

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to introduce the fifth issue of *Marcel Studies*. The Journal was first published in 2016, and has continued to grow since then. We are aware that many people are studying Marcel's ideas, and engaging in research on his thought, all around the world, and we hope that the Journal will assist you with your work. Our aim is not only to promote Marcel scholarship, but we believe strongly that many of Marcel's themes continue to offer profound insights to us today as we struggle with many challenges.

The articles in this issue deal with two important themes in Marcel, the question of immortality and the question of hope. The first article, by Zachary Willcutt, takes up the fascinating question of the possibility of developing an argument for immortality from the structure of human beings. By means of a consideration of the rich and well established views of St Augustine on this question, Willcutt skillfully shows how the Augustinian view is developed in Marcel's thought by means of his discussion of love as gift, culminating in the act of self-sacrifice for the sake of the other in which the person exists not in herself but in the thou. Willcutt goes on to explore how this implies that there might be a shared eternity between self and thou, which together transgress the boundaries of death.

The second article by Cheng-Ling Yu turns to the question of hope, a profound topic for modern culture, a culture that is becoming more under the sway of various forms of nihilism. Marcel is an important thinker on the topic of hope. With Marcel as a guide, Cheng-Ling is interested in the question of how to think about what constitutes a genuine hope, the kind of hope that can give meaning and grounding to human existence. He explores the topic in a carefully nuanced way by means of the example of Etty Hillesum, who was a victim of the concentration camps during World War II, but who exhibited a kind of hope that is profound and invincible. This kind of hope has to be explained as an important aspect of the human condition, Cheng-Ling argues, as he uses Marcel's thought in an attempt to explain how such hope is possible. Along the way, he contrasts this analysis of hope with more contemporary materialistic and reductionist accounts.

We are also very pleased to include four book reviews in this issue on recent work by William Desmond, on French existentialism, and on the question of Christian Philosophy. Be sure also to check out our "News and Views" section, where we have information about recent Marcelian scholarship, an announcement about a new Journal, and a timely reflection from Marcel on the question of values and their justification, bringing out the sharp contrast between his views and Sartre's.

A reminder that *Marcel Studies* is an on-line peer reviewed, international Journal dedicated to furthering understanding and appreciation of the work of Marcel. We welcome submissions from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives on topics and themes that pertain to any aspect of Marcel's thought. We encourage younger scholars especially to submit their work to the Journal. The editors will make a special effort to work with younger scholars in an attempt to bring the

fruits of their scholarship to a worldwide audience. The aim of our Journal is not only to promote, but to encourage, Marcel scholarship, and, keeping in mind also that the Journal is interdisciplinary, one of our goals is to help prospective authors in a variety of fields to bring their work to publication.

Thanks to all of our readers and members of the Gabriel Marcel Society for their continued interest and support. For those wishing to become a member of the Society, please send an email to the address below.

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April 2021
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