

Third International Albert Schweitzer Summer School at Gunsbach (Alsace, France)

MYSTICAL MOMENTS OF MODERN ETHICS

Cross readings in Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) and Martin Buber (1878-1965)

Monday 1st – Saturday 6th June 2015

The year 2015 commemorates the demise of two great figures of humanity: Albert Schweitzer and Martin Buber. The first, being 1952' laureate of the Nobel Price for Peace, is world widely known for his life-ethics and his charitable medical project in Lambarene (Gabon). The fame of the other is due to his reactualisation of Chassidism and his dialogical philosophy. Both men respected each other profoundly. They were both attached to the Rhine-land: Schweitzer was born in the French Alsace, Buber lived for a while happily in the German village Heppenheim.

Their philosophies and praxis might be very different, one aspect affiliates the two giants of intellectual history: their shared conviction that a true realization of human liberty is more than rational decision-making. Both utopian thinkers and doers, they nourished their ethical engagement with a sane, religious sensibility. Where Schweitzer transformed Biblical eschatology into the Lambarene experiment, Buber's Chassidic humanism made him into a critical sojourner in Zionism. Their spirituality was undogmatic, written in a light key and might be considered to be a typical modern, that is *minimal* and *non-speculative* mysticism.

Both Schweitzer and Buber felt akin to Enlightenment and yet they felt the need to transcend its technoscientific reductions. No wonder than that their sense for mysticism became a driver for their analyses in the various aspects of human life. A form of rational-mysticism provoked both Schweitzer's principle *Reverence for Life* and Buber's dialogical principle. But not in ethics, also in esthetics – music for the first, visual and literary arts for the other – and in their utopian ideals this driver can be detected.

The purpose of the *Third International Albert Schweitzer Summer School* is to explore systematically and critically the meaning and importance of the *mystical moment* in the respective enterprises of Schweitzer and Buber, in order to clarify their self-imposed quest for a deeper foundation of modernity. Of what kind of mysticism motivates them? How does it relate to more traditional, religious mysticisms? How to articulate the affinity between the dialogical and reverence-for-life principles? Could Schweitzer and Buber be advanced as representing a new modernized paradigm of mysticism and spirituality?

Call for participations and contributions

The *Third International Albert Schweitzer Summer School* welcomes all interested non-academics and as well as advanced students and scholars to participate in its meeting in Gunsbach (France), the village where Albert Schweitzer lived in his youth and founded his European office (now museum and archives).

Participation is possible in two ways:

1. Attending participants

Auditors, eager to learn more about Schweitzer and Buber, but also ready to engage the (informal) discussions of presentations and studied text fragments. No specific philosophical or theological knowledge, neither about Schweitzer nor about Buber, is required.

2. Contributing participants

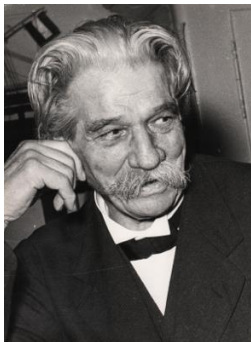
Participants are invited to present a short 30 minutes paper, that will be reviewed by the organizing scientific staff members. The papers should address the question of modernity and mysticism in the work

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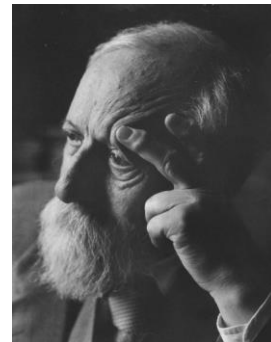
of Schweitzer and/or of Buber. Presentations analyzing analogies and differences between the two authors have priority. By outstanding contributions, the organizers will strive for publication.

Optional topics:

- Shared intellectual horizons (neo-Kantianism, philosophy of life, expressionism)
- Esthetics, mystical experience and the enigma of life experiences
- The future of spirituality and the end of modernity
- Eschatology, messianism and utopism
- Mystical experience: an indispensable ethical complement?
- The decline of culture and its philosophical therapy
- Two vision of Jesus: one way of believing?
- Dialogical and ethical philosophy and the limits of rationality
- Academic philosophical resistance to Schweitzer and Buber
- Schweitzer's *Mysticism of the Apostle Paul* and Buber's *Ecstatic Readings*



PROGRAM



Monday (1st June):

Arrival, dinner, Introduction in the lives and works of Schweitzer and Buber

Tuesday: *Schweitzer and Buber on Intellectual Cross Roads*

Key Note, Text Readings and discussion, Visit to the Schweitzer Museum and Archives, Paper presentations

Wednesday: *Shared Esthetical Interests?*

Key Note, Paper Presentations, Text Reading *The Altar* (Buber) Excursion to the *Issenheim Altar* in Colmar

Thursday: *Ethical mysticism: a paradox?*

Key Note, Text Readings, Paper Presentations

Friday: *Utopia, eschatology and messianism*

Key note, Texts readings, paper presentations, Excursion to Kaysersberg (Natal Town of Schweitzer), Organ Concert and Festive Dinner

Saturday: *Modern mysticism: Schweitzer and Buber and the future of spirituality*

Key Note, Text Readings, Paper Presentation

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PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Deadlines

Paper presentation: **15 March 2015**, notification for acceptance 31 March 2015.

Inscription for all participants: **15 April 2015** (at this date an advance of € 150 is due; If the participant cancels his coming less than 2 weeks before the start of the summer school, the deposit of 150 euros will be retained by the AISL.)

We reserve the right to cancel the event until 1 May 2015 if too few participants, in this case the payments are refunded.

Lodging and Participation Fees

Fee includes all lunches, dinners and accommodation with the exception of restaurant visit during excursions.

Local travel costs and entrance fees are *not* included.

Price (students): € 450

Price (others): € 550

Each participant is responsible for her or his own assurance.

For more information

Mrs. Jenny Litzelmann (practical organization): diffusion.gunsbach@schweitzer.org

Dr. Chris Doude van Troostwijk (program): promontoire@orange.fr

Scientific Board

Prof.dr. Jan Helge Solbakk (Professor of Medical Ethics, Faculty of Medicine, Oslo University)

Prof.dr. Predrag Cicovacki (Professor of Philosophy, Holy Cross College, Massachusetts)

Dr. Chris Doude van Troostwijk (Centre Jean XXIII Luxembourg and Strasbourg University)

Dr. Hines Mabika (Institute of the History of Medicine, Bern University)

Co-organization of the Third International Albert Schweitzer Summer School

- AISL (Association Internationale pour l'oeuvre du Dr. Albert Schweitzer de Lambaréné)
- Strasbourg University, Faculty of Protestant Theology



Albert Schweitzer House in Gunsbach

Third International Albert Schweitzer Summer School at Gunsbach (Alsace, France)

APPLICATION FORM

Personal details

Name:

Academic Position:

Professional Institution:

Home Address:

Professional Address:

E-mail:

Mobile phone: +

Will your mobile phone number work in Europe? Yes / No

Meal Preferences: No specific preferences / Preference (allergies, vegetarian...):

Accommodation: Single room only / double room if necessary / preference for a double room with ...