



MATÍAS PIZZI, *Fenomenología del exceso. (Post Visión)*, SB, 2024, 292 pp. ISBN 978-631-6503-72-5

The debate on language crosses the *nouvelle phénoménologie*, from the auto-affection with which Michel Henry confronts objectifying speech, passing through the poetics of the event in Jean-Louis Chrétien and the liturgy in Jean-Yves Lacoste, to the ontology of manifestation in Renaud Barbaras. Within this framework, saying and silencing becomes the place in which the possibility of the phenomenon is at stake. Jean-Luc Marion responded with a doxological proposal that attempts a discourse of praise and, later, a language of absence to name phenomena that manifest themselves in excess, the so-called saturated ones. In doing so, he opened a trail that now welcomes studies on the pragmatics of donation and the semantics of overabundance. Read from the standpoint of theology, this development suggests that phenomenological language approaches traits of faith such as doxology, prayer and apophatic theology, where the word does not capture what is given but rather hosts its excess and receives it as gift. Marion's work is among the most influential in the current french scene, and it opens with the notion of revelation and with the liturgical performativity of saying. The debates on language in phenomenology that can lead to theological analyses have been varied: Roggero¹, Bassas-Villa² y Vinolo³.

Matías Pizzi inscribes himself naturally within that current by maintaining that the problem of excess requires a theological grammar inherited from Christian Neoplatonism, so that Marion's phenomenology reaches its strongest density when it allows itself to be illuminated by Dionysius the Areopagite and Nicholas of Cusa. It is not only a historical support, but a dogmatic and mystagogical key that guides the saying of excess toward apophatic theology, the doctrine of the divine names and the doxological praxis of the Church. In this sense, the question is no longer simply methodological, but concerns the *logos* of revelation that gives itself without being exhausted and the uses of language that best welcome that donation. In that horizon, *docta ignorantia* and the *coincidentia oppositorum* safeguard the overflow without turning it into empty indetermination, while the liturgy and prayer show performatively how excess becomes audible in hymns, epicleses and blessings, where saying is receiving. Adding up Pizzi's proposal suggests, that the saturated phenomenon demands a concrete phenomenological rhetoric and not a mere rhetoric of the unsayable, and that the hospitality of the gift occurs when saying adopts the form of praise, supplication and fruitful silence.

The first chapter traces the Husserlian–Heideggerian genealogy of excess and shows that the Husserlian distinction between transversal and longitudinal intentionality already outlines an unviewable domain that overflows objectification. Read in a theological key, that reserve of appearing converges with the apophatic way and with the semantics of the divine names, modes of saying that name without possessing. Marion takes up this thread and maintains that saturation does not constitute an extraordinary hypothesis but the very paradox of phenomenicity; for that reason, the excess demands

¹ J. ROGGERO, "La instancia antepredicativa en la nouvelle phénoménologie", *Cuadernos de Filosofía* 75 (2020).

² X. BASSAS VILLA, "Breve estudio de traducción. Para una fenomenología lingüística aplicada a *Siendo dado*", *Siendo dado*, pp. 17- 28, Síntesis (2008); "Estudio de fenomenología lingüística. La historia del *como* en Jean-Luc Marion", *Dios sin el ser*, pp. 313 – 354, Ellago (2010).

³ VINOLO, S. *La fenomenología de la donación como relevo de la metafísica*, Quito, PUCE 2019; "Jean Luc Marion: escribir la ausencia", *Escritos* 20.45 (2012).

a regime of praying and liturgical word in which the gift is hosted rather than defined, and where praise and silence offer the grammar that allows one to receive what gives itself in overabundance because, as Pizzi notes, “excess, far from being something of a marvelous kind, rises as the paradigm of phenomenicity as such”⁴.

The second chapter —*In principio erat excessus*— surveys Marion’s work from *L’Idole et la distance* to *Le visible et le révélé*. Pizzi shows that the category of excess functions as the genetic code that articulates the Kantian inversion, the phenomenology of donation and the critique of the concept, and argues that the Neoplatonic tradition presents itself as a candidate to offer a historical horizon for that guiding thread.

In the third chapter, the author enters into Dionysius in order to show how the discourse of praise frees language from predicative logic: “this non-predicative language has as its fundamental requirement to maintain and traverse distance, and, therefore, to offer an alternative to the predicative language”⁵. The word no longer seeks to enclose the phenomenon within a concept, but to let it speak: the Dionysian particles *such as* and *beyond-ness-of* configure a non-predicative saying that safeguards the iconic character of the divine and, by extension, of every phenomenon that exceeds the gaze.

The fourth chapter unfolds Marion’s reception of Nicholas of Cusa. The enigmatic term *possest* appears as a limit-name that leads intellection to the mystical threshold, functioning as a form of *negative certainty* and prolonging Dionysius’s logic of praise. Pizzi shows that this Cusan category allows Marion to rethink visibility and the counter-intentionality of the icon, enlarging the field of invisible phenomena and even proposing the bases of a *translative phenomenology* which, in the author’s words: “seeks to offer a series of tools for thinking (a) the hermeneutical variation among the diverse levels of phenomena, and in turn, (b) to show that both Cusan thought and Marion’s phenomenology possess a point in common: every phenomenon, beyond its diverse modes of manifestation, can be led back to a unity of meaning that is found at the basis of its varied modes of appearing”⁶.

Pizzi’s intervention has repercussions on three fronts and, at the same time, opens properly theological paths. First, it consolidates that the so-called theological turn does not amount to a disciplinary intrusion, but to the recovery of an apophatic lexicon indispensable for contemporary phenomenology, so that saturation thought with Dionysius is referred to praise and not only to intuition, which authorizes a doxological reading of appearing. Second, it proposes a genealogy that relocates the suspicion of heteronomy present in Janicaud’s critique, showing that the problem of naming the unappropriable already inhabited phenomenology and that the theological resources of negation and of the divine names provide a grammar for saying without possessing. Third, it reactivates the Cusan figure of the *possest* as a key for articulating visible and invisible, which displaces the Marion–Falque discussion on the phenomenality of the body toward a sacramental and liturgical horizon, and allows dialogue with currents that describe the hybrid between object and event as a field where flesh becomes sign and rite.

The backbone hypothesis of the book is expressed as follows. Only a language forged within the Christian Neoplatonic tradition, where the word operates as praise and as enigma, can host the overabundance of the saturated phenomenon without closing it off. Consequently, the phenomenology of donation remains united to a semantics of saturation, in such a manner that excess precedes and grounds the very possibility of donation and its prayerful reception. This torsion does not replace phenomenological description, but orders it toward a theological use of saying that hosts revelation as exceeding gift.

From here, Matías Pizzi’s book situates itself at the heart of contemporary reflection on the phenomenology of excess and, at the same time, enables concrete theological

⁴ PIZZI, M. *Fenomenología del exceso*, Buenos Aires, SB 2024, 131.

⁵ PIZZI, M. *Fenomenología del exceso...*, 188.

⁶ PIZZI, M. *Fenomenología del exceso...*, 271-272

decisions. It not only reconstructs the genealogy of excess in Marion, it also proposes a non-predicative and apophatic interpretive key capable of hosting overabundance without reducing it to what is sayable, which reopens the question of a theology of language where naming is blessing, silencing is discerning and celebrating is receiving. The systematic dialogue with classical and contemporary sources allows one to think revelation as excess that gives itself without being exhausted, liturgy as the public grammar of overabundance and believing flesh as the site of manifestation that articulates visibility and invisibility without negating or closing them.

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