

RELIGION, ATHEISM AND THE COMMUNITY OF REASON IN MODERNITY

**University of Oxford's Second Annual Conference
in Continental Philosophy of Religion**



22nd September 2008

Regent's Park College, Oxford

Keynote Speakers: Raimond Gaita and Mark Wynn

For more information: godphil@googlemail.com

We are pleased to announce a one-day conference in continental philosophy of religion, *Religion, Atheism and the Community of Reason in Modernity*. The conference will take place at Regent's Park College, Oxford University on Monday 22nd September 2008.

Please see below for a full programme for the day and abstracts for the papers.

To register for the conference, please email your name, institution and whether you are a postgraduate student to the following address:
godphil@googlemail.com

The day will begin at 9.30am on the 22nd September and will end at 6pm. The event will be **free to postgraduates** and £10 to faculty (payable on the day).

Maps locating the college can be found by following these links:
http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?utm_campaign=en&utm_source=en-ha-emea-uk-goog-gm&utm_medium=ha&utm_term=map
<http://www.ox.ac.uk/aboutoxford/maps/colls.shtml>

For accommodation, the following links might be helpful:
www.oxfordrooms.co.uk
<http://www.websites.thedms.co.uk/os-ox/thedms.asp?dms=0>

Feel free, however, to contact us at the above email address for further help and information.

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

(Subject to change)

09:30 – 10:00 REGISTRATION AT REGENT’S PARK COLLEGE

10:00 – 11:45 PLENARY SESSION

Professor Raimond Gaita (KCL) – *Morality, Metaphysics and Religion*.

Dr Mark Wynn (Exeter) – *The Moral Philosophy of Raimond Gaita, and some Questions of Method in the Philosophy of Religion*.

11:45 – 12:00 COFFEE

12:00 – 13:00 PARALLEL SESSION 1

Room 1:

Tom Stern (Cambridge) – *Nietzsche and the Creation Museum*.

Wolfhart Totschnig (Northwestern) – *The Expropriation of God: Arendt and Badiou on the Human Being as Creator*.

Room 2:

Clare Greer (Manchester) – *The Problem of the Middle in Gillian Rose’s Reading of Hegel*.

Arthur Kok (Tilburg) – *Kant’s Enlightened Religion: Imagination beyond Reason*.

Room 3:

Joseph Carlisle (Oxford) – *The Blasphemous God: The Re-Appropriation of Job’s Theodicy in G.K. Chesterton’s Reading of Job*.

James Carter (Oxford) – *Compassionate Respect for Human Dignity: Towards a Eudaimonistic Model of Ethics*.

13:00 – 14:30 LUNCH

14:30 – 15:30 PARALLEL SESSION 2

Room 1:

Ian Corbin (Yale) – *‘Infinite Indifference in Equilibrium’: Kierkegaard on the Complementary Roles of Thought and Emotion*.

Matthew Kirkpatrick (Oxford) – *Kierkegaard the Humanist?*

Room 2:

Anthony Paul Smith (Nottingham) – *Heresy, Mysticism, and the Struggle for Utopia: On the Importance of Religion for François Laruelle’s Non-Philosophy*.

Alexandra Popescu (Sussex) – *Community of Singularities – The possibility of ‘being-with’ in the work of Jacques Derrida.*

Room 3:

Michael Burdett (Oxford) – *The Eschatological Experience: Jean-Yves Lacoste’s Liturgical Rupturing of the Heideggerian World.*

Raj Sampath (UC Santa Cruz) – *Ricoeur on Eschatology and History.*

15:35 – 16:35 PARALLEL SESSION 3

Room 1:

Caleb Heldt (Warwick) – *Sartre’s Rejection of Schelling’s Onto-theological Entscheidung.*

Simon Scott (Warwick) – *Gilles Deleuze’s Nietzsche and Philosophy: An Atheistic Ontology.*

Room 2:

Hjalmar Falk (Gothenburg) – *Secular auctoritas? Carl Schmitt and the problem of legitimacy in an age of immanence.*

Julia Perry (Oxford) – *Between the Sacred and Profane: Towards Postsecular Social Theory and Practice.*

Room 3:

Rajiv Kaushik (Brock) – *Affectivity and Religious Experience: Husserl’s God in the Unpublished Manuscripts.*

Sylvain Camilleri (Université Paul Valéry, Montpellier) – *The ‘German Fathers’ of the Theological Turn in Phenomenology: Scheler, Reinach, Heidegger.*

16:35 – 17:00 COFFEE

17:00 – 18:00 PARALLEL SESSION 4

Room 1:

Ashley Vaught (Fordham) – *The Pantheismstreit, Pantheism and Schelling’s Atheistic Freiheitsschrift.*

Alexander Douglas (Birkbeck) – *Spinoza, Mechanism and the Early Enlightenment.*

Room 2:

Anca Gheaus (UCD) – *Love for particular others and moral inclusion.*

Alice Gee (KCL) – *Action failure models, benign psychosis, and the role of emotion in practical reasoning.*

Room 3:

James C. Brown (Paris X – Nanterre) – *From indignation to epiphany of meaning: the theorization of ethics in the works of Jean-François Mattéi.*

Mary-Ann Crumplin (Heythrop College) – *Levinas on Ontotheology: the importance of patricide and atheism.*

ABSTRACTS

(Please note that paper copies of these abstracts will not be supplied on the day)

Keynotes

Raimond Gaita (KCL) – Morality, Metaphysics and Religion

In *A Common Humanity: Thinking about Love and Truth and Justice* (Routledge 2000) I wrote of a nun I encountered when I worked in a psychiatric hospital in the 1960's. Many of the patients in the ward in which I worked had been there for twenty or more years. They were incurable with radically diminished capacities for thought and feeling. The nurses and even the psychiatrists treated them badly, often brutally. Some four or five psychiatrists, however, worked devotedly to ensure that the patients were treated humanely. They were compassionate men who worked very hard and suffered the mockery of their fellows.

One day a nun came to the ward. Her behaviour towards the patients stuck me as wondrous, but not because it revealed in her virtues of the kind exhibited by the psychiatrists, or other, even more admirable, virtues. It was wondrous because her behaviour towards the patients showed not a trace of condescension. Her behaviour revealed to me ("proved", I even say, injudiciously, at one point) that even people who had lost everything that gives sense to the lives of most people, should be regarded, and rightly regarded, as fully our equals. At the same time she revealed that while the psychiatrists (and I for that matter) had treated the patients humanely, we did so with benign condescension. But when I try to understand what I mean by saying that even such people are our equals I realise that I can say only that she behaved towards them without a trace of condescension and that I cannot doubt the wondrousness of her doing so. In *Good and Evil: An Absolute Conception* (Second edition, Routledge 2004) I say similar things about Mother Teresa's behaviour towards the afflicted of Calcutta.

I have tried many times to express more precisely the importance of this example to moral philosophy. That required me to try trying to locate it and my philosophical commentary on it in a conceptual space that would render philosophically perspicuous why I resisted the claim that one could only be claimed, clear-sightedly, as a witness its wondrousness if one provides metaphysical or religious underpinning for that witness. I have resisted the idea that to be claimed in testimony to the wondrousness of such deeds and of what they 'reveal' requires something like an intuitionist epistemology and realist metaphysic. Not, at any rate, as these are generally understood in moral philosophy. Most recently (in the Preface to the second edition of *Good and Evil*), I have put it this way: "My commitment to what the nun in the hospital revealed is not conditional upon my believing something like she believed. My thought is not that it would be rational to respond without condescension to those patients if it is also true that they were God's children. Nor do I wish to say that the wondrousness of her behaviour gives strong prima facie grounds for believing in God or for attributing metaphysical properties to the patients. My affirmation is as firm and unreserved as it is metaphysically groundless." Elsewhere I have also said that rather than saying that I cannot doubt the rightness of her behaviour to those patients, I should simply say that I cannot doubt, the wondrous goodness of it. Wittgenstein was right to say that in philosophy, one of the hardest things is to know when to stop.

In his book, *Emotional Experience and Religious Understanding*, Mark Wynn has written a refreshing, insightful and critically sympathetic commentary on my discussion of the nun, but he would, I think be dismayed at the way I have just put the matter. His discussion has shown me where I need to be more careful and I am particularly grateful for what he says about "affectively toned perceptions" of reality. He provides, I think, a richer account of what metaphysical thought can be than I assume in my denial that a philosophically adequate account of what it is to be lucidly claimed as a witness to what the nun revealed requires metaphysical and/or religious support. Mark's discussion of the implications of that for my denial is very persuasive. I will try to explain why I am not persuaded.

Mark Wynn (Exeter) – The Moral Philosophy of Raimond Gaita, and some Questions of Method in the Philosophy of Religion

Raimond Gaita's moral philosophy is distinguished by, among other things, its attention to the role of embodied, enacted witness in disclosing certain moral values, and its understanding of the emotions as forms of thought. In this paper, I would like to consider how Gaita's insights on these matters might be applied to certain questions in the philosophy of religion, paying particular attention to the nature of religious experience and 'the problem of evil'. I shall suggest that Gaita's discussion of how we come to recognise moral values or 'meanings' can be extended to the question of how we might recognise religious meanings. On this view, religious experience may take the form of an appreciation of the meaning borne by a material context (rather than, for example, some supra-sensory encounter with a supernatural agent), and our sense of the goodness or otherwise of the world may be answerable to the authoritative example of particular lives. I shall also try and say something in response to Gaita's comments on my appropriation of his work in my book *Emotional Experience and Religious Understanding*.

Parallel Sessions

Alexander Douglas (Birkbeck) – Spinoza, Mechanism and the Early Enlightenment

In the seventeenth century Dutch Republic, Descartes' philosophy made a great impact on some university philosophers. One characteristic feature of the new Cartesian philosophy was its mechanistic physics: its determination to reduce all physical phenomena to determinate functions of matter and motion.

Mechanism, by and large, would be the theoretical basis of physics for centuries to come. But most Cartesians restricted the scope of mechanistic explanation to non-human nature. Human action was beyond its grasp. This built-in limitation upon science left room for religious explanations. One reading of Spinoza holds that he found even human bodies and their actions to be reducible to these mechanistic terms. Spinoza, on this reading, radicalised Cartesianism, drawing the most far-reaching conclusions from its scientific advances, and penetrating the asylum the Cartesians had left for religion..

I will argue that this reading is wrong. Theo Verbeek has already done much work towards elucidating Spinoza's uncomfortable relationship with early modern science. Here I aim to show only that Spinoza's physics cannot be mechanistic. His rejection of religious dogma, on ostensibly rational grounds, does not automatically make him an advocate for the mainstream scientific movement of his day. Science and religion were not so much at odds in the early Enlightenment that every famous thinker must fall on one side or the other.

Alexandra Popescu (Sussex) – Community of Singularities: The Possibility of 'Being-With' in the Work of Derrida

This paper explores an attempt at re-conceptualising ethics and politics away from the well-rehearsed structure of the *polis* or the *cosmopolis*, and the dichotomy between the two. Instead, a recent, though much overlooked, notion within Jacques Derrida's work will be fore-grounded: that of 'community of singularities'. This will be presented as an alternative to thinking 'being-in-common'.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first and second parts trace the origin of the concept of *singularity* in Derrida, as informed by and developed from the Heideggerian and Levinasian theories of the subject, respectively. 'Singularity' is a notion that recoils from the Western philosophical tradition in which the subject is exterior to the other, as 'presence-to-self' and consciousness. The third part of the paper inscribes singularity within a relational logic and questions the possibility of a bond between singularities that would resemble a community. The latter term is one that, paradoxically, Derrida both proposes and rejects, a notion adored by liberal political theory, Communitarianism, as well as theories

of consensus, and abhorred by those who would like to see Derrida's thought as committed to the impossibility of a being-with, and, therefore, inconsequential in the political sphere.

The paper will argue that, against the above two views, Derrida's thought on the 'community of singularities' provides an alternative way of thinking about 'community' and 'cosmopolitanism' that does not preclude an ethical openness to the other and amounts to a system based on principles of exclusion. It is also an alternative way of thinking 'being-in-common' that holds on to a 'difference principle', the latter of which would not permit the absolute assimilation of the other into the homogenizing structure of the respective community. Thus, this paper investigates the question of the subject conceived as *singularity*, as an effort to overcome the abstract conception of identity and attempt to think the self's exposure to the 'alterity of the other'. I will explore the following questions: Who is the subject now and what are the possibilities for an articulation of 'being-with-others' that does not foreclose an ethical relationality? What happens to the subject when its very name is under erasure? And, given the above, what is at stake, and what 'still speaks', in a term like community?

Alice Gee (KCL) – Action Failure Models, Benign Psychosis and the Role of Emotion in Practical Reasoning

In 'Psychosis Good and Bad' (2003), Jackson and Fulford distinguish between psychotic experience which they term *benign spiritual experience* and actual psychotic symptoms (delusions and hallucinations). Building on their previous analysis in 'Spiritual Experiences and Psychopathology' (1997), they claim that the difference between pathological and non-pathological forms of experience depends upon some kind of *failure of action*. This action-failure model is in contrast to traditional psychiatric classificatory systems whereby experiences are analysed in terms of failure of function (or 'dysfunction'; Wakefield, 2000; Megone, 1998). The failure of action and failure of function models map on to the Aristotelian categories of *practical reasoning* and *theoretical reasoning* respectively, according to which the ultimate function of the human being is *reason*. Jackson and Fulford's action failure model goes beyond the characterisation of psychopathology as loss of reason; it is only when the experience is *radically enhancing* or *radically destructive* to action depending on its embeddedness within the belief structure of the individual that it should be considered pathological, the processes of which they explain using a Cognitive Problem-Solving Model.

This paper aims to give a central role to emotion in the Cognitive Problem-Solving Model by looking at modern views of emotion in Cognitive Neuroscience: Damasio's Somatic Marker Hypothesis, simulation theories of mind-reading, and forward models of delusion and hallucination formation (Blakemore and Frith, 2003). Emotions act as bodily, 'somatic markers' allowing us to detect salient changes in the environment which demand action. It is proposed that emotions allow us to simulate potential states-of-affairs in the world, in order to give predictive power to our actions. As environmentally situated, epistemically incomplete beings, we depend on others to impart knowledge to us about the world; as such our knowledge is inter-subjective (the 'community of reason'). Being able to use our bodily and affective states to simulate the minds of others is of enormous evolutionary advantage. Finally, the ability of our motor system to create predictive, forward models of our actions allows us to distinguish between self-caused and externally caused events. It is proposed that it is not just the failure of function of this system which makes the experience pathological (e.g. in delusions of control) but failure of action, of which emotions play a central part.

In terms of religious and spiritual experience, a parallel can be drawn between rationalist (e.g. Descartes) and irrationalist (e.g. Kierkegaard) views of the divine and the historical privileging of reason over emotion in psychiatric classification respectively. It is proposed that religious emotions allow us to simulate a state of ultimate inter-subjectivity (both in Eastern and Western traditions), which, if successful, would allow for greater predictive power of our actions. It is concluded from the action-failure account that loss of function or reason is insufficient as an explanatory model of psychopathology. Rather, emotions can have a beneficial, positive role on practical reasoning. Furthermore, religious emotions, if they have a radically enhancing effect on the individual, should be considered in a positive light by psychiatric practitioners, in view of the individual's values and beliefs.

Anca Gheaus (UCD) – Love for Particular Others and Moral Inclusion

I argue that love for particular others can serve as a basis for including strangers in the sphere of ethically relevant individuals. While partiality for some people can of course hinder proper treatment of others, it can also be constitutive to our ability to construct a universalistic morality. This paper has two sources of inspiration: one is the debates about partiality in ethics, especially as they figure in a feminist ethics of care, the other is the work of Raimond Gaita. The central claim is that love for some people can lead to the moral inclusion of all others whom we recognise as similar to those we love. But then might it be equally true that hate for particular others could lead, in certain circumstances, to misanthropy? While acknowledging this danger as real, I draw upon object relations psychology, especially Melanie Klein's work, to show why we can hope that love will prevail in most situations. This piece of moral psychology can go towards endorsing an ethics based on "needs" as the fundamental source of normative claims. Central to this approach are the special emotional needs for individualised love and care.

Anthony Paul Smith (Nottingham) - Heresy, Mysticism and the Struggle for Utopia: On the Importance of Religion for Laruelle's Non-Philosophy

François Laruelle's work has the singular focus of creating a new practice of thought that he calls non-philosophy. Non-philosophy is not to be understood as an oppositional discipline to philosophy. Rather, it uses the preposition "non" in a similar way to non-Euclidian geometry. In non-Euclidian geometry Giovanni Saccheri attempted to prove Euclidian geometry and instead found a consistent geometry that operated on different principles that were not, for that, logically inconsistent with Euclidian geometry. In a similar way Laruelle's non-philosophy attempts to use the material of philosophy while suspending the authority, practices, and accepted methods of philosophy (Laruelle terms the unity of these the "principle of sufficient philosophy") to then construct new theoretical domains for thought and practice. Laruelle's work is largely unknown in the English speaking world as none of his major works are in translation and few secondary pieces have been published on his work. This owes, perhaps, to the very abstract and continually evolving nature of his work that is also the source of what makes non-philosophy an exciting, unexplored resource for thinking generally.

Recently Laruelle has turned to the material of religion and religious thought in both its philosophical and theological modes. From this material he has constructed a non-philosophy of heresy and mysticism. One of the predominate themes which divides contemporary continental philosophy is that conflict between ontologies of immanence and those of transcendence. Laruelle characterizes his heretical and mystical non-philosophy as a thinking from radical immanence. This thinking from, and not of, the radical immanence of religion is interesting for continental philosophy of religion in that it offers an immanent thinking of religion that does not reject or fetishize religion as religion. Rather, it is radically indifferent to the claims of religion in the name of the material of religion of which it creates new theories and practices out of.

The paper thus takes on two tasks: the explication of the main material of religion which Laruelle excavates using the tools of non-philosophy and presenting in what ways non-philosophy opens up novel theoretical domains for thinking both about existent religion as well as the future which may be constructed from the material of those religions. The first naturally leads into the second for as Laruelle elaborates on the non-philosophical thinking of heresy and mysticism, the two main "materials" he draws out of religion, he demonstrates performatively how a non-philosophy of religion may assist the human struggle for salvation, or what is also called Utopia.

Because Laruelle's work is relatively lesser known and his work on religion is not available in translation I will also provide handouts that will contain my own original draft translations of some of the most crucial sections from his two books on religion (*Le Christ Futur*, *Une Leçon d'hérésie* and *Mystique non-philosophique à l'usage des contemporains*) as well as from his *Dictionnaire de la non-philosophie*. The hope for the presentation and the providing of these resources is that they will encourage more engagement with the neglected but important and exciting work of Laruelle.

Arthur Kok (Tilburg) – Kant's Enlightened Religion: Imagination beyond Reason

In my view, Kant was the first truly enlightened philosopher, because he proposed a philosophy of pure reason: one that regarded the activity of reason to be an independent discipline. No longer did philosophy have to imitate or repeat the theological insights given by revelation with the means of reason and understanding, neither did she have to observe the great workings of nature with sceptical disdain towards reason's own capacities. In her own right, reason suffices for knowledge, purely reasonable knowledge. Kant's plea for reason finds its culmination in the *Critique of Practical Reason*. Here, for the first and only time, Kant claims that all reasonable beings have an immediate and indubitable source of knowledge, which stems from reason alone: the moral law or fact of reason.

It is a common misunderstanding that the moral law provides us with knowledge about good and evil: it does not. It merely says that it is a fact that every reasonable being is possibly capable of producing its own causality, rather than that it is fully subjected to natural causality; therefore, the moral law provides a principle of *autonomy*. Kant's intriguing claim thus is that we are free beings insofar we act in accordance with the moral law. Then of course the question is, how can we act accordingly? How the fact of reason, moral knowledge, relates to knowledge about the good is a difficult and delicate problem within Kant's entire philosophy. In the second part of the *CPR* Kant denies pure reason to have knowledge about the good other than through *analogy*. Whereas analogy is a form of mediation, pure reason lacks the capacity to know the good directly. Does this mean that reason, to be autonomous, needs some guidance, which is not reasonable in itself? Is this why Kant introduces a philosophy of religion *within* the framework of his critical philosophy, which ought to be a sober discipline? The question is what is actually limited here: reason or religion.

I think the keyword is imagination (*Einbildungskraft*). In his reflection on the origin of evil in *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, Kant seems to point out that knowledge about good and evil is not philosophical but religious in nature. There is an interesting connection between imagination and the concept of origin (*Ursprung*) implicit in the text. How does this relate to the idea of a religion of pure reason, to the idea of analogy?

The aim of my paper is to show how I believe that Kant develops a philosophy of religion mediated not by theology but by Enlightenment. In this, philosophy religion neither becomes a straightforward necessary by-product of moral obligation, nor allows a proliferation of religious imagery. It becomes a package of stories and images that tells us something about how we are, and what it means to be human. And it tells philosophers that reason is not enough: we need to imagine.

Ashley Vaught (Fordham) – The *Pantheismusstreit*, Pantheism, and Schelling's Atheistic *Freiheitsschrift*

In my paper I shall argue that Schelling's *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom* (1809) constitutes his response to F.H. Jacobi's critique of philosophy in the *Pantheismusstreit*. Although the *Pantheismusstreit* largely took place during the mid-1780s, it had an enduring influence over philosophy throughout the end of 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. Put crudely, Jacobi argued that philosophy's commitment to demonstrative reason undermined its capacity to grasp freedom, and consequently morality. In his most famous articulation, Jacobi claimed that all philosophy is ultimately, in its systematic pretensions, pantheism and that pantheism is atheism. In short, pantheism's systematicity contradicts freedom and morality.

Although Jacobi's argument was perhaps over-simplified, this did not mute its persuasive force within the intellectual community. For example, the well-known gap between Kant's theoretical and practical philosophy provided an immediate demonstration of Jacobi's point. Thus, one might well argue that the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant's avowed attempt to overcome this gap, was in turn a potential solution to the critique that Jacobi raised.

Schelling's early work makes references to Jacobi at various points, but only the *Freiheitsschrift* develops a substantial engagement with the latter's intellectual legacy. In the introductory remarks, Schelling interrogates the concept of pantheism. Brashly contradicting conventional intellectual wisdom, he argues that pantheism not only *does not* neutralize freedom, but that in fact *only* pantheism can rescue the concept of freedom. Schelling thinks freedom as the capacity for good and for evil,

possibilities for human character that are rooted in (but not reducible to) the two-fold metaphysical structure of this pantheism. That is, Schellingian pantheism conceives a distinction between the co-constitutive principles or powers of God's existence and of the ground for God's existence. The principles provide evil with a positive, real basis. However, as a consequence of the centrality accorded to human freedom, God becomes subject to the vicissitudes of human history. That is, if human freedom forms the most complex and complete development of God's revelation in nature, God suffers human history.

In conclusion, Schelling's response to the Jacobian polemic presents a dramatic dialectical movement in the philosophico-historical transformation of the concept of pantheism vis-à-vis morality: pantheism initially opposes freedom, negating its possibility and that of morality; pantheism is then reconceived to centralize freedom, such that thinking either concept is impossible without the other; but this revision of pantheism and freedom, although giving morality a metaphysical basis for both good *and* evil, reduces God to a hapless observer. Ironically, in showing that freedom and pantheism do not contradict one another, contra Jacobi, Schelling leads metaphysics towards a certain form of *atheism*.

Caleb Heldt (Warwick) – Sartre's Rejection of Schelling's Onto-theological *Entscheidung*

While it is unclear as to exactly how familiar with Schelling's writings Sartre was, I will argue that Sartre's moral philosophy can perhaps best be understood as an atheistic existentializing of Schelling's onto-theological *Entscheidung*, the moment of decision which for Schelling (at least during the period of the Freedom essay) is pre-ontological and elucidates the individual's ontologically intelligible character. By essentially eradicating the pre-ontological dimension of *Entscheidung*, Sartre ontologizes the moment of decision which defines the individual's existential project(s) and explains it in terms of his existential psychoanalytic theory, itself embedded in his well-known ontological commitment to freedom and moral commitment to responsibility. I will endeavour to formulate a sketch of Sartre's theory of the development and formation of the fundamental value which he eludes to in *Being and Nothingness* and his various psychoanalytical case studies but which he himself never brought fully to fruition. It seems to me that by ontologizing the previously pre-ontological *Entscheidung* Sartre does away with the problem of 'contingent necessity' over which Schelling was so preoccupied and in doing so leaves room for the possibility of metamorphosis and ultimately the existential conversion of which he writes at length in the *Notebooks for an Ethics*. The resultant explication of moral development renders superfluous a conception of God of the onto-theological sort posited by Schelling and, arguably, of any conception of God whatsoever. This formulation of Sartre's relation to Schelling runs counter to that put forward by Sebastian Gardner in his 2006 essay entitled, 'Sartre, Schelling and onto-theology' in which Professor Gardner claims that Sartre's ontological project is incomplete and unsatisfactory unless otherwise supplemented by an onto-theology such as that maintained by Schelling. As maintaining such a position would obviously contradict Sartre's steadfast commitment to atheism, I will endeavour to demonstrate that Sartre's atheistic existentialist position need not undermine itself by appealing to onto-theological tenets but is itself ontologically stalwart enough to support Sartre's rejection of Schellingian onto-theological morality in favour of a radically existentially grounded conception of human freedom and responsibility.

Clare Greer (Manchester) – The Problem of the Middle in Gillian Rose's Reading of Hegel

Hegel's theological critics have often concluded that in his system the divine and the human *Geist* are univocal, which collapses the theological into the secular and so eradicates the possibility of any relationship between the divine and the human (see William Desmond, John Milbank). This is in contrast, for instance, to Kierkegaardian *equivocity* in which there is an infinite qualitative difference between divine and human, a theory that is equally inadequate since it posits a God who interrupts human life only intermittently, thus amounting to a profound agnosticism. If political theology is to be justified *qua* political theology (as opposed to as either secular immanentism or theological dogmatism) then we must examine the possibilities for genuine analogical implication of divine in human life. But is it possible to find in Hegel a path that avoids the extremes of univocity or equivocity?

The critique of Hegel, broadly expressed, would suggest the contrary; that by creating a system based on the whole, or absolute, Hegel has made God a part of this larger whole, which therefore cannot attain what William Desmond in *Hegel's God* calls 'transcendence itself' (T3); Desmond argues that Hegel's God is limited to something in between 'the transcendence of external beings as other in nature' or simply the very existence at all of 'others' (T1), and 'the transcendence of *self-being* such as we meet especially in the self-surpassing power of the human being' (T2).

This paper focuses on providing an exegesis of the critical significance of Gillian Rose *The Broken Middle* (1992) which suggested an alternative to the common portrayal of Hegel as the thinker of the rigidified absolute. Rose argues that the middle does exist in Hegel, but that it is broken in form. She uses stylistic devices to 'perform' this open dialectic. I will consider first, how her style is designed to reflect Hegel's form of writing in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and then consider how she has raised new possibilities for analogy by setting up a dialectic between Hegel and Kierkegaard in *The Broken Middle*. Rose objects to philosophy's idealisations and reminds us of their inevitable falling back into the middle. For her, this inevitability is the proper 'phenomenological' basis for political theory.

I wish to argue that although Rose does not develop this fully as a theology – and I argue that her conclusions are limited by the fact that the middle is always deferred such that she is unable to move from T2 (self-surpassing) to T3 (transcendence itself) – her approach is successful insofar as it is a philosophical refusal to countenance any rigidifying of thought which would replace the 'pathos of the concept' with a 'mended' or 'holy' middle.

Hjalmar Falk (Gotheburg) – Secular *auctoritas*? Carl Schmitt and the Problem of Legitimacy in an Age of Immanence

The aim of my presentation is to investigate the metaphysical grounds and implications of the political theory of Carl Schmitt, with a specific interest in its theological aspects. I intend to do this through a reading of both the works published under the title of *Politische Theologie*, the first one in 1922 and the second one in 1970. The first volume is regarded as a classic in the field of political theology, while the second one is often neglected and viewed as a mere restatement of earlier positions. I argue for a reevaluation of *Politische Theologie II*, best viewed as an intellectual last will and testament. At the centre of Schmitt's doctrine is, of course, the concept of sovereignty as defined in its relation to the state of exception. But his analysis is also dependent on the claim that all meaningful concepts of the modern theory of state are secularised theological concepts. Starting from this claim, I work through the central theological concept in *Politische Theologie* – the exception/miracle – and the implications of the modern metaphysics of immanence. I argue that Schmitt's use of the concept *auctoritas* is of importance for an understanding of modern problems of sovereignty, and I bring to light the Christian roots of and the reliance on a conception of transcendence for Schmitt's formulations. I then turn to *Politische Theologie II*, especially to the polemic Schmitt there enters with the theologian Erik Peterson, who claimed that all political theology had been refuted by the acceptance of Trinitarian dogma and that there could be no misuse of Christianity for political purposes. According to Peterson, Christianity can't be viewed as a model for worldly political authority. For Schmitt, this doesn't go far as to give answers to *who* is to be given the authority to interpret dogma and distinguish between the secular and the religious. Schmitt ends his treatise with a confrontation with the philosopher Hans Blumenberg, who had attacked Schmitt's theory of secularisation in the book *Die Legitimität der Neuzeit* with the claim that modernity and its legitimacy must be viewed in the light of its own thought and as a successful overcoming of transcendence. This overview of Schmitt's two works and their polemic with liberalism, modern theologies of liberation, Peterson and Blumenberg serves to illustrate central problems in Schmitt's thought, especially his diagnostic of modernity and the metaphysical aspect of politics. I intend to bring to light how this line of thought challenges modern conceptions of secularism and the relation between politics and religion. In the end, Schmitt's view of the political and the human condition leaves us with a grim image of religious experience, giving rise to rather disconcerting thoughts on the implications the political may hold for theological reason itself.

Ian Corbin (Yale) – ‘Infinite Indifference in Equilibrium’: Kierkegaard on the Complementary Roles of Thought and Emotion

In the words of eminent Kierkegaard scholar C. Stephen Evans, Søren Kierkegaard is very often “denigrated (or praised) as an opponent of reason, a fideist who gloried in irrationalism.” This reputation as a pioneer of fideism has gained Kierkegaard a marked place in the history of continental philosophy of religion. But, I will argue, insofar as one accepts this view, he has misunderstood Søren Kierkegaard. My goal in this paper, then, is to understand and elucidate Kierkegaard’s account of the relationship between thought and emotion. This attempt begins with the recognition that Kierkegaard’s account of the two faculties is more nuanced and complicated than it initially appears. For instance, it might be tempting to read Kierkegaard’s polemic against “reflection” in favor of “passion” in *The Present Age* as signifying a rejection of thought, as such, in favor of emotion, as such. But a close reading does not bear out this simple opposition. Rather, the versions of “passion” and “reflection” that Kierkegaard subjects to high praise and harsh scorn are specific, and rather rarified, subsets of emotion and thought.

In what follows I will argue that in Kierkegaard’s account of human psychology, the intellectual and emotive faculties are deeply interdependent. Rather than being suspicious of intellect, Kierkegaard assigns it a robust and vital place in a healthy spiritual life. In fact, I will try to show that in Kierkegaard’s opinion, one of the main maladies of his age consists in a *deficit* of real thought, which is both productive of, and worsened by, an errant emotion, “a sluggish or vehement preference.” This emotional maladjustment produces an impotent and fatuous imitation of the real thought that it has displaced. It is this *counterfeit thought* that Kierkegaard attacks as a spiritual pox.

A great deal of scholarly ink has been spilled attempting to ascertain Kierkegaard’s relationship with his various pseudonyms. While this question is an interesting one, I will circumvent it by dealing exclusively with veronymous texts, providing a close reading of relevant passages from Kierkegaard’s *Works of Love* and *The Present Age*. In this way I hope to avoid the inevitable confusions and complications inherent in any attempt to parse, for instance, the respective opinions of Johannes Climacus and Søren Kierkegaard.

James C. Brown (Paris X, Nanterre) - From Indignation to Epiphany of Meaning: The Theorisation of Ethics in the Work of Jean-Francois Mattei

The themes of my paper lie at the juncture of the relation between religious and secular ethics and the role of emotion in philosophical accounts of the self. I wish to expose the outlines for a theory of ethics which is developed in the works of Jean-François Mattéi and to investigate the possibility of such theorization playing a complementary role in the anthropological ethics of Wolfhart Pannenberg.

Mattéi is one of the foremost commentators on Plato and Heidegger in France today and the sources of his own philosophical investigations are to be found in Platonism. His more recent works (*La barbarie intérieure*, 1999; *De l’indignation*, 2005; and *La crise du sens*, 2006) insist upon the necessity of rehabilitating a transcendent horizon in order to palliate, if not rectify, the crisis of meaning which characterizes the disenchantment of modern Western culture. For him, the successive ruptures with an over-arching and unifying ontological narrative have disoriented practical ethics and the very concept of human dignity.

In the first part of my paper, I wish to trace the contours of his ethical theorization. I shall start with his account of a morality of sentiments and his hypothesis according to which the sentiment of indignation precedes the theorization of human dignity. For Mattéi, indignation stands in relation to justice as astonishment does to philosophy as a whole. From thence, I shall want to relate this foundation of ethical reflection in the pathos of indignation to his elaboration of the criteria by which a moral act may be judged good. The four “paradigms of action” which constitute what Mattéi also calls the “quadrant of ethics” situate moral action in reference to their temporal and transcendent horizons.

In the second part of my paper, I wish to examine Mattéi’s critique of Levinas’ radical position which subordinates ontology to ethics, or the truth of being to the dignity of the good. His animadversions of Levinasien “*épiphany du visage d’autrui*” are the locus of Mattéi’s conception of the epiphany of

meaning which attempts to render intelligible the normative claims of practical ethics. In the wake of this contrast, I wish to then highlight the relevance of Mattéi's ethical theorization for the anthropological ethics of Wolhart Pannenberg which lie at the basis of the latter's concern for presenting universally valid argumentation on ethical norms. For Pannenberg, the anthropological universality of ethics establishes the proximity of theological and philosophical ethics and is fundamental to its claims of validity. Thus from there can one engage in the ethical inquiry along the lines of the Socratic and Platonic question about the good. However, the limits of this line of inquiry according to Pannenberg are a consequence of its focus on the good as happiness whose horizon is inherently temporal. I wish to show that the ontological foundations of the ethics as found in both Mattéi and Pannenberg concur in important ways notably in regard to the actualisation of ethical behaviour as called for in the latter's conception of prolepsis.

James Carter (Regent's Park, Oxford) – Compassionate Respect for Human Dignity: Towards a Eudaimonistic Model of Ethics

Respect for human dignity is essential to ethical practices. But this respect cannot be taken on its own as a sufficient basis for ethical deliberation which requires that moral motivation address the basic needs of human beings as creatures vulnerable to external factors beyond their control. I propose that we incorporate compassion as the moral motivation of a *eudaimonistic* model of ethics which maintains respect for human dignity. This model brings together compassion and respect in ethical relations; but is, in turn, contingent upon highly specific conceptions of compassion as *eudaimonistic* (Nussbaum 2001) and human dignity as vulnerable in preserving respect for 'oneself as another' (Ricoeur 1992; 2007). Crucially, this proposal marks a break with a dominant trend in Christian theology, insofar as it is inconceivable apart from the compassionate agent's understanding of her own flourishing, and not of her own self-sacrifice as strictly kenotic. In brief, this Aristotelian quality of compassion will provide the essential force of moral motivation which is nurtured by respect for human dignity. The positive quality of this motivating force has been overlooked in the past due to overly rigid Christian conceptions of compassion and dignity which render them incompatible (e.g. Nietzsche 1982); this incompatibility has been hugely destructive of human relationships. My aim will be a revised understanding of ethical practices which can lead to a compassionate respect for human dignity.

Joseph Carlisle (Pembroke, Oxford) – The Blasphemous God: The Re-Appropriation of Job's Theodicy in G.K. Chesterton's Reading of Job

G.K. Chesterton is often argued to have possessed a weak theodicy due to his apparent superficial optimism; however, this essay will argue that this is an over-simplification of his position. In his "The Book of Job" essay Chesterton offers an exegesis that refuses simplistic or rationalistic approaches to the problem of evil. In the essay Chesterton argues that for a moment in the Job drama God almost becomes an atheist, offering no justification for the suffering of Job instead God rejects the theodicy's of Job's comforters and arguably sides with Job; there is no reason for Job's suffering other than the complete mystery of God. With D.Z. Phillips and Slavoj Žižek, this paper will argue that Job is one of the first critiques of ideology, deconstructing consequentialist solutions to the problem of evil, especially those offered by analytic philosophers of religion. Thus a model based on Chesterton's "The Book of Job" offers more comfort to those suffering inexplicable evil because it offers no facile solutions and instead accepts that radical evil is unacceptable.

Julia Perry (Green, Oxford) – Between the Secular and the Profane: Towards Postsecular Social Theory and Practice

This paper examines the fledging engagement of social theory with postsecular discourse in addressing the enduring religious narratives of faith based communities. In particular, the uncritical appropriation of secular neo-Marxist and liberal epistemologies by the social sciences are analysed with reference to postsecular paradigms that contextualise the ahistoric, cultural and hegemonic orientation of secular reason. To this effect the right of freedom of thought, conscience and religion as enshrined by Article 9

of the European Commission for Human Rights 1998 challenges the definitive secular and atheistic character of sociology given that, paradoxically, this politically sanctioned legislation determines the State as unqualified to legitimate, marginalise or disavow religious belief.

It follows that the retrieval of the latent religious imaginary by continental philosophy has proved invaluable to the cultivation of postsecular discourse that exposes the reductive, conformist and contingent foundations of liberal secular reason. Yet, whilst theological tropes may have emerged from a former regulation to the private sphere, moral diversity remains a persistent threat to the political order that in consequence continues to be met with an unapologetic secularist response. As such, the monologic of secular public reason is implicit in the restriction of the democratic integrity of citizens to whom religious affinity signifies definitive social identity. In response, advocates of postsecular discourse examine the possibilities of participatory community that reach beyond secular reason and which fully engage the moral convictions of citizens. Indeed, postsecular sociology observes the vitalism of religious heritages that precede and exceed the demystified yet cherished concepts of political philosophy and ethics.

The commodification of community, whereby the free market becomes the supreme arbiter of collective values, is therefore criticised by postsecular discourse as a normative precondition of the liberal secular State that is unsustainable. Concurrently, the binary logic that opposes materialism and idealism is deconstructed by religious philosophy that restores the redemptive potential of corporeality. As such, notions of sensible transcendence, which confound the traditional dialectic between immanence and transcendence, provide modes of representation that encourage personal, interpersonal and collective heuristics of the religious. Indeed, feminist philosophy of religion, which deploys psychoanalytic theory in asserting an ethics of sexuate difference, advocates *communitas* that is sustained by a democracy that begins with two engendered subjects. In summary, this paper therefore traces the contributions of authors such as John Millbank, Jurgen Habermas and Luce Irigaray in conceiving communities of reason which resist the utopian yet contextualise the secular and that in consequence offer possibilities for postsecular ethics of social care.

Mary-Ann Crumplin (Heythrop) – Levinas on Onto-theology: The Importance of Patricide and Atheism

Emmanuel Levinas's postmodern philosophy says that atheism is necessary for ethics. In this paper I shall show the philosophical logic from which this startling thesis is derived.

The aim of the paper is to consider the philosophical security of Levinas' thesis that because a hermeneutical approach to ontology remains an egology it is insufficient to its ambition of articulating being unless it is simultaneously a hermeneutic of paradox. I shall situate the texts of the lectures on ontotheology which Levinas delivered in the Sorbonne in 1976 into the context of his fifty year engagement with the way in which the history of Western thinking has developed the question of identity and difference from Plato's dialogue *Parmenides*.

Starting from the extant fragments of *Parmenides*, I shall show how the advent of Socratic dialogue rendered Homeric *λογος* (*logos*) synthetic, causing a 'rupture' in the unity of being and *logos* which *Parmenides* had identified. Levinas recognises the advent of representational thinking and of ontotheology in philosophy's subsequent attempt to remain faithful to both *Parmenides* and Socrates. Separating *logos* and dialogue rather than identifying them, and emphasising that ontological separation is also the origin of thinking, Levinas proposes 'radical alterity' as a response to the representational thinking of ontotheology. Levinas suggests that philosophers embrace the paradox of atheism which must be implicit, for us, in both *Parmenidean* ontology (because we are no longer think our being in the realm of the Homeric gods) and in the ontotheology which develops out of philosophy's understanding Plato's 'Good, beyond being' as part of a 'doctrine of forms'. In this way, Levinas's 'rejection of *Parmenides*' that is, his affirmation of separation rather than unity, demonstrates that atheism is the human being's truthful affirmation of an ineffable God, a God who cannot be brought to being either through direct revelation (*Parmenides*' ontology) or through mediation (Socratic dialogue as transcendental realism). Levinas writes: '*La séparation athée est exigée par l'idée de l'Infini.*'

Matthew Kirkpatrick (Regent's Park, Oxford) – Kierkegaard the Humanist?

Søren Kierkegaard has been called many names. Some of the most popular are 'irrationalist', 'acosmist', and even 'Gnostic'. For many, his ideas stand in stark contrast to the humanist approaches of the later existentialists, and are often considered to denounce the mind, society, and the world, all in favour of such terms as inwardness, subjectivity, and the individual. In contrast, this paper will argue that Kierkegaard should rather be referred to as a humanist, who not only studied the human condition, but also promoted it in all its earthly nature.

It will be argued that part of the problem has come about through the separation of Kierkegaard's aesthetics and his epistemology. Both must rather be understood through the concept of the 'life-view'. This term has almost escaped scholars attention, and yet it held such prominence for Kierkegaard that he used it as the central motif of both 'From the Papers of one Still Living', and also 'A Literary Review', published in 1846: the two works that begin and end his main pseudonymous authorship. In these aesthetic works, Kierkegaard argues that the only way one can gain an understanding of reality, and so be able to express it through aesthetic forms, is if individuals invest themselves fully in their existence, and receive an understanding of it through their life-experiences. Each individual therefore gains an understanding of the same objective reality, through their own subjectivity. But this is also epistemological as it is 'truth', 'reality', and so 'knowledge' that the individual is receiving. At the beginning of his authorship, Kierkegaard therefore describes knowledge as a 're-spiratio', a passive 'breathing in' through which the individual receives his understanding. Kierkegaard does not discard reason, but rather what he saw as its absolutization through such thinkers as Hegel. Rather, as he explained in Postscript, Kierkegaard sought to return reason to humankind's armoury of faculties through which true 'knowledge' is gained.

This has profound consequences for Kierkegaard's understanding of the equality of mankind in general. The other term that brackets his whole authorship is that of the 'common man'—for instance, found within The Concept of Irony and in the final instalments of The Moment. Against the exclusivist perceptions of 19th C thinkers, Kierkegaard argued that such a life-view was perhaps most easily attainable by the 'common man' who simply live their lives in reality, and not by the 'wise' of society who lose themselves in the idealistic systems of thought and culture.

Standing in the line of Rousseau, and in union with Nietzsche and the later Existentialists, Kierkegaard argued for a stripping away of the fabricated systems that blocked humankind from his true potential. Kierkegaard sought to release humankind into the full power of his faculties. His ideas are punctuated by his profound sense of faith and the truly objective realm, but are couched within a humanist subjectivity, that speaks of mankind's ultimate potential in his earthly life.

Michael Burdett (Regent's Park, Oxford) - The Eschatological Experience: Lacoste's Liturgical Breaking of the Heideggerian World

The French theologian, Jean-Yves Lacoste, has become increasingly important in the last 10 years. Like many other notably French theologians, Jean-Luc Marion and others associated with him, Lacoste takes up the language and thought of Heidegger and his philosophical anthropology and appropriates it in a distinctly theological context. In this essay, I outline the importance of Lacoste's notion of eschatological experience as a response to Heidegger's emphasis on a secular anthropology. In particular, Lacoste reads Heidegger's being-in-the-world as an important philosophical concept in relation to Heidegger's other concepts of 'earth' and 'world'. Lacoste wishes to extend the phenomenological experience of Dasein from being-in-the-world to a being-towards-God. Lacoste's understanding of 'project', Dasein's urge to appropriate its intended future in the lived present, is foundational to moving beyond Heidegger's portrayal of Dasein's being as existing solely in a topology of 'earth' and 'world'. For Lacoste, a phenomenology of liturgy begins with a move out of the Heideggerian world by coming in contact with the non-experience. This non-experience, while sounding quite Levinasian, hinges on Lacoste's notion of project and is rooted in the existential notion of Augustinian restlessness. Liturgy, for Lacoste, is this grappling with and response to the non-experience. It draws one out of their being as Dasein into a non-place that leaves the world which is devoid of God. This movement out of the Heideggerian world into some other place is intimately connected with the *eschaton*. Indeed, this virtual space, which aims at appropriating this future

eschatology as a possibility opened by the non-experience, becomes the place of God's proximity. The essay concludes with how this non-place in liturgy operates in between actualization of the eschaton and the present—relating this to the Absolute, rationality and the non-experience as night. Some final remarks will also be made in regards to the sufficiency of Lacoste's liturgical anthropology.

Raj Sampath (Santa Cruz) – Ricoeur on Eschatology and History

In our paper, we will examine “The ‘Adamic’ Myth and the ‘Eschatological’ Vision of History” in Paul Ricoeur's masterful *Symbolism of Evil*. Placing Kierkegaard's *Concept of Anxiety* and Heidegger's *Being and Time* in the backdrop of our paper, we hope to show that Ricoeur's thinking offers a way out from the opaque conundrum, where both the Kierkegaardian and Heideggerian projects leave us hopelessly stranded. In particular, Kierkegaard analyzes the Adamic fall by stating that anxiety is the presupposition for hereditary sin and not its consequence. He examines the relationship between innocence, freedom, nothingness and anxiety through a complex set of formulations, which resist dialectical synthesis. However, we are left with an intractable ambiguity regarding the paradox or aporia of how Adam is himself a singular actor (prior to the birth of the good and evil distinction) and the origin of human history and thus part of the guilt-saturated human race. In Heidegger's *Being and Time*, we learn that Anxiety (Sorge) is the Being of Dasein, Dasein is that non-egological being, which poses the ontological question of the meaning of Being anew, Being is ‘*transcendens* pure and simple,’ and time is the horizon for understanding Being whatsoever. Yet not only is Division II of *Being and Time* unfinished, Division III on “Time and Being” is missing. And all associated concepts of temporality and historicity remain under-developed whereby the project of understanding the *whole* of Dasein (and the unity of its two ends of birth and death) in its Being remains incomplete. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger does not offer us a view on how the ‘eschatological completion of history’ unveils Dasein as finite transcendence, and therefore death as its completion and the revelation of time as the meaning of Being in general: that is, through the *destruction* of how the Western tradition has posed the question of being in the history of metaphysics and its inauthentic, linear notion of time as passing nows, we are left without a positive philosophy of revelation and meaningful understanding of Dasein as a ‘relationship of Being’ itself. Ricoeur, however, gives us a clear analysis of the limits of understanding the origin and end of history, but also the transcendence of the both the philosophical and religious prejudices regarding eschatology, which neither Kierkegaard nor Heidegger are able to surmount. By elaborating a ‘poetics of freedom’ in treating the Adamic experience of evil (prior to the birth of the distinction of good and evil), Ricoeur negotiates between these extremes while pointing to a hermeneutical logic that is irreducible to both: a ‘philosophical anthropology,’ which voids the possibility of a genuine philosophy of faith or religious experience, and dogmatic Christology, which forces the alterity of our tradition's archaic symbols in to conformity with an ‘objective’ history that serves to substantiate dogmatic truth. The hermeneutic experience of our encounter with the symbol constitutes the possibility of transcendence while engaging us responsibility and authentically with the tradition from which we have descended. The ‘hermeneutic of myth’ can not simply take the place of ‘systematic philosophy,’ and it is that event, which determines the status of a philosophy of religion today: that is, a philosophical experience of faith, which is irreducible to the dependence of religion on myth, yet distant from the philosophical aloofness or dis-interest that keeps the religious strictly apart from the ontological without relapsing back in to theology.

Rajiv Kaushik (Brock) - Affectivity and Religious Experience: Husserl's God in the Unpublished Manuscripts

Husserl rarely has much to say about religious experience in his published works, and when he does have something to say, e.g. in the oft-cited § 58 of *Ideas I*, it is to notice the impossibility of admitting it into phenomenological investigation. Husserl once remarked to Roman Ingarden, however, that he considered ‘the problem of god’ “the greatest problem of philosophy.” On separate occasions, he proclaimed that he wanted his phenomenology to lead to god, without the help of theology. And, even more tellingly, he admired Rudolf Otto's book *The Idea of the Holy*, which, he said, affected him more so than any other book because it began a description of the pure religious phenomenon.

In this paper, I want to contextualize some of Husserl's unpublished manuscript notes on the topic of religious experience. The notes with which I am concerned here are found in the Leuven Archives, in the A Manuscripts or "Mundane Phenomenology," under the sub-heading "Intentional Anthropology (Person and Surrounding World)," and especially in the E Manuscripts or "Intersubjective Constitution," under the sub-heading "Transcendental Anthropology (Transcendental Theology, etc.). Rarely have these notes been commented on, with the exception of Louis Dupré's 1968 article "Husserl's Thought on God and Faith." Although extensive and extraordinarily helpful, Dupré's article is in no way exhaustive. In fact, Dupré finally concludes in his article that Husserl's notations are "too sketchy to lead anywhere" and indicate that he "had no intention to write about these problems ex professo." (214) Any clarification of the notes seems hopeless since the problem lies with phenomenology itself, which "recognizes only constituted being (phenomena) and constituting being (transcendental subjectivity), neither one of which can accommodate the idea of a transcendent God." (209) But roughly 40 years of Husserl scholarship have complicated this division between the constituted and the constituting, and I suspect that, precisely because of this complication, some of Husserl's remarks on god are more readily accessible to us now.

As I hope to show, Husserl's later critique of affectivity throws the affectivity as it is outlined in Kant's Critique of Judgment, the very affectivity on which Otto's thesis of the Holy relies, into question. This critique, from the point of view of a passive affectivity and the affective allure of objectivities, reveals an extended understanding of constituted being and phenomenality, and overcomes the impassibility that concerns Dupré. Understood in the context of this critique, Husserl can speak of a deep sense of the strange and esoteric, and an archaic religiosity that is dormant at the core of all experience. Indeed, as I hope to show, the kind of religious experience that Husserlian phenomenology discovers is the form of religiosity that lays in the heart of Otto's Holy, the kind of religiosity prior to any thematic idea of god. At other times, and perhaps more radically, Husserl intimates that not only is the phenomenon subtended by a sense of strangeness, but also that which gives this sense can itself appear. In this case Husserl allows for a phenomenological sense of 'revelation' and, by discovering a phenomenon of the alien (*das Fremde*) itself, he in fact anticipates some of Marion's current work and the theological turn in French phenomenology.

Simon Scott (Warwick) – Gilles Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy*: An Atheistic Ontology

Through a reading of Gilles Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, I will look at how the concepts of the Will to Power and the eternal return preclude the existence of God. Deleuze presents a systematic reading of both concepts at an ontological level, and he constructs his ontology in terms of a principle of difference. Difference is not imposed from the outside and inserted between things, it is the Bergsonian pure difference that is self-differentiating. Although I will not have sufficient time to examine the concept of pure difference Deleuze discovers in Bergsonism, I will note its importance in enabling Deleuze to present a cosmic universe of finite active and reactive forces, in which active forces affirm their difference and reactive forces negate it. These forces are in a constant struggle with each other and are in a relation with either an affirmative or a negative Will to Power. The Will to Power is a synthesising principle, meaning that it both determines, and is determined by, the struggles between these forces. Everything – all physics, metaphysics and psychology – is explained in these terms. Moreover, it is an ontology in which Being is exposed as an illusion because the world is understood only in terms of becomings. Thus, Deleuze explains Nietzsche's rejection of all metaphysics, including the concept of God.

The only metaphysical term that Nietzsche did not reject was 'eternity', though he has a very different understanding of what it means. One of Deleuze's most difficult tasks in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* is to follow through with his systematic reading and explain the relation between the Will to Power and the eternal return, something Nietzsche did not do. He seizes on a fragment from the *Will to Power*: "That everything recurs is the closest approximation of a world of becoming to a world of being". (NP,44) Deleuze draws on the Bergsonian concept of pure difference to explain what recurrence means and how it is possible in a world of becoming. Significantly, it empties time of any meaning, and the endurance of things *in* time becomes the endurance *of* time. In a world in which God does not exist, the eternal return also has an ethical function, which is to ensure the recurrence of only active forces.

Sylvain Camilleri (Montpellier) - The 'German Fathers' of the Theological Turn to Phenomenology: Scheler, Reinach, Heidegger

Following Dominique Janicaud's famous pamphlet *Le tournant théologique de la phénoménologie française* (1991), one often assumes that the first confrontation between the phenomenological method and the religious life-world is not older than Levinas', Henry's, Marion's, Ricoeur's and Chrétien's essays. If it is undeniable that the official debate takes its roots in this inaugural *disputatio*, one might not forget that the first true encounter of phenomenology with the theological-religious question did not take place in the post World-War II France but right in the middle of World-War I in Germany – as we shall see, the factual context should not be underestimated. Although he devotes only few reflections to this theme in his *Ideen*, Husserl did not avoid the topic and claimed it was necessary to suspend God's transcendence in order to reach a theoretical attitude free of all presuppositions. One might say this call was too laconic and insufficient, for his closest disciples felt the irrepressible need to give their own account on how phenomenology should deal with theological-religious matters. To us indeed, Max Scheler, Adolf Reinach and the early Martin Heidegger are the "German Fathers" of the theological turn of phenomenology. It is obvious that, unlike their aforementioned successors, they were not committed in "turning" or "reframing" phenomenology itself since the discipline was barely born. But still, they considered that phenomenology had to stand to the most powerful cultural phenomenon at that time which was Christianity. As a result, they decided to enter into the rebellious domain of the religious life-world and to work in it, sometimes with Husserl's conceptual tools, sometimes without. They tried to define which attitude the phenomenologist – who might simultaneously be a religious person – should adopt in front of phenomena and lived-experiences clearly out of the ordinary. Different answers and recommendations came out of this very first exploration that we'd like to present in this paper. The development of our purpose will be simple. It involves: 1/ an introduction to and a brief discussion of the central ideas of three core texts: Scheler's *Liebe und Erkenntnis* (1915), Reinach's *Religionsphilosophischen Fragmenten* (1917) and the early Heidegger's notes for a *Phänomenologie des religiösen Bewusstseins* (1916-1919); 2/ a schematic comparison between the German "Fathers" and the French "Children" followed by five propositions for a theo-logical phenomenology borrowing the best of both generations.

Tom Stern (Cambridge) – Nietzsche and the Creation Museum

Ken Ham's Creation Museum in Petersburg, Kentucky was designed to 'take dinosaurs back': 'We wanted to show people there's no mystery with dinosaurs, we can explain them.' The Creation Museum gives a so-called 'Young Earth' account of the origins of our planet: 6,000 years old and created in six days, along with every living thing. The Museum tries to explain, therefore, the fossil record, the vast scale of the universe and, of course, the infamous dinosaur. Traditionally, of course, dinosaurs have posed something of a problem for Young Earth creationists. First, the findings challenge their 'historical' claims – specifically that the Earth is 6,000 years old and that all creatures were created at the beginning of time. Second, the fossil record challenges the Bible's optimistic world-view: that beasts are given all they need to survive and Noah's Ark ensures that none dies out; man is at the heart of God's plan, made in God's image, treated with special care and attention. Yet in the face of the fossil record, nature no longer looks like the careful work of a loving creator: we witness the destruction not only of the individual, but of the entire species and genus. Thus, from the 'scarped cliff and quarried stone' of geological discovery, Tennyson's 'Nature' cries out: "A thousand types are gone: / I care for nothing, all shall go". Tennyson's poem expresses the horror of the thought: the fate of the dinosaurs might be the fate of man. Maybe God doesn't care about us after all.

Friedrich Nietzsche was right: often the interesting question about some particular world-view is not 'is this right?', but rather 'what kind of psychological need does this serve, given that it's obviously wrong?' Nietzsche went further, of course, seeking to explain the very human needs that lie behind the religious and the secular alike. And Max Weber was right: to understand the modern, we need to grapple with Nietzsche. The first aim of my paper is to explore the Museum's fundamentalism using the concepts Nietzsche provided (and to explain Nietzsche with examples from the Museum).

Nietzsche was right about something else, too: we shouldn't be too complacent about the inferior world-views of others. Rather, we can use them to shine a harsh light upon our own – scientific,

religious, moral. The second aim of my paper is to explore the way that The Museum manipulates the relationship between the moral and the scientific. In that respect, it serves as a lesson and a warning.

It would be easy to ignore the Creation Museum, in spite of its 65,000 sq feet of exhibit space and its \$20 million construction cost. We shouldn't: its message has struck home with thousands of visitors and the simplicity of that message rests on complex ground shared by fundamentalists and liberals, believers and non-believers alike.

Wolfhart Totschnig (Northwestern) – The Expropriation of God: Arendt and Badiou on the Human Being as Creator

Though God is dead, we continue to live in his house, Nietzsche observed. Though, as philosophers, we have repudiated theology, we continue to think within the same framework, to start from the same assumptions and use the same concepts. Nietzsche's diagnosis resonates with Carl Schmitt's dictum that all the principal notions of political philosophy are secularized theological notions. Philosophy turned its back on theology, yet it still stands in the latter's shadow.

Nietzsche intended his observation as a critique. His project was to move out of God's house, finally and definitely, to leave behind not only the notion of God but also all of its descendants and relatives—the notions of eternal truth, of the sovereign subject, of creation *ex nihilo*, of absolute good and radical evil. Nietzsche took these notions to be inherently, inseparably linked to the idea of God. Hence, they had to be discarded too. God, he contended, had been the guarantor—the *sole* guarantor—of the eternity of truth, of the sovereignty of the subject, of the absoluteness of good and evil. And so, after God's demise, truth became perspectival, the subject a retroactive fiction, and "good" and "evil" the reflection of petty prejudices.

To draw such drastic conclusions from the death of God is not ineluctable, however. They follow only if the said notions are indeed inextricably bound up with the idea of God. And it is this premise that I want to challenge. The concepts that Nietzsche diagnosed as irredeemably theological can well be given a secular twist. In fact, they are open to such a reinterpretation because they *originally are* secular concepts. They are not mere corollaries of—and hence dependent on—the idea of a supreme being, but derive from experiences in *this* world.

The aim of the present paper is to expound this thesis, drawing on the philosophies of Hannah Arendt and Alain Badiou. The starting point is the notion of creation. Arendt and Badiou conceive the human being as creator, as possessing the power to invent and bring into being new worlds. What was formerly the prerogative of God is thus attributed to ourselves. This seizure of God's prime property then leads to further appropriations. Developing the idea of the human being as creator, Arendt and Badiou come to adopt, in a context that is resolutely secular, other key concepts of theology—miracle, immortality, absolute good and radical evil, eternal truth.

I will focus on the principal concept, creation. To assert that human beings are creators is to assert that they are authors of novelty. This claim is to be evaluated against the backdrop of the philosophical positions that came to be known as the death of the author, of the subject, or of man *tout court*. Against these positions, Arendt and Badiou defend the idea that the new has an author, that radical changes have a subject, namely by conceiving this author/subject as a contingent plurality rather than as a sovereign individual.