

An Affectionate Welcome to the Next Generation: A Brief Introduction to Volume 17— Hermeneutics Across the Horizon

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All is not lost, however. Our campuses will still have teachers who can inspire, believe in, and be there for those students who want to learn how to think, write, and create. Not everyone will fall for the AI trap. True, there will be fewer professors, and they will not have the cushy academic and economic situation that has existed since WWII . . . But there will always be some young people who want to learn about the wonders and complexities of literature, art, history, the sciences. So we go back to educating the few rather than the many.
—Jennifer Delton

Those of us who spend our philosophical lives thinking (about) hermeneutics share a commitment to its universality. This commits us to claims about hermeneutics being fundamental to being-in-the-world wherever and whenever human being has been, or is, or will be. Furthermore, we claim hermeneutics is not something we might sometimes do, it is something that we cannot help but being. However, despite this universality of the hermeneutic condition and the traditions of overtly undertaken hermeneutic study, I fear, judging from my experience of these last three decades, fewer persons today are studying in humanistic disciplines where they might encounter the texts leading them to become hermeneuticians, where they could come to understand the universality of having to interpret. Despite forces arrayed against this type of thinking, we remain committed to nurturing the coming generation because,

of course, in future we shall need the next generation's diligent work to keep this essential thinking alive. In future and in their turn, they will need to inspire the generation following theirs to continue in their wake.

How fitting, then, to have this issue of *Analecta Hermeneutica* contain essays (apart from "But in a Fiction") and a lengthy multi-book review all written by young scholars who have recently completed their graduate work or are quite near the end of their graduate study. Their work published here should give some sense to the readers of *Analecta Hermeneutica* that the future study of hermeneutics as a self-aware practice is brighter than we might imagine in our lowest moments. These essays taken together demonstrate the universality of the hermeneutic question by taking as their various foci several disparate themes. As the Aims and Scope of *Analecta Hermeneutica* makes evident, we extend a broad welcome to the many situations and practices authors might take as the motivation of their work.

As the epigraph that heads this introduction makes clear, the next generation of hermeneutic scholars will be required to engage any number of changes to the situations in which they shall be undertaking their work, artificial intelligence so-called at present foremost among the many. It suggests likewise other challenges will be a significant part of the circumstances in which they undertake their endeavors. *Analecta Hermeneutica* is pleased to publish these few promissory notes to the future health and survival of hermeneutic inspired thinking.¹

¹ The Editors of *Analecta Hermeneutica* wish to thank all those scholars who completed the anonymous peer reviews for these essays.