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Cultivating the Self: Towards a Definition of Philosophy of Culture

✍ Jeffrey M. Centeno

Culture is the single soul of the self.
- GWF Hegel (1967, 516)

Abstract

This paper aims to provide a philosophical brief on culture, in the hope of recognizing *philosophy of culture* as a distinctly unique field of philosophical research. Culture is inevitably an important subject matter of human discourse. That includes the discourse of philosophy, out of which we audaciously propose that a distinct course in philosophy of culture is necessarily a foundational field of inquiry within the entire range of philosophical disciplines. This can be a promising approach towards understanding the reality of the human person. From a cultural perspective, every identity is rooted in an ethnic context which informs the identity's unique character. That is why an adequate account of ethnic identity involves an elaboration of the fundamental relation between the self and culture. In order to accomplish this projected elaboration, this paper subscribes to the thought of Charles Taylor, using his hermeneutics of culture as main interpretive frame.

Keywords: Charles Taylor, hermeneutics

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The Women Question in Plato's City-State

☞ *Danilo S. Alterado*

Abstract

Is Plato's account and legislation on the role of women in his envisioned city-state gender-sensitive? This question is at the core of an ongoing controversy, with various positions arguing in support of or negating the claim. This essay offers to contribute to the ongoing discourse by calling attention to and setting in perspective Plato's account and legislation on women's education. Women are of equal footing with men as citizens in Plato's planned community, thus his careful legislation on women's place and function in the attainment of his goal. Understanding women's education therefore is crucial in the appreciation of women's proper place in the whole political life of Plato's planned community. Adopting this stance, this paper argues that the women-question should be embedded within Plato's context and seen in the light of his chief philosophical *telos* for an ideal republic. Outside this context, the criticism that Plato's philosophy is "gendered" is unfair.

Keywords: women's education, gender

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Eden and the Longing of the Soul: Notes about the Human Search for the Absolute

☞ *Wilfried Vanhoutte*

Abstract

Since ancient times, philosophers have kept on repeating that human life is actually a long quest for happiness. Even as its concrete or context-dependent features remain blurred, happiness is there to kindle the flame of human desire for the Absolute. What is being sought is actually what made man happy right after his creation, symbolized in the Judeo-Christian tradition as the paradise of Eden. Hegel and Kierkegaard represent two different standards in assessing the human quest for the absolute, which are centered around the attitude towards finitude and its possible reconciliation with the infinite. Either the dichotomy is assumed to be somewhat

artificial and, therefore, to be gradually overcome in the process of rational self-possession of the spirit, or it is assumed to create a categorical dilemma for the subject, that is, to be overcome by a blind choice. Such a choice has an essentially religious foundation. It is the existential answer to a call from the Infinite. As such, it is reminiscent of the century-long tradition of religious and monastic life in the Church, culminating in the personal contemplative experience as described by mystics like Meister Eckhart and Thomas Merton.

Keywords: philosophy and religion; religious life – philosophical aspects; philosophical anthropology

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The More, the Merrier: Ecclesial Pluralism and Fidelity to Tradition

Reynaldo O. Dumpayan

Abstract

This paper wrestles with the issue of pluralism in the church and its implications for fidelity to the Christian tradition. It sets off by calling attention to present day realities and the attendant issues on ecclesial and religious pluralism. Suggesting that ecclesial pluralism needs to be situated within the wider context of religious pluralism, it presents and examines the three approaches to religious plurality, namely - the exclusivist, the inclusivist, and the pluralist. Pursuing the pluralist alternative which proposes a "rough parity" among world religions, it moves on to a critique of the prevailing construction of ecclesial pluralism as leading towards the death of tradition. Summoning novel perspectives on tradition, with emphasis on the fact that this is dynamic and developing, the paper argues for the necessity and inevitability of ecclesial pluralism in the Church. It asserts that variety in faith expressions is not necessarily inconsistent with faithfulness to tradition and, with this, points out to some implications of ecclesial pluralism for the Church today.

Keywords: religious pluralism, exclusivism, inclusivism, pluralist approach

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Towards a Critical Hermeneutics of the Torah

✦ Romano M. Bulatao

It is because of a great mystery of perfection that God's commandments are contained in the Decalogue.

– St Augustine (1993, 117)

Abstract

This paper aims to engage readers towards a renewed understanding of the Torah and, specifically, the Decalogue, in the context of the Covenant of love between God and his people. To facilitate this objective, the essay makes special reference to the thoughts of Pope Benedict XVI, whose meditations on the Ten Commandments or Decalogue brings the Torah in a better light for contemporary interpretation. This paper concludes with the reaffirmation of the Torah as God's intervention of love into human history, highlighted as it were by a moral framework that is embodied in the Decalogue.

Keywords: Ten Commandments, Covenant, Decalogue, Pope Benedict XVI

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The Dynamics of Educational Hospitality

☞ *Lawrence Dexter D. Ladia*

Teaching signifies the whole infinity of exteriority. And the whole infinity of exteriority is not first produced, to then teach: teaching is its very foundation. The first teaching teaches very height, tantamount to its exteriority, the ethical.

– Emmanuel Levinas (1969, 171)

Abstract

The article is an articulation about the goal of education, which is no less than the cultivation of the human person. Asserting that education must lead the person towards an integral development, this essay aims to spell out the elements and dynamics involved in the holistic formation of the human person vis-à-vis the process of education. In relation to the notion of the human person as homo academicus, the essay discusses the three fundamental elements of human existence, namely: authenticity, rationality and spirituality (ARS), which - it suggests - corresponds to the elements of educational hospitality. Underlying the reflection is the assertion that hospitality is the condition for a genuine academic community.

Keywords: authenticity, rationality, spirituality

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The Philosophy of Care in Teaching Theology

☞ *Dennis M. Placido*

Abstract

This article is a reflection on the philosophy of care as appropriated in teaching theology. Building on the Heideggerian concept of Dasein as Care as well as on insights gained from experiences in teaching theology, it proposes a theory and praxis of the philosophy of care as a mode of or an approach to the teaching and learning of theology. It outlines several elements or moods by which this philosophy of care can be put into practice in the classroom setting.

Keywords: Dasein as Care, learning theology

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Revisiting and Revitalizing the Essence and Identity of Catholic Universities

Rico C. Jacoba

Abstract

This paper deals particularly with the growing challenges of post-modern education to Catholic universities. Following after the call for renewal by Vatican II and PCP II, it aims to clarify the essence and identity of Catholic Universities, guided by the work of the late Pope John Paul II, *Ex corde ecclesiae*. The paper revisits the distinct characteristics of a Catholic university in terms of its nature and objectives, community life, service to the church and community, pastoral ministry, cultural dialogue, and evangelization. Moreover, it suggests revitalizing Catholic education along these characteristics: liberative, reign-kingdom-focused, inclusive, and glocal. The proposed areas of revitalization include the curriculum and the profession of Catholic educators.

Keywords: Catholic education, *Ex corde ecclesiae*, Paulo Freire

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A Philosophical Rethinking of Leadership, Management and Organization in the Postmodern World

✍ Fernando Martin B. Serrano

The essence of leadership is the ability to be and do differently, not because of weakness such as is found in the current pre-occupation with power seeking, but because of strength that comes from a sense of duty and responsibility to one's unique self. The individual who is a point of contact with the future and who creates new values or goals is called a superior man.

–Eugene Jennings (1960, 125)

Abstract

This paper examines and suggests strategies and approaches to face the challenges in leadership, management, and organization in our postmodern time guided by the thoughts of several great thinkers. Using descriptive, analytical and historical methods of presentation, it reviews and does a comparative look of the pre-modern, modern, and postmodern discourses on leadership, management, and organization. As a response to the postmodern challenges, this work highlights the importance of self-knowledge, the significance of Nietzsche's concept of the 'ubermensch', the necessity of ethical leadership/management, the inevitable issues of globalization and change, the true meaning of shared and collaborative leadership, and the value of an inclusive and learning organization.

Keywords: ethics management, deconstructionism, 'ubermensch', self-knowledge, dialogue

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