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The limits and possibilities of postmetaphysical God-talk

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Summary of study: The limits and possibilities of postmetaphysical God-talk. A conversation between Heidegger, Levinas and Derrida

The beginning of the twenty-first century has been characterised by a return of religion in various forms such as rising fundamentalism and the role religion is playing in the politics of certain *secular* Western democracies, but also the return of religion to the philosophical debate and the rise in prominence of the science-religion debate. The study will specifically focus on the limits and possibilities of such a return by focussing on God-talk from a philosophical perspective taking the developments in recent philosophy into consideration.

The journey of Western philosophy towards what has been described as postmodernity has been characterised by numerous turns that changed the way the world and humans are interpreted and thus also the role and understanding of God within the world. The first major turn that had an effect on God-talk was the metaphysical turn toward the end or closure of metaphysics. This turn fatally wounded traditional metaphysical God-talk and for many this turn was the end of God-talk. The second turn was the linguistic turn and the realisation of the importance of language in the construction of realities. This second turn reopened the possibility for God-talk, but God-talk as part of the social construction of realities, thus God-talk as the religious ideals of particular communities. Such a return of God-talk leaves God-talk relative to its context of construction, which reopens the door for religious conflict between differing *contexts* of God-talk where the various particular religious ideals compete for supremacy in the Global Village. The study seeks an alternative to such God-talk by exploring the limits and possibilities of *postmetaphysical* God-talk in the site of the closure of metaphysics and the linguistic turn by bringing three philosophers, Heidegger, Levinas and Derrida into conversation with each other.

Postmetaphysics in this study is interpreted as thinking through metaphysics at the closure of metaphysics by thinking the impossible possibility of metaphysics. In this site of the closure of metaphysics and the turn to language, the *grammar of faith* is discovered as the *grammar of language* or writing (grammatology). The *logic* or *grammatology* of writing and thus of reality (*context*) is revealed, not contra to philosophy or metaphysics, but when thinking through metaphysics to its end (Heidegger) or closure (Derrida), and there in that site the grammar of faith is revealed as the grammar of texts and *contexts* and in such a site “God” is a good name to save and hence the possibility of postmetaphysical God-talk.

The study concludes with three oblique offerings with regard to such postmetaphysical God-talk, namely a construction of an image, theopoetics and finally holy folly in response to the

limitations and possibilities of postmetaphysical God-talk in the light of the conversation between Heidegger, Levinas and Derrida.