

*Abstract*

One of the key problems negative theology has been struggling with from its beginnings is the dialectical quality of negation: What is negated is simultaneously affirmed, as it is manifest in image or word. John Scotus Eriugena tries to escape this binary logic by pointing out that Biblical language tends to be figurative. Thus, language loses its grip on what it signifies; it becomes vague and indeterminate. The action of negating metaphors reinforces this tendency, emphasizing the inadequacy of language in its attempt to capture God's nature. Contemporary Psalter manuscripts, the Utrecht and Stuttgart Psalters, respond strikingly to the pictorial dimension of words and reinforce the apophatic force they have by depicting Biblical metaphors taken literally. The text not only determines the meaning of the images, in accordance with the Carolingian *Renovatio*; moreover, the metaphorical and unsuitable quality of both text and image is emphasized and affected by an apophatic move. Only the order of these givens and the structure in which they are presented reveal the intellectual profile of the scholar. The insight to be gained from apophatic theology, frequently only implicitly, can be found in the topical arrangement and the structure of both text and images.