an instrument of communicating with Him. Regarding the difference between the icon and the painting, I use the interpretation offered by Jean-Luc Marion in *The Crossing of the Visible*. Marion sees the painting as something that makes one the spectator of an image, which is reduced to the level of an object. In front of the icon, one feels at the same time that he is being seen. The duo made up of the spectator and the visible objective is replaced by a trio formed by the look taken by the on-looker, the visible objective and the prototype. Besides Marion, I also discuss the opinion of Wunenburger on the icon. He acknowledges that the sacred cannot be mistaken for the divine reality, since it is fictional. A representation characteristic for symbolic imagination is that which enables man to move from the immediate to the mediated, from the sensible to the intelligible, or, to put in Marion's terms, from the visible to the Prototype. The systematic impoverishment of the spectacle offered to our sight, practiced by the Christian iconographic art, pertains to the close interrelationship between the artistic conception and the theanthropic conception of Christ, hold by the patristic authors and enacted liturgically by the Orthodox Church. In order to understand an icon, it does not suffice to be aware of the mystery of Incarnation, as well as of the ecclesial tradition of icon-painting. It must be always borne in mind that the Invisible which shapes the visible in a painting, is understood as an attribute of the divine nature. Consequently the painting is a limited action of viser as compared to the icon.

## ANDREI GAITANARU

### ***Un modèle herméneutique: le Corpus de l'Aréopagite***

Au-delà du fait d'offrir l'occasion de la reconfiguration de certains thèmes et distinctions qui sont devenus des lieux communs de l'exégèse patristique, le Corpus de l'Aréopagite représente à la fois le lieu d'une réflexion sur le statut du discours théologique et l'opportunité de pratiquer une herméneutique née à l'occasion de l'articulation des questions rendant nécessaire le premier concile œcuménique de Nicée. A partir d'une redéfinition succincte de la distinction aréopagitique entre la théologie apophatique et la théologie cataphatique et en mettant ainsi en évidence les apories qui circonscrivent dans une registre allégorique l'objet de la théologie, nous pourrions nous pencher sur la question du statut du discours théologique dans le cadre du corpus aréopagitique, et par extension exégétique, sur sa postérité. Nous allons ainsi essayer de démontrer le fait que la théologie germée par le corpus aréopagitique cache et révèle de manière équivalente et simultanée le contenu de la divinité. Nous allons ensuite voir que la donation/transmission (**paradosis**) de l'infinie réserve de sens de la divinité, conformément à une rigoureuse aporétique du don que met en lumière la juste compréhension des deux types de discours théologique, nous implique dans une démarche mystagogique. Nous observerons ainsi que les traites aréopagitiques initient une nouvelle pratique de l'interprétation, qui loin de fonctionner selon le paradigme des vérités représentatives témoignant de la pure transcendance de l'objet vis-à-vis du sujet, proposent un rapprochement infini du contenu de la divinité, remettant en cause et impliquant celui qui met à jour et assume ce type de discours. Ainsi, en mettant en évidence les attributs définitoires de la hiérarchie (« ordre », « science de la divinité » et « ouvrage semblable au divin »), nous allons comprendre la raison pour laquelle l'herméneute est à son tour interprète en fonction de son habileté de réfléchir la révélation, en tant que « miroir sans tache de la divinité ». Le théologien peut donc être compris à la fois en tant que médium de la révélation, locuteur, porteur et endroit de la divinité (**topos theou**), par conséquent celui dont la transparence ou l'opacité dit ce que jamais il ne pourra s'approprier entièrement. En ce sens, le corpus aréopagitique n'apparaît pas seulement en tant que représentatif pour ce modèle herméneutique, mais également comme zone discursive, un élément qui est déjà contenu dans l'objet exposé et qui englobe le lecteur par le geste même de la lecture et de l'interprétation à laquelle il invite. La mise en évidence du statut de ce type d'herméneutique est révélatrice, tant pour l'exégèse du corpus aréopagitique, que pour l'approfondissement de la relation entre théologie et phénoménologie. Le rapprochement de ces deux domaines n'est pas simplement possible du point de vue de la « tournure théologique de la phénoménologie » (Dominique Janicaud), mais surtout au travers de celui d'une aporétique phénoménologique de la donation (Jean-Luc Marion) qui, dans la mesure où elle s'inspire du Corpus aréopagitique, est co-extensive à la pensée antinomique propre à la théologie patristique.

## ANNETTE LARREA

### ***Challenging Heidegger on Conscience***

Religious metaphors figure frequently in Heidegger's **Being and Time**. They are, however, fundamentally reinterpreted in the context of his own philosophical project of formal ontology. The call of conscience is one of the best examples of this. Heidegger acknowledges that many studies of the phenomenon of conscience have been undertaken within Theology, but claims that these are unsatisfactory in that they remain at a purely ontic level (often relying on dogmatic assumptions) and fail to produce any ontological elucidation of the being of Dasein. In the first part of this presentation then I will outline the key contours of Heidegger's phenomenology of conscience as presented in BT II.2. In particular my examination will focus on Heidegger's contention that in conscience Dasein essentially calls itself. It is on this point that a number of diverse commentators take issue with Heidegger, among them: Jean-Louis Chrétien, Paul Ricoeur, Stephen Mulhall, and Merold Westphal. Their objection is neatly summed up in Chrétien's question: "Is it really more 'dogmatic' to inquire about the call's origin than to assume from the start that I send it to myself?" (**The Call and the Response**, p. 48) Each of these commentators in different ways thus advances the claim that Heidegger's account breaches the limits of a purely phenomenological elucidation and itself gives into the temptation of dogmatism by categorically excluding any questions concerning the identity of the caller. Is theological provocation to phenomenology then limited to merely policing the boundary lines in order to ensure that philosophy doesn't overstep its rightful domain; to ensuring that phenomenology stays free of dogmatic presuppositions (whether of the religious or Kantian variety)? This would seem to cast the relation between phenomenology and theology unsatisfactorily in terms of a rather limited and negative mode of interaction. In contrast to this, the final section of this paper will explore the way in which some of the commentators mentioned above present their theological provocation to Heidegger's phenomenology of conscience most fundamentally not as a matter of pulling him up for overstepping a mark (although that critique is there) but rather as in fact being an opening up of the analysis that further enriches the phenomenological elucidation. This approach is perhaps clearest in Chrétien, for whom the questions Heidegger's brilliant phenomenological analyses of call and response raise "are as complex as they are stubborn". And while Heidegger may have wanted to block certain stubborn questions as "unphenomenological", Chrétien shows how attention to these questions (particularly to the question of "who calls?") in fact reaches to the very heart of Heidegger's own central question: "who is Dasein?" As Chrétien puts it: "To wonder whether it is myself or another who calls me, to wonder whether the implied alterity is external or internal, is basically to wonder who I am by asking how it is possible for me to be thus reached" (48).

This, however, is not necessarily to imply that phenomenology could answer such a question, as Ricoeur contends, "With this aporia of the Other [the source of the injunction], philosophical discourse comes to an end." (*Oneself as Another*, p. 355)

## **HANNA MARTYSEVICH**

### ***The problem of interaction of West European Christian theology of the 20th – 21st centuries and Heidegger's philosophy***

Modernization of the theology of the West European Christianity in the end of the 20th – beginning of the 21st centuries closely correlates with the ideas of postmodernism: "the new theology" appears in the theology of Protestantism which correlates with poststructuralism of M.Foucault, R.Barth, deconstruction of J.Derrida, critical theory of J.Habermas; assimilation of the "sunset of the metanarrations" idea is observed in the theology of Catholicism. Nevertheless, interaction is observed also with M.Heidegger's phenomenology.

Modern humanity, according to the representative of the "new theology" R.Scharlemann, is characterized by the forgetting the question of the meaning of the Being that M.Heidegger was writing about and by the forgetting the symbol of "Otherness" of God. One more representative of the "new theology" M.Mayers connects the process of deconstruction in theology with the names of F.Hegel, F. Nitsche, J.Derrida, and also M.Heidegger. The necessity to discover anew the life of Jesus Christ historically, as postulated by the representative of the Catholic theology of the end of the 20th – beginning of the 21st centuries H.Küng, is in many ways similar to the M.Heidegger's deconstruction of tradition.

## **MIHAIL NEAMTU**

### ***Monastic Liturgy and Desert Eschatology***

By 'desert eschatology' I understand the horizon of participation into the Christian proclamation of hope, faith, and love, respectively, embraced by the early Christian ascetics. They see in the incarnation of the Word the recreation of history, and the beginning of its eschatological consummation. The unfolding of desert eschatology along the narrative and sacramental lines of monastic liturgy will be studied under the conceptual umbrella of liturgical temporality. I will thus indicate the points of inflection between the monastic liturgy of the individual ascetic, and the cosmic liturgy of the ecclesial body. Monastic liturgy operates a transcendental synthesis of different modes of Christian life, to which distinct temporal codes of performance and comprehension converge. I call these marks of 'desert eschatology' 'chronotropes of deification.' Since monastic liturgy comprises both a narrative performance and a sacramental praxis, each chronotrope defines the unity between the holy script and the enacting body.

## **ANDREA RABALLO**

### ***The unbearable salience of meanings: a clinical-phenomenological stance on religious-philosophical metaphors in impending psychosis.***

Despite its eclipse from the mainstream research, phenomenological psychopathology is still providing an indispensable methodology to illuminate the subtle qualitative changes that prelude to the psychotic crisis (Jaspers 1963, Parnas et al 1998). Indeed, transitions over the psychosis continuum are usually interpreted as driven by the emotional, cognitive and behavioural responses to the initial psychotic or psychosis-like experiences. However, such new biographic-experiential reorganization cannot be plainly equated to a mere compensatory psychological mechanism (i.e. leading to delusional explanation as an explanatory effort), overlooking the very primordial moment of "revelation"/"atmospherization" which antedates delusional externalization (Tellenbach 1968). Such states are often contextual with a profound disorganization of the tacit dimensions and structures of the Life-world (i.e. corporeality, temporality, spatiality) (Binswanger 1956), from which delusions may arise rather as metaphorical reports of altered structure of experiencing than as epistemic statements about external world. In this perspective, the lived-notions of "event/change", "manifestation/revelation", "passivity / receptiveness" play a crucial reframing role to overcome the otherwise almost ineffable incoherence of emergent anomalous subjective experiences (Conrad 1958, Parnas & Zahavi 2002). The paper illustrates the radical indwelling between living experiential metaphors and pre-delusional self-narratives by applying phenomenological psychopathological analysis to first-personal accounts of impending crisis that may be observable in the prodromal and acute phases of schizophrenia. Special emphasis is given to the relationship between phenomenological and theological-derived semantic schemas as meaning-organizers of the profoundly altered domains of subjectivity involved (i.e. intentionality, self-awareness and intersubjectivity).

## **GELU SABAU**

### ***Le médiateur chez les Pères de l'Église et chez M. Henry***

Mon projet est de soutenir que de point de vue philosophique, la doctrine chrétienne du Médiateur (achevée par les définitions de deux natures dans la personne du Christ au concile de Chalcédoine, en 451) représente la réponse (en passant par la conception hellénistique du démon) pour un des plus importants problèmes philosophiques : le problème de la participation posé par Platon en **Parménide**. L'essence de la vérité révélée, présente dans la doctrine du Médiateur, consiste dans la synthèse des concepts opposés séparés par les gnostiques dans leur théologie. On suivra la formation historique de la doctrine du Médiateur dans ses points essentiels (Irénée, Tertullien, Maxime le Confesseur, Jean Damascène). On va examiner la position de M. Henry vis-à-vis de l'idée chrétienne du Médiateur et la mesure dans laquelle le phénoménologue français réussit dépasser la position chrétienne dans sa philosophie.

## **MIKKO SAMMALKIVI**

### ***Imagination and Religion in Max Scheler***

The purpose of my project is to examine Scheler's conception of imagination. The subject is definitely worth a closer look because - according to Scheler's second wife Maerit Furtwängler - Scheler never explained what he meant by "images". Even if this was true, it must be noted that Scheler analysed the concept of imagination fairly clearly to other acts such as perception and memory. Additionally, Scheler used a lot of imaginative terms in his phenomenology: "facts", "sensations", "symbols" and "representations". Because these and many other related terms are often found in his books, the way he uses these terms is worth analysing. The purpose of my project is to (1) analyse Scheler's idea of imagination, and then (2) see how this idea affects his view of religion. Like many other phenomenologists of his time, Scheler argued that the act of imagination is something inauthentic whereas intuition is more authentic. Quite contrary to Husserl's analysis of free fantasy as the vital element of phenomenology and eidetic sciences, Scheler did not give a very positive task to fantasy. He criticised the Aristotelian-Thomist doctrine of conversion to the phantasms (*conversio ad phantasma*) according to which the intellect has to turn to the particulars in every act of knowing. Scheler stated that the human spirit does not turn towards particulars but towards the universal and objective essences. The purpose of phenomenology, according to Scheler, is to bring the reader (or listener) to see the "thing itself" which can only be "seen" immediately through the phenomenological experience.

## **LEO STAN**

### ***Is Kierkegaard an Onto-theologian?***

In my presentation I shall tackle an almost unexplored topic in the field of phenomenology, namely the place occupied by Kierkegaard's appropriation of (Christian) religion within what Martin Heidegger called Western onto-theology. It is a well-known fact that a significant portion of phenomenological thinking claims to be an unambiguously critical response to traditional metaphysics in its onto-theological embodiments. The methodology I shall adopt is of a philosophico-historical nature. More specifically, from a historical standpoint I deal with Kierkegaard's reception by prominent phenomenologists, such as M. Heidegger, E. Levinas, and J. Derrida with additional, though cursory, references to Rudolf Otto, Michel Henry, and Mircea Eliade. My aim is to deliberate whether this interaction has been faithful to the spirit and letter of the Kierkegaardian corpus. Philosophically speaking, I tentatively propose the thesis that Kierkegaard's philosophy, and particularly its Christian assumptions, is more nuanced than its phenomenological reception so far. More importantly, Kierkegaard can actually bring further and substantive contributions to phenomenology's overall criticisms against traditional metaphysical thought. With this in mind I argue that Kierkegaard's insistence on existence, facticity, consciousness, relationality, and time are indispensable to the 20th century phenomenological thinking, especially with respect to the latter's theological openings. To exemplify such interpretive stance I shall briefly sketch the outlines of a comparison between Kierkegaard's Christian philosophy and that part of Jean-Luc Marion's phenomenology which deals with explicitly theological topics. Special consideration can be given in this sense to the concepts of gift and its underlying categories of distance, call, ipseity, and charity.