

Phenomenology and theological aesthetics assignment

[Sociology](#)



Notes on Hans Ours von Baluster's Thought Edmund Husserl's

phenomenology analyzes the downfall of science into techno, deprived of its necessary foundation in objective evidence. It responds to this impoverished self-understanding of science, the human being and the goals of reason themselves, uncovering in the roots of this epistemological and cultural crisis the true founding of our understanding and praxis of human experience.

In a seemingly different arena, the possibility of religious experience has been object of a harsh criticism that has uncovered and denounced its ideological social function, the unconscious constitution of its symbols and categories, and its denial of the worldliness of the human being, escaping to another fictitious world. After its own troubled polemics with modern reason the last century, Christian religion has come to understand its role in this dialogue, not as that of an enemy, but in any case, of a possible companion or inspiration for the quests of humanitarian that triggered those critics.

Nonetheless, catholic Christianity still faces some peculiar uniqueness of this critic understanding of its faith, as well as the vital questioning from those to whom religion says nothing, or apparently offers nothing but another ethical proposal. This complex situation, due to, for example, different local developments, is not reducible to oversimplified oppositions or labels.

The Swiss theologian Hans Ours von Blathers (1905-1988) stays in the crossroad of these contemporary interpolations and reaffirms: it is possible to experience God, and to give a reasonable account of this experience.

Following the first volume of his *The Glory of the Lord – A theological aesthetics* we can point out some of the central challenges he seeded to

face. (1) Is it possible to speak about certitude and truth in the space of faith? About the misleading “either ... Or” approach to faith and reason. 2) Is God’s revelation possible? Against a representational reduction of Jesus. (3) Can we grasp the revelation -or, better, can it grasp us- through tradition? Concerning historicity, the mediation of the community and the critical potential of faith. (4) Is it possible to respond to the calling discovered in religious experience? About the following of Jesus, autonomous ethics, the availability of salvation and, above all, the ultimate proximity but absolute asymmetry in the relation between the human being and God.

In this central point lies also Baluster’s main suspicion against phenomenology. These discussions will bring us the most fundamental question when meeting Baluster’s thought: his claim about the necessity of an aesthetically approach to understand religious experience, or, in other terms, what he means with the affirmation that the self-emptying of the Son that makes himself a human being, lives like one, dies rectified, descends to hell, and is resurrected, reveals the true Glory of God, the proper object of faith.

We will explore the meaning of this claim that the (ultimate) thing itself can give itself, and actually is given to us in the form of a man, making explicit the phenomenological spirit of these discussions, and how they can provide a fruitful orientation for our study of human experience. Truth and certitude Let us be guided by the structure of The Glory first volume. Its first part discusses the subjective side of religious experience, focused on the subjective evidence.

Blathers shows how the Scripture and tradition know no incompatibility between Christian pistils and gnomish. The problem is not an critical use of the terms in the Godspeed, Paul, etc. But our constrained by an impoverished notion of knowledge shaped by a misunderstood sense of objectivity in natural sciences. Faith is not just a substitute for knowledge, that accepts unfounded propositions impulses by a nude leap.

Despite this fragmented modern construct, for Christian tradition to believe is an integrating certitude that moves all human dimensions to a commitment that exceeds the individual as its only possible centering, and that's why believing cannot be understood without taking into account the form – the structure of the object – given in the experience, which is the focus of The Glory second part. The form is the thing itself in its manifestation, the nucleus that gives coherence to all the aspects of the manifestation, and gives believing its specific nature.

Therefore, religious experience can ' t be understood only in terms of an impenetrable subjective certitude founded in (IR)rational or emotive dogmatism. We face an experience that affirms itself as a convection of the lifework, perception and praxis of the subject, radically referred to an objective truth criterion. This is an important introductory hint to the aesthetically approach Blathers is sketching.

He understands this reciprocal reference of subject and object in religious experience, as that of the true perception -Haranguing – of the beautiful object in nature or art, where the description of any experience of Joyous contemplation of beauty is incomplete without the consideration of its

particular object (and no other). The subject experiences himself guided by the object that brings together various capacities, or develops them, in a fashion that cannot be properly described in terms of a causal explanation that considers the object as a mere physical entity.

The analysis of the experience demands itself to consider the presence of the object in the subject, and of the subject in the object. Truth, as beauty, isn't just conformity to external parameters or expectations: a breathtaking landscape or a Mozart masterpiece seems to have "everything in its place"; it poses, inside the experience, its own objective criteria. As we experience the beautiful object, we wouldn't normally struggle to condense it in one formula, definition or perspective point to "capture" what it is about.

We would rather, as Blathers repeatedly remembers, give ourselves to the experience, walking around the sculpture or painting, letting ourselves deepen our view of it by the successive partial perspectives that constitute the richness of the experience. We are proposed a symphonic experience of truth, whose harmonious variety structures an inner conformity that penetrates us subjects, who find ourselves in this music that "speaks" of us, as well as to us.

What is "spoken" it's not just a metaphoric resemblance of what is said in language, but its more profound human roots: the logos directed to the very center of the human being where all the dimensions of his experience are integrated, and he finds himself addressed as a true human being. Thing itself and representation What is given to us in perception is the manifestation of the thing itself, not just a mere signing.

<https://assignbuster.com/phenomenology-and-theological-aesthetics-assignment/>

For Christians, Jesus is the manifestation of God, in him is revealed the truth about God and about the human being, creature of the world. He is the nucleus ND permanent form of the revelation which comprehends the Scripture, Mary, the Church, the Creation and the Eschatology. The true scope of the form is condensed in the formula: “ He who sees me, sees the Father”. The form does not testify about himself but about the Father, and so it is the Father who testifies about the truth of his words, actions, gestures, etc. I. E. The truth of his manifestation. Thus, the thing itself manifests, and its manifesting – its self- giving – is so essential to it that, as far as we can grasp its misters, it really is this very elf-emptying seeking to reach the human being as testimony of the Father. Jesus’ life reveals itself as a total openness to the Father: his most intimate identity is an act of reception. In Jesus, mission and being are one; what he does is not an outer expression of his identity, but the active reception of God’s will.

So, in Jesus’ experience of the Father, their absolute reciprocal reference is revealed in the form of obedience which is not an irrational subjugation to an external imposition, but the receiving of his being from He who is all for him, with whom he is one in the Spirit. This openness to the Father drives Jesus to the human world. His being with others is the Father’s will turned into response, because the Father wants to manifest himself to mankind.

The revelation affirms the rich density of the life of a human being, where the ultimate Being reveals itself: the form of Jesus is inseparable from the sportsmanlike frame in which it occurring. So, the true experience of the form presupposes a subject within a history, a community, a body, opened

through his expectations, plans and actions to the future. Our always partial experience grows as his constituents are opened through its attention to He who gives completely to us, in an infinite process that seeks its fulfillment in the object that captivates us in such a profound manner.

The absolute became flesh and made his dwelling among our history, our cultures, our lands and, thus, becoming one of us, fulfilled himself accomplishing the Father's will in the Spirit. Historicity and understanding For Blathers the historical-critical method 's most important contribution is to show how God's word is God's word in human word. He has has nothing but praise for the academic rigor of these methods, which made possible a profound rediscovery of the Scriptures, the Holy Fathers and the tradition.

He denounces, however, a common methodological extrapolation that subtly precludes the objective pole of revelation: exegesis dogmatically reduces itself to an analytic of the sign within the net of its historical mediations, that seeks nothing more but the reflection of the community about its faith, with its hermeneutic criterion being its paraxial significance for our present existential urgencies.

Our theologian feels compelled to reaffirm the manifestation of the truth in the objective form that is the Scripture, or rather, the books that form the Scripture, which, though incarnated in our present perplexities, is far more than a " dialogue" about them. The Scripture is a form submitted to the form of Christ, constituted of different forms articulated through complex relations. The completeness and profundity of the form of Christ is made evident in the richness variety of these forms. None of them is obsolete.

Such prejudice is based in the previously mentioned impoverished experience of truth which imposes reduction as the exclusive form of universalistic and understanding. Beyond any unforgiving systemization of the symphonic truth that has its nucleus in Christ, the plenitude of the form manifests only in the final harmony of these irreducible forms. Hence, from this form-centered hermeneutic perspective, we cannot claim that scientific exegetical methods per SE provide us the definitive access to this truth.

Our author confronts this pretended superiority, with the testimony of the first apostles and Fathers, who didn't only display and admirable intellectual power, but gave themselves to the living Truth that became their lives, showing us that not only the true exegete but the true theologian is only the saints. Affirming this, we are not renouncing to the objectivity of truth, or despising exegetical sciences. We must be critically aware of the historically mediated categories (conceptual, aesthetic, etc.) of the Scripture, as well as ours.

But history is not just a collection of facts, or a coherent articulation of sense that stood indifferently in front of us. Understanding the Scripture is recognizing -I. E. Letting us be grasped by- the spirit that animates it. It supposes human limitation, the particularity of the form in which it manifests, for only because of it, it is accessible to other limited humans as ourselves. Such limitation constitutes the openness of our historical and cultural horizons, supported by the objectification of a written text, articulating a living tradition.

Tradition, the form of the community through history, living up to our days, finds then its true form as the testifying, embodied in all its declarations and actions, that finds its truth in its submission to the form of Christ, light, path and Judge. This doesn't exclude the possibility of unfaithfulness to this calling, but rather stresses rearmament the need to test oneself under the light of the guiding objective pole. This understanding of the revelation and tradition in its historicity, reveals itself as a calling to the truth, mediation or conversion.

History is this history which we consider, and it takes the form of our own patriarchal history as we understand it. Hence, historicity it's not an obstacle, as neither is it just a neutral bridge to the truth. Its openness, as it constitutes our understanding of what was revealed to us in Palestine and was given to us through the experiences of others conformed to the arm of Christ, constitutes simultaneously our own self-understanding.

So the understanding -the experience - of the revelation enabled by the tradition which we form, reveals itself as a commitment to truth, as an integral response in the form of a conversion orientated objectively by a calling. This committed response in conversion, as well as the very understanding of the calling, presuppose a capacity to (self) critic, which does ' t identify with the historiographer methods but uses them and urges its development to understand critically (I. E. In conversion attitude) the historical situation in the past and nowadays.

The call for conversion, the ultimate critical principle, sovereign over our own criteria, reaches us in a moment – in every moment – in our own questions,

<https://assignbuster.com/phenomenology-and-theological-aesthetics-assignment/>

our own already traveled path, building or destroying a future expectation. In the believer community, the living face of tradition, centered by the Scripture and the Eucharist, the individual is reached by Jesus who calls him or her by name. His life, death and resurrection, the very form revelation of God, are the form of this calling.

And that profound is, when understood and believed, also the form of the free response enabled by this revelation. Praxis, responsibility and beyond Modern thought has sought to found its humiliating project as a paraxial imperative of reason, where truth achieves its fulfillment in an uninterested and persevering action: giving one's own life for a more human world for all human beings, specially for those we put the last, even protecting and Judging with the same Justice friends and enemies. The experience of the Christian commandment of love disapproves nothing of this demand and aspiration.

Rather it has much to admire, and even to confess humiliated, due to its own critic potential, its sins of power and violence, hen its distinctive force is the cross, its absurd weakness, failure and inadvertent power, only experienced through one's own sin and powerlessness. For the believer this commitment to the others to have life, and that they might have it more abundantly, is the following of Jesus; not a theoretical affirmation about " religious truths" or some ritualistic praxis to gain heaven, but an all-life integrating response to the gracious love he has offering.

Love refers here to the content of Jesus' life: a total self-giving to the others. This " message" embodied in the impoliteness of a human life , demands a

<https://assignbuster.com/phenomenology-and-theological-aesthetics-assignment/>

correlative life response, whose truth criterion is the conformation of this life to the form of love, or its rejection. Thus, all the infinite possibilities of forms of the Christian life, integrate in the archetypical form of Christ, and, because his life was his total self-givens to the others, specially the most needed of healing, the follower is enabled and invited to see in his or her neighbor, the misters of that love: God himself has given his life for this man or woman.

Once again Blathers proposes Mary as the true believer model, for she appears to s as the model of openness: she emptied herself for the life of God to flourish, and, doing so, she opened mankind to his revelation. In this foundational human “ yes” to God, we face the pre-eminence of the feminine form over the masculine form in the objectively true response to the calling. Through the mother, he was opened to the world, to the others an their life, and to his self-discovery.

His life is framed by the “ yes” of the mother: in Nazareth and before the cross, she gave herself to the misters. Theology must understand - contemplate - the importance f this human constitutive conditions for the Christian response: the corporal and affective experience of the mother (previous to and beyond linguistic objectification) founds the experience of every human being of the world as good (bonus), true (verve) and beautiful (fulcrum)xv. This openness directs us to the worldly things and, through them, to the Being, and, most of all, to the possibility of infinite love.

This is the horizon of Christian praxis. This experience of fulfillment through openness, which encounters in the neighbor the misters of God’s redeeming love is thus mediated in ordinary life by the immunity. The believers gather

responding to the Father's calling in Jesus to flourish in this shared Spirit of service, hope and expectancy, that goes beyond the sums of their individual experiences. They conform the form of the Church that serves the form of Christ manifesting him.

In this way the community's life goes beyond its factual frontiers in the form of a loving life conformed to that of Jesus, where the extra ecclesiae null callus formula expresses not an elitist barbarism, but the universal calling signed by the humble, paraxial and gracious invitation, where imposition has and should've had no place. As we have seen, this calling that brings the community outside itself is always situated. God didn't instrumentalize human nature, but fully revealed himself in it and still does here and now, appearing and calling.

Thus, neither through a theoretical faith nor through an enterprise to be achieved, can the follower replace the Schwa deer Gestalt, the vision of the form that in this world, and in the most concrete way, reaches him or her in this calling. In this human perceptive openness God speaks to his creatures, and because love alone is believable, have they been rasped by the unifying misters of redemption that assumes their history and animates them in our present life, lighted by its scatological fulfillment anticipated in Jesus.

The human tendency to the infinite is fulfilled and radically transformed in Jesus, truly man, and truly God, in such a manner that openness is not closed, for Jesus himself, as we have seen, receives the totality of his being from the Father, in the unity of the same Spirit. The human life is thus introduced to the Trinitarian lifelike, and sent in mission to the world. But this

response constituted as a truly profound human praxis in that glimpse of eternity, is only possible as a gift, never as an extrapolation of human expectancies.

The nucleus of the calling, of Jesus' life as the fulfillment of his mission, is neither the external imputation of a new place in the cosmos derived from his natural place, nor the recruitment in the most humanistic or revolutionary world project. Any cosmological or anthropological reduction of the Revelation in Jesus, misses the truth his life manifestation. What was and is given to human experience in Jesus, resembles no true analogy to human reason or actions, left to their own resources, to which it is, at least, scandal and madness.

Though truly pipelining of his humanity, man's relationship with God is not a personal relationship, and that is why, our theologian warns, the phenomenological way cannot encounter with the essence of religious experience, for it is, at least, inattentive speaking about it in terms of dialogue, and of God as "interlocutor" of maxi. There's no discussion, adult emancipation, or middle point agreement here, but a self-giving obedient response.

Jesus experience is archetypical in the sense that its integrative authority lies in its absolute singularity. As we have seen, this integration takes place in the true reception -Haranguing - of the form revealed in Jesus' life. That form is the Glory of God, which shined in his plenitude in the Cross, where the absolute beauty of the substance of God revealed itself evidently and

irresistibly. This is the uniqueness of redemption that no cosmological or anthropological reduction can duplicate.

To the thing itself: Hierarchical, a theological aesthetics Huskers referred to the phenomenological attitude as aesthetically. This term is also the key access to Baluster's thought in his most well-known work structured as a helically aesthetics (the Lord's Glory, Hierarchical), followed by a Therefore (Thermodynamic) and, finally, a Theology (Theologies). Blathers relies on the renewing power of Christian and western tradition which, he contests, presupposes the methodological pre-eminence of the aesthetic approach to speak about our experience of God.

This interpretation denounces the perversion of theology as a static system attached from life, as well as its reduction to a militant ethical project. Baluster's recuperation of the fulcrum before the bonus and the verve, certainly refers to beauty, but, more precisely, to the sublime, in Kantian terms. In its experience we are captivated not just by the conformity we experience in the object, but subjugated by its overwhelming worth in which we discover our insignificance, filled and elevated.

Our author finds this perspective behind the whole tradition, but focuses, as tradition, in the experience of the disciples and the first believers of the kerugma, who didn't testify a new knowledge or ethical way, but confessed being overwhelmed by the life of this Maxine, whose transparency evidenced for them what human life really is through the eyes of God. They couldn't ignore this proposal that demanded and received a response, whether of acceptance and redemption, or scandal and damnation.

We have discussed how love is the form of the life of Jesus. He didn't just proclaimed salvation to the prostitutes, lepers, tax collectors, Pharisees or fishermen, but lived among them, and doing so, in his most simple actions and in his miracles, never gave testimony of himself but of the Father who had sent him to mankind. But the splendor of this form has its center in the Cross, where this whole life of self-giving love is desiderated, mocked, fallen in disgrace and abandoned.

The crucified finds himself not only ripped apart from the men and women he was sent to, but also from the Father who sent him: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?". Rejected, Jesus appears most clearly, as he who is sent, as the free communication of God that is at once the possibility of communion with him. As far as human reason can understand, that's who the Son in the immanent Trinity really is, the Our-genesis that pressures since ever the genesis, the self-emptiness, made visible, touchable and urging in the Cross.

If reason sought the Cross, it would lose itself in self destruction or in the morbid contemplation of an irrational death and suffering, without any bendable link with the ones it pretends to give life for. It might be reasonable to give life for justice and the well-being of human beings, but it makes no sense to love -in Jesus, give life for - every human benefiting. This is what the disciples slowly grasp since the Resurrection: that God accomplished the ultimate extreme for the sake of mankind giving it his his own Son.

His absolute self-givens still offers in the Cross saving calling, silently shouting in terrifying loneliness. Theological aesthetics is, then, no

<https://assignbuster.com/phenomenology-and-theological-aesthetics-assignment/>

aesthetically theology. In this absurdity, Jesus radically fulfills his mission of integrating in the form of his life the totality of the human experience, sharing the fate of those who live and lose their life in the absurdity of suffering, indifference and desperation. This integration isn't just a titanic solidarity that somehow, after the Resurrection, reaches us as an external imputation of redemption.

Blathers insists in the traditional faith declaration: Jesus took our place and saved us; in him, all men and women have died and been resurrected. He died, and doing so he, the innocent, studiously made his own the sins of mankind introducing this evil in the divine lifelike, up to the point that he also suffered the condemnation of hell. In perhaps some of his most interesting and dramatic pages, Blathers describes the Holy Saturday experience of Jesus descent to hell, where he experienced himself cutter out from every relation, from the world, the others and even, in the absolute extreme, from his Father.

We can only imagine -meditate in the light of the Scripture and the saint's life, that report us this misters – this absolute experience of the Saint himself, haring the destiny of the damned. Therefore, contemplation lies at the center of these considerations, for we find ourselves in a misters. Not between incomprehensible affirmations, but realizing how the extreme love fully revealed in the cross has broken every ethical barrier and radically transformed our sense of ourselves, our world and where lies the ultimate reality in which we dwell.

This is the self-giving love that in its true and evident splendor enraptures the deepest intimacy of man or woman, enabling the response, for love alone is believable. So love is the absence of God xv, and the medium in which we are made participants of the Trinitarian life. The Glory is the manifestation of this redemption crucified love, fully accomplished in the Resurrection, in which we are resurrected, integrated in the path traced and completed by Jesus.

Supported in this aesthetically enrapture in the form of Jesus, we are capable of carrying out our response, as the acceptance of our role in this Grant Theatre del Mound. Blathers explores the Therefore of the following, in the frame of the bigger action of Redemption, characterized through the image of Cauldron De la Barb's assistance. Each one is invited to accept freely the role reserved for him or her by God, between the characters of the action. Obedience appears here as letting God be God in one's own life, just like Mary, and, ultimately, Jesus.

The follower is incorporated in the central action which inevitably leads to the Cross, the redeemers Haranguing of the form of Christ, which enables our response, conforming it to him, sent to the others in loving self-givens. Thus, in the neighbor we find the acting love of Jesus for this limited human being, that is addressed by his or her singular personal name. The neighbor is not just an associate or the beneficiary in our praxis, but a particular person, named by God, singled out of the mere world of things.

And, for I recognize in this experience the godly love for this sinner, I am reminded of my own sin and acknowledge thankfully the redemption I was

also given. In strict sense, I'm not to be "another Jesus" but a co-participant in his redeeming action. His is the accomplishing and the Judgment. All the dogmatism of Christian faith stems from this encounter space between the believer and the neighborhoods, in which they are integrated by Christ.

There is manifested his being sent by the Father, his true humanity as the true face of the Father in the all-involving love of the Spirit. This mister is remembered, meditated and cherished in the community by its expression in the declarations of faith, as we have seen, no esoterically outwardly affirmations, or normative tools measured by its usefulness for our praxis. Only from this path can the believer attempt a word conformed to the truth of the Misters to which he or she loses his own life, to be born in the new life opened by Jesus.

This is the true position and role of Theology. From this experience, it's Seibel to risk a word about the truth of the world, in dialogue with its now regrettably divorced companion, philosophy. There blossoms the truth about the human being, and the truth about God. This knowledge, aware of the absolute truth from where it flows, as well as its limitation to an analogical language, is the Christian noosing, the service of the truth developed in tradition, expressed in the teachings of the Magistrate and permanently explored by theologians.

Conclusion (I): Servants of human experience Hans Urs von Baluster's theology invites the reader to realize the human capacity to seek and reach - or, rather, being reached by - the thing itself. Even more, the full profoundness of the ultimate "thing" itself is revealed precisely in a man,

<https://assignbuster.com/phenomenology-and-theological-aesthetics-assignment/>

Jesus. Human experience is not just a sign of the absolute, but the space of its true Revolutionaries, which awakens and enables the obeying response of letting oneself be appropriated by the form of Christ.

In him, man is really turned into the language of Goodwin. This full attention of the believer in the contemplation of the only important thing, God, orientates him or her to the world in a self-giving that, just like Jesus, is not a canonical predication, but the true embracement of the world's hopes, pains, and struggles. As we have seen, the faithfulness to the Spirit which constitutes the community, prevents its mission from the temptation to build its own kingdom in this world, for what is now lived is a pilgrimage.

This faithfulness demands from the community -its authority structure, its rituals, its groups and individual members form of the life of Jesus: exposition to the world and powerlessness, in order for the true power to find its silent way. "Integrity", as von Blathers calls it, is not just a catalog's desire for an impossible comeback to Christendom; it's a denial to the Cross, the fall in the ever present temptation of building securities out of ourselves. Christians may and should collaborate with all human projects to protect and foster the human spirit.

Doing so they shouldn't look down on the nonbeliever, not only because of the vivid memories of their shameful past, but because Jesus himself elevated the love of the pagan (the good Samaritan) to the level of his own lovelier. His is the Spirit to flow wherever the Father wishes. Thus, the Church rejoices in Jesus or all development of the human world, but should 't measure itself against the world's criteria: growing number, influence,

appreciation, etc. Xiii Only the Spirit gives the measure: the form of Christ, poor, unarmed, respectful of the human response, and abandoned in God.

The community knows itself as forgiven sinners, and there lies the permanent force of its critic capacity in order to continuously convert itself to God's forgiving love. The consciousness of this love, and their poor response to it, drives Christians confidently and humbly to the world, given to them as the talent, not as property. Far away from despising this world, the believer cooperates in what he or she knows is a never ending task that it's not up to us to measure.

This anticipated experience of the Kingdom is that of giving reason with meekness and fear, through life, of the loving hope which fulfills the longings of the world. Excursus: This Lifework Blathers dialogues with the contemporary European religious indifference, as well as the perplexities of the post-conciliator Christianity. What sense can it make to discuss philosophically this theology in a seemingly inverse context like Peru and Latin America, with such particular experience of widespread institutionalizing of individual autonomy, massive access to technology, wealth and leisure, religious pluralism or practical atheism?

Let us briefly address this question, before finishing. One day in October it is possible to see a *Senor De Los Mailbags* procession along the main pathway of this University where professors and students of its Science and Engineering School carry the image into their building between typical chants, attire and even Peruvians women with the traditional incense.

Statistical data shows this was and is a familiar experience for many of these professionals of natural