

From Temporality to Eternity: Three Philosophical Approaches

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Received: 2014-10-12; Accepted: 2014-12-15

This article studies the problem of eternal life from a philosophical perspective. It focuses on the approaches of Bergson, Husserl, and Heidegger from contemporary philosophy, and shows that using these three philosophical approaches can better explain certain aspects of revealed theology, such as resurrection of flesh, eternity in a transcendent dimension, and eternal life as the angels in heaven. In this way, a point of interaction between philosophy and theology is highlighted.

Keywords: eternal life, contemporary philosophy, Bergson, Husserl, Heidegger, revealed theology.

Introduction

Questions about eternal life are *rational*, belonging to those questions that, as Kant says, human reason “cannot decline, as they are presented by its own nature, but which it cannot answer, as they transcend every faculty of the mind” (Kant 2000, 3). So, although thinking of eternal life can appear worthless because it transcends every power of reason, we cannot avoid thinking of it (Findlay 1978). These rational questions can be considered in two different ways that we need to distinguish.² We can consider the pure philosophical possibility of eternity (for example, as in Parmenides, Spinoza, Nietzsche, etc.); otherwise, we can consider the eternity in a theological way. According to revealed theology doctrine (Hebraism, Christianity, and Islam), God is transcendent and eternal life is also transcendent. Therefore, when we think of eternity within these theologies, we have to consider it as different from immanent temporality. Using an immanent approach, we could think through temporality without the problem of substantial differences from it: we can think of *eternity as eternal time*. A

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2. About this difference see Padgett (1992), Helm (1988), and Craig (2001).

transcendent approach to the question of eternity, instead, leads to the great problem of thinking of eternity as *different* from temporality, because it is investigated *through the difference between God and the world*. So we have a great difficulty: eternal life is different from temporal life, but temporal life is the only point of view from which we can think of eternal life (Harris 1987).

We have to begin from temporality, and so we have to decide *what definition* of temporality can be useful when thinking about eternity. We could consider many definitions of temporality that have been provided throughout the course of philosophy, from Plato to Heidegger. Many of these have been used by medieval philosophers when considering revealed theology, both in Hebrew and in Christian and Muslim contexts (Porro 2001).¹ Modern philosophy takes two general approaches to temporality, one idealistic (Hobbes, Leibniz, Spinoza, Locke, Hume, Kant) and the other realistic (Descartes, Galilei, Newton) (Melamed, forthcoming). Both are strongly linked to mechanical physics, and therefore contain a notion of time overcome and criticised by contemporary thought. When considering contemporary approaches to questions of temporality, it can be more useful to open new possibilities to think of eternal life. I propose three important philosophical approaches from contemporary philosophy: those of Bergson, Husserl, and Heidegger. Through these philosophies of time we may think of the transcendence of eternal life in terms of three possibilities.

Temporality as a Relationship between Memory and Matter

Bergson made one of the earlier attempts to define philosophy's irreducibility regarding positive sciences. Against the positivistic idea that science will explain everything progressively, and that philosophy's destiny is to become a philosophy of science, Bergson investigated the fields in which our experience cannot be described by scientific methods. From these investigations, he found an irreducible difference between the scientific approach and inner life experience, especially regarding the consideration of temporality. In his essays *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (1888) and *Matter and Memory* (1896), Bergson showed that there are two irreducible meanings of time, one by science and the other by life. The sciences give us a notion of time as objective, measurable, and, therefore, quantitative: every moment is a precise quantity of time (for example, one second or one minute), and this quantity is infinitely repeatable. This is the temporality we know through the clock and which we consider in scientific experiments. And yet, if we analyze this quantitative consideration of time, we understand that it is a *spatial consideration* of temporality. Every moment on the clock is a portion

1. About contemporary notions of time applied in theological contexts, see Ramige (1935).

of space. It is not time *tout court*; indeed, we can represent it as a line formed by points: every point is equal and juxtaposed with others.

If we consider our inner experience of time, however, we discover that

No two moments are identical in a conscious being. Take for example the simplest feeling, suppose it to be constant, absorb the whole personality in it: the consciousness which will accompany this feeling will not be able to remain identical with itself for two consecutive moments, since the following moment always contains, over and above the preceding one, the memory the latter has left it. A consciousness which had two identical moments would be a consciousness without memory. (Bergson 2007, 187)

I can make the same thing in two different moments, but the consciousness of those moments cannot be identical, because the latter is lived through the past experience of the former. I am not the same in two different moments, because my lived experience lasts in me; it is present in my memory. Every new moment of life adds new content to my memory. Therefore, it is impossible to have the same experience in two different moments; each moment of life is unique and unrepeatable.

Furthermore, two moments are different even if they are quantitatively identical; indeed, I may perceive one minute as an hour or as a second, according to the quality of my living. If I live that minute bored, it appears to me an hour; if I live it while happy, it may seem to last only a second. The moment's quality distinguishes it from the others.

Lastly, in the scientific consideration of time, the latter moment substitutes the former, so there is a juxtaposition of moments. In life's temporality, however, every moment adds itself to the others, so we can represent time as a ball of wool that grows constantly. The living time is the *duration* of the moments, one in the others. Each moment is present in the others; there is no exteriority between them, but a constant compenetration. The "pure duration excludes all idea of juxtaposition, reciprocal exteriority and extension" (Bergson 2007, 188). Because every moment is unique and adds itself to the whole of life, we cannot represent our time as a line. The time we live is irreducibly different from the time considered by science.

There are two possible conceptions of time, the one free from all alloy, the other surreptitiously bringing in the idea of space. Pure duration is the form which the succession of our conscious states assumes when our ego lets itself *live*, when it refrains from separating its present state from its former states. (Bergson 2001, 114)

The question of time is linked to the status of matter and memory. We cannot explain all the arguments about this relationship, but it is sufficient to remember that, according to Bergson, matter is a set of

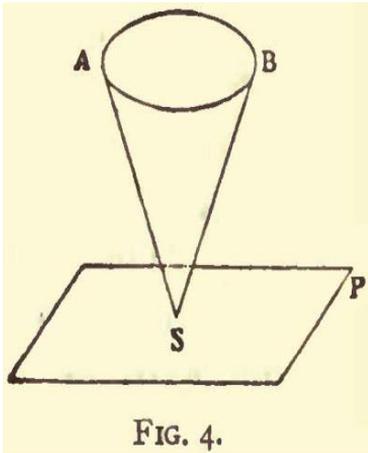
images (“images,” because material things are different from consciousness but are always perceived by consciousness). These moving images are ever-changing. All material realities change and leave their precedent status; therefore, they are always an “actual state.” If the matter is, time by time, an actual disposition, it cannot be its past. A piece of iron or wood cannot replace its past; it is just what it is. The matter cannot remember. But our brain is a kind of matter; therefore, if memory is not present in the matter, the brain cannot explain the possibility to remember. The brain, because it is a matter, is always an *actual disposition*. The brain disposes itself according to the actual moment, to think the actual events or actual images. By the brain, we can explain thoughts about actual (or recently present) objects. Where did it come from memory? My far memories are not present in the actual disposition of my brain, but I can represent them when I need to. If the matter can explain just the present thoughts, *the memory is immaterial*. The memory is a reality that *does not depend on the matter*, but at once *can change the matter’s disposition*. When we remember, it is not the brain that elaborates the memory, but it is the memory that changes the brain’s disposition. How could the brain produce the memories of whether the memories exist even when we do not remember? Our memories always exist, because they are always available. In each moment of our life we can remember, depending on the utility of memories in the actual moment.

But how can the past, which, by hypothesis, has ceased to be, preserve itself? Have we not here a real contradiction?—We reply that the question is just whether the past has ceased to exist or whether it has simply ceased to be useful. You define the present in an arbitrary manner as *that which is*, whereas the present is simply *what is being made*. (Bergson 2004, 193)

We carry with us our memory, a growing immaterial spirit that we cannot wholly, but only partially consider, every time. Bergson’s scheme representing the relationship between memory and matter is as follows:

The cone is the spirit, the plane is the matter. Their tangent point is the actual moment, in which we put only a little content of the memory that we possess.

We can use our spirit, or our inner life, only partially in the present time.



Every moment of life is made by this relationship between matter and memory: the past is the whole of the situations we have experienced; the present is the actual relationship between thought and matter, in which we choose our actions and memories; and the future is the prevision of future situations, or future dispositions of matter. The present, or the actual relationship between matter and memory, is the condition in which to choose memories and think of the future. We use our immaterial thoughts only through the matter.

Now, as we have shown, pure perception, which is the lowest degree of mind, – mind without memory – is really part of matter, as we understand matter. We may go further: memory does not intervene as a function of which matter has no presentiment and which it does not imitate in its own way. If matter does not remember the past, it is because it repeats the past unceasingly, because, subject to necessity, it unfolds a series of moments of which each is the equivalent of the preceding moment and may be deduced from it: thus its past is truly given in its present. But a being which evolves more or less freely creates something new every moment: in vain, then, should we seek to read its past in its present unless its past were deposited within it in the form of memory. Thus, to use again a metaphor which has more than once appeared in this book, it is necessary, and for similar reasons, that the past should be acted by matter, imagined by mind. (Bergson 2004, 273)

We can use this theory to reflect on the possibility of eternal life. We have to remove the limits of time according to this consideration. Time's limits concern the impossibility of thinking of all moments in our memory that represent all the contents of our spirit. We are constrained to think only of the contents we need in an actual moment. We may think of transcendence in two ways: (1) eliminating one element of immanent reality, that is, *eliminating the matter* to consider just the life as spirit, (2) or *eliminating the difference* between matter and memory, trying to think of them as being the same thing, for example a *spiritual matter*.

(1) By eliminating the matter, we can consider eternal life as *pure memory*. If there is only the memory, our thoughts are not conditioned by the actual disposition of matter. Because each disposition of matter requires a particular content and constrains our spirit not to consider all its other contents, we can represent the whole of our life's experiences out of the matter. Each thought could contain within itself all the memories of our life. Each truth of our memory *could contain every*

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truth. The absence of temporality could be the absence of juxtaposition among thoughts of our life, the possibility of grasping in each memory the truth of all the other memories. All the contents of the spirit would be given in each spirit's act. Out of temporality's limits the compenetration of moments becomes total: each moment is present in the others, all the moments are present in the same moment. Eternal life could be a purely spiritual life, in which each act of our spirit understands the whole of truth through a memory.

(2) By eliminating the difference between matter and memory, we can consider eternal life as a *spiritual matter*. To imagine a spiritual matter, we have to consider together the spirit's possibilities and the matter's possibilities: the spirit can represent the truth and can understand the reality, but it cannot produce the reality. The reality of representation is given through the matter; the spirit cannot give the reality by itself. It has to receive the reality. The matter can instil a representation of truth into the spirit. If the matter and spirit become the same thing, on the one hand, the spirit could materialise the reality through the representation; on the other hand, the matter may not be limited by juxtaposition and exclusion; it could be "duration," like the memory. Each disposition of the matter may not hide other possible dispositions, but they could appear in exactly the same way that each content of memory is compenetrated by all other contents. For example, in each disposition of our body, we could see all the other dispositions of our body, and all the history of our body by a particular disposition. Of course, we do not have to intend this "materialisation" as "creation" of reality, because only God can create the reality. The materialisable reality is the reality created only by God. Overcoming the limits of temporality does not mean overcoming the limits of God's creation.

Starting from Bergson's philosophy of temporality, we can therefore define two possibilities to think of eternal life in a transcendent way: as pure memory that understands the whole of knowledge in each content; or as spiritual matter that can replace the matter's dispositions by its representation, considering each disposition as capable of showing all created dispositions. By the former, we could think of the possibility of the *life of the soul* (without its body); by the latter, we could think of the *resurrection of flesh*.

Temporality as an Inner Flow of Consciousness

In 1905, Husserl delivered his lectures on the phenomenology of the inner consciousness of time. He began these lectures by recalling those of his master Franz Brentano, who described the consciousness of time as the result of the passage from impression (present) to imagination (past or future). According to Brentano, "impression" is produced by actual perception, but its content does not disappear with successive perceptions, because it becomes an image that remains temporally. This

modification *from* perception *to* image allows the object to be held in the consciousness; when we receive a successive impression of the same object, we associate the object's new impression and its precedent image. In this way, according to Brentano, we perceive the object's *duration*. The duration is constituted by this association between perceptions and imaginations. According to Husserl, this theory of "original association" is positive, because it grasps a phenomenological aspect: we have perception and imagination, present and not present, as a *unitary act of consciousness*. This theory, however, is problematic because it does not explain how we distinguish the present impression from a past image, since they are simultaneous in consciousness.

From a phenomenological point of view, we have to describe how we constitute the perception of time. Husserl points out that it is not just a perception of *temporal objects*, but also a *temporal perception*.

It is certainly evident that the perception of a temporal object itself has temporality, that the perception of duration itself presupposes the duration of perception, that the perception of any temporal form itself has its temporal form. (Husserl 1991, §7, p. 24)

To describe how we perceive the temporality, Husserl uses melody as an example. When we hear a melody, we perceive a sequence of tones as a unique sound that lasts: "'Throughout' this whole flow of consciousness, one and the same tone is intended as enduring" (Husserl 1991, §8, p. 26).

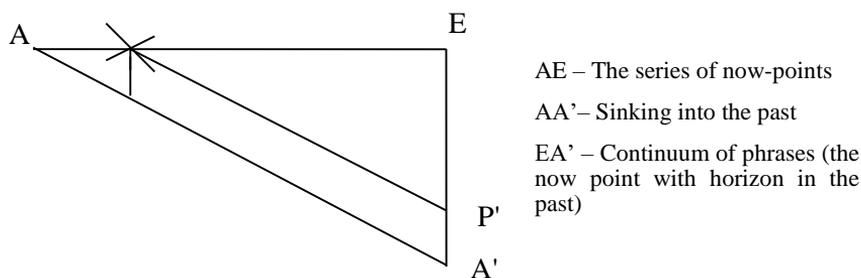
We perceive the present not as an atomic impression (as Brentano argues), but as a continuity of tones, as an extension. Because a new tone always enters into this continuity and other tones deep behind it, our present perception is a sequence in becoming. A new element enters in the "now," while others give way. Each new tone is clearer than the others that progressively vanish, but we cannot separate each tone from its predecessors.

We know that the running-off phenomenon is a continuity of constant changes. This continuity forms an inseparable unity, inseparable into extended sections that could exist by themselves and inseparable into phases that could exist by themselves, into points of the continuity. The parts that we single out by abstraction can exist only in the whole running-off; and this is equally true of the phases, the points that belong to the running-off continuity. (Husserl 1991, §10, p. 29)

To perceive this continuity, our consciousness has to maintain, or retain, each tone heard; otherwise, we perceive only a single tone. This act is called "retention," and goes with "original impression." So we perceive at once two continuities, one of impressions and one of retentions, in which we retain the tone in the same order: impressions are perceived as temporal sequences, thanks to retentions. The

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difference between impressions and retentions is that the sequence of retentions is more extended than that of impressions (because retentions last longer in the consciousness), but they are related and converge in the “now.” Husserl explains this double sequence through the following scheme:



Our intentions on impressions go with retentions, but also with waiting for a new impression. This openness is always present in our intention, and also when we focus our attention on a pure memory, far from an actual perception. This constant intention of openness, or “waiting for,” is called “protention” by Husserl. Therefore, our perception is temporal, because our consciousness is structurally temporal. Duration appears in our consciousness because we perceive like a flow, or like a field, and not like a point. This flow, or field, is finite and its extension is constant. In every perception we have a main intention, and around it we have a series of modifications, towards the past (retentions) and towards the future (protentions). Usually, we focus on impression, but main intention can be also a retention, or a protention, or a “secondary memory” (further from now). Independently from our aim of intention, our acts of apprehension implicate this flow, this extension between past and future. The flow appears through objects of apprehension, but it cannot be an object of apprehension. Husserl defines this flow as “absolute subjectivity”:

We can say nothing other than the following: this flow is something we speak of *in conformity with what is constituted*, but it is not “something in objective time.” It is *absolute subjectivity* and has the absolute properties of something to be designated metaphorically as “flow”; of something that originates in a point of actuality, in a primal source-point, “the now,” and so on. (Husserl 1991, §36, p. 79)¹

Now, we can try to define what could be eternal life starting with Husserl’s phenomenology of inner consciousness of time. In a passage of integrative texts of his lectures, there is a brief passage where Husserl

1. About this question, see Sandowsky (2006).

speaks about divine consciousness, as that *infinite consciousness* that represents temporal objects without temporality.

Perception is something universal in contrast to perception of the now, perception of the immediate past, and perception of the future. The now-perceptions belonging to different stages cannot be united into a collective now-perception, but in relation to each now-group there is a unity of memorial and expectational groups in which a different now-stage corresponds to each group. Or rather each group *is* a different now-stage. For *now* is something relative. It is relative to stages.

God's infinite consciousness embraces all time "at once". This infinite consciousness is nontemporal.

To each time-point corresponds the group belonging to the now of that time-point. These groups are ordered – ordered by the continuous mode of apperception. For him <for God> there is no past, present and future. But <even> for him there is a past, present and future relative to each point. Time is the form of the infinite consciousness, as infinite adequate perceptual series. From the position of a determinate now, a – n - b, a is past; in relation to a, n is future, just as b is.

The divine consciousness is the ideal correlate of objective time and of objective world and world evolution. (Husserl 1991, §15, p. 180)

In finite consciousness, the "now" is given through a series of adumbrations; in divine consciousness, each "now" is clearly perceived in its "relativity"; that is, its past and future moments without adumbrations, or progressive nebulosity. Divine consciousness is not a flow, because retentions, impressions, and protensions are all perceived in the same way. Husserl does not provide other clarifications about divine consciousness, but we can try to explain his ideas by an example. When we read a text, we can perceive only a phrase (sequence) at a time; continuing reading, we have no additional awareness of past phrases, and we are not aware of the successive phrases. We are good at retaining and foreseeing words in the current phrase, because our consciousness can perceive a finite flow of words. In a divine consciousness, however, it is possible to read a phrase and to be aware of the whole past and the whole future of the text. Each object is perceived without adumbration: the past of the object clearly appears, as does its present and its future. Divine consciousness does not need to follow the flow of perception to grasp the temporal object. It does not understand the object through adumbrations. Indeed, Husserl says that the temporality of divine consciousness is the ideal correlate of objective temporality.

In this digression, Husserl gives us an important indication of how to think of consciousness without temporality: he thinks of divine, or infinite consciousness. Husserl does not write about a finite consciousness in eternal life, but we can deduce this through his

writings about divine consciousness. A finite consciousness in eternal life can perceive all temporality of the objects without adumbrations, so it can understand all the temporal reality in the same moment. The difference between divine and human consciousness is not about the knowledge of reality, because both can understand all reality by eternity. But we can distinguish two kinds of knowledge, recalling the Aquinas' distinction between divine intellect and finite intellect: divine intellect is a practical one, because when it knows the reality, it is not passive but active; it creates what it knows. However, when finite intellect understands reality, it receives the reality. The finite mind is measured by reality; reality is measured by the divine mind.

Note, however, that a thing is referred differently to the practical intellect than it is to the speculative intellect. Since the practical intellect causes things, it is a measure of what it causes. But, since the speculative intellect is receptive in regard to things, it is, in a certain sense, moved by things and consequently measured by them. It is clear, therefore, that, as is said in the *Metaphysics*, natural things from which our intellect gets its scientific knowledge measure our intellect. (Aquinas 2008, 11 [*De Veritate*, q.1, a. 2])

Following this reasoning, we can deduce a way of thinking of finite consciousness in eternal life. We can define it as free from the flow of temporality, and therefore capable of perceiving objects without adumbrations. Without the inner temporality of a flow of consciousness, we could understand all the past and all the future by the now. But this consideration implicates a temporality of reality, because Husserl's phenomenology does not provide an ontology of reality out of consciousness. Furthermore, when Husserl speaks about divine consciousness, he considers only the perception to be different, but not the reality. Because here we find a phenomenology of consciousness without an ontology of time, Husserl's analysis is useful when considering the relationship of eternal life with this world; for example, the eternal life of a pure soul or of an angel. This philosophy is useful when thinking of the perception of temporality by an eternal consciousness.

Temporality as Potentiality-for-Being.

In Heidegger, we find an ontology of temporality in his analytics of existence and in his attempt to overcome the metaphysics. The Heideggerian definition of temporality is exposed in his opus magnum, *Being and Time* (1927), in which he attempts to understand the sense of Being through a phenomenology of existence. Western philosophy, Heidegger argues, has forgotten the question of Being, which is considered the most universal concept, or an indefinable concept, or an evident one. Nevertheless, thinking that Being is a universal, or an indefinable or a self-evident concept means that we do not understand what Being is. In this misunderstanding, western philosophy had

thought of Being as “Present” (Heidegger 2008, §7) or “presence-at-hand,” forgetting the ontological difference between Being and beings. To free philosophy from old categories linked with a notion of Being as “presence-at-hand,” Heidegger chose to call human existence *Dasein*. Through a phenomenology of *Dasein*, Heidegger tried to define a “fundamental ontology”:

We are ourselves the entities to be analyzed. The Being of any such entity is in each case mine. These entities, in their Being, comport themselves towards their Being. As entities with such Being, they are delivered over to their own Being. Being is that which is an issue for every such entity. (§9)

Heidegger’s phenomenology describes *Dasein* as being (*Seiende*) in a structural relationship with its Being (*Sein*). Since I always have to relate to my Being, in each moment I have to choose (or define) my existence. Therefore, my essence, or my definition, is not a given, but is always being defined by my existence (“priority of *existentia* over *essentia*” [Heidegger 2008, §9]). And, because this relationship with my being is constitutive, my existence is in each case mine (*Jemeinigkeit*).

Therefore, my existence is ever to define, and it is at most a possibility rather than an actuality (“Higher than actuality stands possibility” [Heidegger 2008, §7]). This structural relationship with my Being makes my existence a potentiality-for-Being: until I exist, I will not have a complete definition of myself; I cannot be a whole.

The ‘ahead-of-itself’, as an item in the structure of care, tells us unambiguously that in *Dasein* there is always something still outstanding, which, as a potentiality-for-Being for *Dasein* itself, has not yet become ‘actual’. It is essential to the basic constitution of *Dasein* that there is *constantly something still to be settled*. (Heidegger 2008, §46)

This “impossibility of Being-a-whole” can be overcome only by my death, which is my “own most possibility.”

Here, we cannot follow all the analytic passages relating to *Dasein*; therefore, we go directly to the definition of temporality. According to Heidegger, *Dasein* is structurally a potentiality-for-Being; until I exist, I am open: “This ‘not-yet’ ‘belongs’ to *Dasein* as long as it is” (Heidegger 2008, §48).

This structural openness constitutes *Dasein*’s “care”: I am towards (“ahead-of-myself”) to possibilities of the world, and, in this transcendence, I take my Being-already-thrown-into-a-world, and I have to do with something. This structure can be interpreted as temporality: I am open to the future (towards my possibilities with the world) and, in this openness, I take my past (my Being-in-the world); in this relationship between future and past I presently exist with worldly objects.

Coming back to itself futurally, resoluteness brings itself into the Situation by making present. The character of “having been” arises from the future, and in such a way that the future which “has been” (or better, which “is the process of having been”) releases from itself the Present. This phenomenon has the unity of a future which makes present in the process of having been; we designate it as “temporality”. Only in so far as Dasein has the definite character of temporality is the authentic potentiality-for-Being-a-whole of anticipatory resoluteness, as we have described it, made possible for Dasein itself. *Temporality reveals itself as the meaning of authentic care.* (Heidegger 2008, §65)

Dasein’s temporality reveals that Being is intrinsically temporality. To think of eternal life in terms of Heidegger’s philosophy seems impossible: if Being is temporality, without temporality there is no Being. It seems impossible to imagine my existence without temporality; this is the difficulty when thinking of a transcendent situation. We have to imagine a Being without the limits of time.

If we observe temporality as Heidegger describes, we note that it is a particular interpretation of Being as possibility. This is an assumption of Heidegger’s ontology, and by this assumption he can say that *existentia* precedes *essentia* and that temporality is open by potentiality-for-Being. To think of Being without temporality, therefore, we have to think of Being as actuality, and to invert the relationship between *existentia* and *essentia*. This is to say that my structural impossibility of Being-a-whole has to be overcome. In other words, I have to think of my existence as a defined totality in which I cannot change what I am. My possibilities, in eternal life, are chosen for eternity. Therefore, the eternal life is without possibilities to change my *essentia*. We have to imagine a kind of life, and therefore a kind of freedom, notwithstanding this impossibility to change ourselves. To imagine this, we can recall some doctrines about angels (for example, the angelology by Isidore of Seville [Carpin 2004, 99-101]), spiritual creatures who do not change their choices. Each angel had decided forever his position regarding God. In an analogical way, we can think of our eternal life “like the angels in heaven” (Matthew 22, 30): everybody lives according to his or her definitive choices, regarding God and regarding the others. In this way, we could say that the concept of existence as belonging to ourselves (existence as “in each case mine”) cannot be supported. If I have chosen for eternity, I have given my existence to God or to the others, and it is no longer mine.

This could lead to some questions about freedom in eternal life, because if I cannot change my defined *essentia*, my freedom seems to be limited. But freedom without any possibilities could still be described as freedom of a sort, because although it is not possible to choose everything, it is still possible to choose what belongs to one’s own *essentia*. We have to imagine eternal life as a life in which we

cannot change our choices, and our future choices follow our essence for eternity. So we can admit a future in eternal life, but it is a *future without contingency*. In some way, eternal life implicates effects, but these effects in eternity are not contingent: they become necessary. In this way, we can think of Being as an actuality that implicates possibilities, and therefore as a kind of future. This could seem limited, but if we consider our eternal life in relationships with other eternal lives and with God's infinite actuality, we have to imagine infinite possibilities.

Conclusion

We have attempted to think of eternal life as over-temporality through three approaches of contemporary philosophy. We have shown that some aspects of revealed theology (resurrection of flesh, eternity in a transcendent dimension, eternal life as the angels in heaven) can be more thinkable through philosophy. In this way, we show a point of mutuality between philosophy and theology, and we hope that this modest paper can be food for thought in this direction.

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