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Hermeneutics as Communicative Praxis: Honoring the Work of Calvin O. Schrag (1928-2024)

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To honor, remember, and take up into thinking the profound philosophical contribution of the work of Calvin O. Schrag, Volume 18 of *Analecta Hermeneutica* is dedicated to essays by a distinguished group of thinkers from across the globe addressing some aspect of Professor Schrag's many contributions to hermeneutic philosophy.

Volume 18 of *Analecta Hermeneutica* is comprised of two types of essays. First, six traditional essays exploring, expanding, and extending the work of Prof. Schrag so as to make an original contribution to hermeneutic philosophy. These contributions make various claims and address issues central to the concerns of hermeneutic philosophy, all of which were concerns of Schrag's in some manner or another in his own work. Among these concerns are: rhetoric and reciprocity, hermeneutics and rhetoric and space, philosophy and literature, time and being, leadership, and being ever-addressed by words.

The second set of essays are shorter pieces the execution of which, while containing memorial and remembrance honoring Prof. Schrag, also make claims to advance hermeneutic thinking. Each essay gives us some reflection on what it meant to interact with Prof. Schrag in a more personal way. Taken together these reflections sketch a compelling profile of this beloved hermeneutic philosopher, colleague, and teacher. So as to refrain from postponing the reader's engagement with these fine essays and reflections, allow me the briefest rehearsal of Prof. Schrag's career for those until now unfamiliar with his work.

Calvin O. Schrag, whose long and illustrious career spanned six decades, played a significant role in bringing continental philosophy to North America. As a founding editor of the journal then called *Man and World* (now *Continental Philosophy Review*) and as an early force in creating the premier professional society for the study of continental philosophy in the States (Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy, SPEP), his work helped to create spaces and opportunities for North American contributions to hermeneutic thinking.

A student of John Wild and Paul Tillich, Prof. Schrag's work addressed many pressing issues salient to hermeneutic philosophy among them questions of ethics, issues pertaining to religious and theological thought, and hermeneutics as the practice of communication in everyday life. The last of these led to his creating with colleagues a joint Ph.D. program in Philosophy and Communication at Purdue University, where he held the George Ade Distinguished Professor of Philosophy. From his leadership position in this program his research made important, fecund, and lasting contributions to the philosophical study of communication as a life-word practice in line with what European philosophers following Heidegger and Gadamer call *Sprachlichkeit*.

His numerous books, including *Communicative Praxis and the Space of Subjectivity*, *The Self After Postmodernity*, and *God as Otherwise than Being*, along with his scores and scores of articles and book chapters (many of his books and articles are translated into several other languages) are without doubt a powerful contribution to hermeneutic thinking and will long act as inspiration for furthering thought concerning issues essential to the contemporary thinking in hermeneutics—the very type of thinking central to the mission of *Analecta Hermeneutica*, the official journal of the International Institute for Hermeneutics. It is our honor to publish this memorial to Calvin O. Schrag, who lives on in the writing and teaching of so many across the globe.

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To send us on our way, this from Prof. Schrag's *Doing Philosophy with Others*:

> What becomes manifest in this recursion to a hermeneutic of everyday life as we track the origins of the curricula in our citadels of leaning is a manifold of concrete sense giving and sense making in our conversational involvements. No one discipline in the university and no particular configuration of political, religious, or ethnic-cultural beliefs holds a birthright to the understanding of our personal and

> social existence that plays itself out in the multifaceted conversations, reminiscences, and reflections of humankind.

This truly interdisciplinary and post-disciplinary thinker has bequeathed to the rich tradition of hermeneutic thinking, as is fitting such work, that which is beyond mere calculation. His legacy is present in ways both impossible to tease out in full and yet uniquely and powerfully felt by many, many thinkers throughout the world. Through his copious written work, his decades long teaching endeavors, and his thoughtful mentoring, Calvin O. Schrag stands as an exemplar of what keeps hermeneutic thinking alive.