

MCGILL UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY (2011-2012)  
PHILOSOPHY 575: SEMINAR IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN PHILOSOPHY  
(TUESDAY 1:30-3:30)

Instructor: Professor Buckley (philip.buckley@mcgill.ca)

Theme of seminar for 2011: Husserl and Heidegger on the phenomenology of religious life

Hegel famously claims in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* that “Philosophy is itself, worship; it is religion.” What such a statement intends is by no means unambiguous. In this seminar, we want to inquire whether some writing on religion by Husserl or Heidegger in the early 1920s and also in Heidegger’s later texts, helps us understand this statement. In the first part of the seminar, we look at some of the positive aspects, and also some of the dangers, of Husserl’s analogy between phenomenology and religion that is captured in his description of phenomenological life as “*Venunftglauben*” in his “*Kaizo*” articles from 1922/23. We will then turn to Heidegger’s interpretation of the “formally indicative” nature of religious language in his 1920/21 lecture course on the phenomenology of religion. Finally, we look at some of the later Heidegger’s perplexing formulations in his “Contributions to Philosophy: On *Ereignis*” and some other later essays. The aims of the seminar include thinking about important shifts/developments in the phenomenological movement; reflecting on the nature of a phenomenology of religion; and uncovering in what similar (and different) ways Husserl and Heidegger see an analysis of religious life as containing unique possibilities for unlocking a more general phenomenological understanding of the experience of life itself.

Readings:

Edmund Husserl, *Aufsätze und Vorträge (1922-1937)*, hrsg. von Thomas Nenon und Hans Rainer Sepp, *Husserliana XXVII* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989). [Translation will be made available on WebCT].

Martin Heidegger, *Einleitung in die Phänomenologie der Religion: Phänomenologie des religiösen Lebens*. GA 60, ed. M. Jung und T. Regehely (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1995); *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. M. Fritsch and J.A. Gosetti-Ferencei (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004).

Martin Heidegger, *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*. GA 65, ed. F.W. von Herrmann (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1989); *Contributions to Philosophy*, trans P. Emad and K. Malay (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).

GRADING: Written work = 80%; Participation = 20%

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