

Diakrisis: INPR opening

EMMANUEL FALQUE

SPONTANEOUS CREATIONS OFTEN EXIST IN nature but rarely in philosophy. Yet, the emergence of the International Network of Philosophy of Religion (INPR) was such an instance. France and the United States have long been linked, not just in friendship, but in thought. Paul Ricoeur, Jacques Derrida, and, more recently, Jean-Luc Marion, have been among some of the French pioneers bridging this divide. More than a matter of an affiliation to a particular school of thought, a true “bridge of friendship” has been constructed across the ocean, as if these waters were not enough to separate us. One may be surprised by this poetic rendering of a reciprocal relationship, especially as the French have been accustomed to falsely thinking that traversing the Atlantic goes one way (from Europe to the United States) and not the other (from the United States to Europe). We must certainly correct this mistaken idea. There are many “Rubicons” to cross, and this passing must be bidirectional. We cannot think on our own, but always in interaction with others. The United States is not only a place of welcome for French philosophy but also a veritable dwelling for experimentation and confrontation whereby each side is transformed.

INPR was founded on this conviction. Far from being the property of the few, this “network of thought and friendship” belongs to all those who have previously participated and who continue to participate. The question is not about claiming a particular school of phenomenological or continental thought but, instead, of crossing perspectives whereby each can learn from the other what is also true of his or her own identity.

In this sense, INPR is not intent on being an insular group of established scholars who have already penetrated the intellectual scene. Rather, young professors, even doctoral students, and those whose philosophical decisions are still emerging serve as the strength and meaning of this network of friends, preparing today for the philosophy of tomorrow. This is the conviction INPR seeks to retain.

As is well-known, there is great diversity and opposition in thought in France between those who claim a pure secularism and those who assert an explicit, or at least public, meaning of catholicity. Although in a slightly

different way, we find something analogous in the US in the distinction between religious studies departments and more confessionally-oriented departments of theology or philosophy. Here again, INPR aims to bring these groups together. All the better to directly engage these differences so that we each may have a greater existence, and to grow in respect and progress together.

Gathering for the first time in Paris in June 2015 on the theme of “Description,” INPR met again in Paris from June 21st to 24th, 2017 on the theme “Immanence and Transcendence”. This volume contains contributions from this gathering that addressed this theme and significantly enriched our thinking on it.

INPR is exceptionally grateful to *Diakrisis* for generously welcoming this collection of papers and for giving a voice to this intercontinental crossing. This publication marks a moment where young shoots emerge from the ground and are gathered together so that their bouquet, fragile and deliberately diversified, may be unified according to a certain mode of the beautiful. Only the future may tell, retrospectively, the meaning of this moment. There is a time for everything – a time to produce and a time to read again. It is the former that matters here, inasmuch as one only progresses by not remaining stuck in the past, threatening to smother the shoots that have begun to emerge so fruitfully.

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EMMANUEL FALQUE
Co-founder and coordinator of INPR
Honorary Dean of the Catholic University of Paris

Translated by BRIAN BECKER