

## Editorial

After the tragedy of the Holocaust, the problem of the other came to the fore in social sciences. Previously, the other had been perceived as an object of one's own power and influence, which was believed to be the cause of violence, oppression, terror, genocides, and colonial and conquest wars. The post-Holocaust world has sought to understand the other so that it is not reduced to the level of a thing to be possessed. Therefore, the other begins to be seen as a possibility of my existence and my ethical direction towards this other, marked by a sense of empathy, hospitality, solidarity, and responsibility. As such, the philosophy of the other (primarily Levinas and Derrida) was oftentimes anchored in the ideas of Christianity and Judaism, addressing the themes of racial and social injustice, refugees and immigrants, and overcoming tragic experiences.

In the midst of the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war, the question of embracing the other is gaining new urgency and tone: is the other always a guest to be welcomed, or is the other also a threat to be stopped? To answer this question, the Eastern European Institute of Theology organized the Summer School of Theology 2022, entitled *The Other under Pressure of the Empire*, which brought together prominent philosophers and theologians to support Ukraine. The School welcomed participants and speakers from more than ten countries: Ukraine, the USA, Canada, Germany, Poland, Austria, Romania, Belgium, the Netherlands, England, Estonia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, and others. Speakers of the school were prominent philosophers and theologians, such as John D. Caputo, Catherine Keller, and Miroslav Volf.

In this journal issue, we publish some of the School's presentations translated into Ukrainian. Some of the speakers, namely Marietta van der Tol, Myron B. Penner, Andrey Shishkov, Catherine Keller, and John Caputo are published in Ukrainian translation for the first time. We sincerely thank them for entrusting us with their writings. In addition to the published papers, this issue contains an article by Andrii Shymanovych in English, in which the author explores the anti-Western and radically anti-ecumenical theology of the Greek Orthodox thinker Christos Yannaras. We also publish reviews by Petro Selskii, Vitalii Stankevych and Anatolii Denysenko. In the closing section, we have posted the text of the appeal of representatives of Ukrainian evangelical theological educational institutions to the world evangelical community regarding the war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, as well as press releases of key events in the evangelical theological community that took place in the fall of 2022.

As already mentioned, most of the contributions in this issue are devoted to the theme of the Other under pressure of the empire. Joshua Searle seeks to deconstruct the myth of "holy Rus-Russia," which, in the author's opinion, underpins the entire "special military operation" of mass destruction and demoralization of the civilian population of Ukraine. The author substantiates the notion that the secular humanism of modern Europe is essentially more Christian than the pseudo-Christian nationalism that the Kremlin and the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church espouse. Marietta van der Tol explores the concept of evil in the context of right-wing populism and the ideology

of the Russian World (*russkii mir*). In her opinion, these ideologies share a common flaw: they identify the other as total evil, contrary to the Christian belief. Cyril Hovorun analyzes the “metaphysical” aspects of the Russian-Ukrainian war, which were facilitated by the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as the role of the church in shaping the ideology of the “Russian world.” Myron Penner shares his reflections on what Christian witness looks like in the context of violent ideological aggression and war and how to remain faithful to the Gospel teaching in such difficult circumstances. For this reason, the author draws on the works and experiences of Søren Kierkegaard and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The importance of Penner’s exploration is that it is not naive or superficial, the author is quite aware that he is far from the Ukrainian border and does not offer a panacea for this complex issue. Andrey Shishkov offers an interesting analysis of the concept of “Russian world,” appealing to the theory of myth by the French philosopher Roland Barthes. To this end, the author analyzes the socio-political context of Russia in the last decade, comparing it with the Ukrainian one, through the lens of the concept of dark times developed by the German political philosopher Hannah Arendt. Catherine Keller revisits the idea of absolute sovereignty, wherein Carl Schmitt considered God, and those who imitate this sovereignty “in the name of public welfare,” justifying authoritarian regimes as a means of combating the “chaos of democracy.” Keller underscores the crucial flaw of this approach and political actions, motivated by a desire to subjugate the other, erase diversity and reduce the world to an imperial order. Keller finds the solution to this problem in process theology, which offers an alternative view of divine sovereignty, derived from the principle of relationality and interdependence of God and creation. John Caputo examines Jacques Derrida’s notion of unconditional hospitality, which the French philosopher considered from the perspective of the refugee, the displaced person, the exile, the immigrant, that is, those who are in need of our hospitality. Caputo expands the context of unconditional hospitality, in which the other is a real threat to our lives and the lives of our loved ones, in which the other is a threat to the existence of an entire nation. He offers new insights into the challenging question of whether it is possible to sustain unconditional hospitality under such circumstances, leaving room for hope and the future.

The editorial board of the journal hopes that the publication of these scholarly contributions will be a helpful resource for our readers and will stimulate thoughtful theological discussions on issues relevant to the current Ukrainian and global contexts. We thank everyone for their work and contributions to making this issue of the journal possible.

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