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SCRIPTABLE

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EDITORIAL

Scriptable is an irregular review of what was once called the belles-lettres, where we essay upon a wide assortment of current books and articles with an eye open for "the beautiful jumble of discordant congruencies" derived from the authors and titles under discussion. We cast a wide academic net through the social sciences and humanities, with a strong orientation toward current events, social theory, religious and cultural studies.

With this number we move away from simple reportage of current scholarship to something more ambitious. The body of each issue includes editorial essays examining themes inspired by the works under consideration. The sum of our reviews are carefully pruned excerpts from the books themselves so as to preview the style and technicality of the text itself.
Our purpose is to inform and entertain. Through the review essays we hope to visit new and timeworn places through unsettled ideas in currency newly minted. Perhaps to see the outlandish as intimate and to show up the familiar as stranger than before thought.
Each issue should surprise.

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<> CHINESE CHARACTER MANIPULATION IN LITERATURE AND DIVINATION: THE ZICHU BY ZHOU LIANGGONG (1612–1672) by Anne Kathrin Schmiedl [Series: Prognostication in History, Brill, 9789004422360]

In **CHINESE CHARACTER MANIPULATION IN LITERATURE AND DIVINATION**, Anne Schmiedl analyses the little-studied method of Chinese character manipulation as found in imperial sources. Focusing on one of the most famous and important works on this subject, the Zichu by Zhou Lianggong (1612–1672), Schmiedl traces and discusses the historical development and linguistic properties of this method. This book represents the first thorough study of the Zichu and the reader is invited to explore how, on the one hand, the educated elite leveraged character manipulation as a literary play form. On the other hand, as detailed exhaustively by Schmiedl, practitioners of divination also used and altered the visual, phonetic, and semantic structure of Chinese characters to gain insights into events and objects in the material world.

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Preface

Acknowledgements

Prologue: Script and Divination Intertwined

1 The Manipulation of Chinese Characters Cezi

Excerpt: The object of investigation of this study is embedded in the context of imperial China. Thus, all Chinese text is presented in traditional Chinese characters. As an exception, citations from modern publications, names, and titles originally in simplified characters are retained in that form.

This study relies on the Hanyu Pinyin system for the Romanisation of Chinese text. Quotes originally in older Romanisation systems—including Wade-Giles and others—are adapted to the Hanyu Pinyin system in the interests of consistency. Similarly, quotes from American sources are expressed in British English.

All translations are by the author of this study, unless stated otherwise. The adage "all translations are ultimately interpretations" applies to the translations in this study as well. All Chinese characters, concepts, and passages are explained by at least one possible English rendition. However, some

Chinese texts involve multiple layers of meaning. For the sake of brevity, not all meanings for all characters and phrases can be expressed in the translated text. Since the English language is sometimes not sufficient to convey the often multi-layered meaning of the original Chinese text, the author has included Chinese characters for all relevant passages by way of acknowledging this problem.

Zhou Lianggong, like other Chinese authors, often changed his texts as compared to the original source. Some of these quotes have a long history and can be traced through multiple different sources. The author, therefore, adheres to the version in the *Zichu*, not the original source texts. The original source texts are only described if they are vital to the argument or are of special interest.

Entries from the six chapters of the *Zichu* 字觸 are presented in the following format: "Roman numeral-Arabic numeral". The Roman numeral refers to the number of the respective chapter of the *Zichu*, the Arabic numeral to the number of the entry in the specific chapter, starting with the first entry of each chapter as number one. Thus, I-1 alludes to the first entry of the first chapter, VI-24 to the twenty-fourth entry of the sixth chapter, III-15 to the fifteenth entry of the third chapter, and so on.

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Herein, Zhou Lianggong's *Zichu*, which offers a broad collection of entries on Chinese character manipulation from different sources and dynasties, was taken as a corpus for analysing the manipulation of Chinese characters. The findings provide a detailed picture of the method of character manipulation in respect to divinatory and literary considerations, as seen through the lens of a Ming dynasty categorised compendium.

The *Zichu* entails examples of character manipulation in a divinatory context as well as examples of the utilisation of *cezi* as a rhetorical device in a literary setting. These contents mirror the deep embeddedness of character manipulation in the two fields of writing and divination.

On the one hand, character manipulation exhibits an understanding of Chinese characters based on traditional notions of, and works on, script theory. In this capacity, the six categories of writing as exemplified by Xu Shen in his *Shuowen jiezi*, the mythical scribe Cang Jie as the creator of Chinese writing, Li Si and the script unification of the Qin dynasty, as well as works on calligraphy and famous calligraphers are alluded to. However, while traditional notions of script understanding and the theory of the six categories of writing serve as a basis for theoretical discussions on *cezi*, these foundations are adapted in the actual application of the method. The examples in the paratexts and the six chapters of the *Zichu* show that *cezi* does partly rely on conventions of character construction, but not entirely. Indeed, *cezi* deviates regularly from script conventions and often breaks its regulations, proving its flexibility. Character manipulation is, thus, positioned as convergent with, but not rigidly aligned to, orthodox script conventions. Most authors of the paratexts and the anecdotes in the *Zichu* embrace this openly.

On the other hand, the study of *cezi* shows that its development relies on notions and texts connected to divination in the same way that it depends on concepts and works of script theory. In this context, the *Yijing*, the myth of the invention of the trigrams by Fu Xi, different methods of divination, and famous diviners are alluded to. Numerous examples show the application of *cezi* in a divinatory sense, and they bear witness to the serious nature of these divinatory acts. In these examples, fate tends to be presented as determined. Even if protagonists try to alter their destiny, they ultimately fail. Only one manipulation of a Chinese character is deemed accurate in each situation, as there is only one potential outcome of events. All other possibilities, even if plausible

according to character theory, are spurious. At the same time, these examples also entail a certain playfulness: anecdotes are often presented in a humorous manner, even if they discuss a bleak topic.

Cezi as a method at the intersection of the fields of writing and divination provides insights into both fields as well as their connection. This unique interplay shows, that in the application of character manipulation, the boundaries between seriousness and playfulness, creativity and regularity are often blurred.

Regardless of whether anecdotes are embedded in a literary or divinatory context, all examples of *cezi* rely on the same world-view. The entries of the *Zichu* present a cosmos permeated by meaning, in which every character manipulation accurately refers to events in the material world. The paratexts further emphasise this world-view through the citation of sources on the development of *cezi*. These sources all follow a similar process in their argumentation: after an observation of nature, written patterns are created. These sources as well as anecdotes on character manipulation stress the link between material world and written character—be it in a divinatory or literary setting. In both settings, *cezi* starts from the same basis and offers the same significant act of manipulation, because it is related to and represents events and objects in the real world in each form of application. Thus, the paratexts and entries on character manipulation in the *Zichu* deal with both applications of *cezi* as the same process.

Character manipulation has a long-standing history. Even before the formation of an independent divinatory method, its techniques were applied in a literary capacity since as early as the *Zuozhuan*. From then on, the employment of character manipulation can be observed in many different genres of literature and as a divinatory method throughout all of imperial China. This fact bears witness to the method's importance in the official as well as the private sphere: as a rhetorical tool, character manipulation was used in official petitions as well as private letters and as a divinatory method, it was applied to matters of state and individuals.

Chinese character manipulation remains important nowadays; *cezi* is a living tradition. It is still used in rhetorical and divinatory capacities in contemporary Chinese-speaking countries. Popular publications on the subject of character divination keep appearing as well. Furthermore, the widely spread modern practices of name selection and name changing also rely on techniques of *cezi* to a certain degree. Thus, the study of Chinese character manipulation is meaningful from a historical as well as a contemporary perspective—it offers insights into the unique way in which practitioners past and present regard their own writing system.

An interesting example of the continued importance of character manipulation can be found online. In July 2016, independent journalist and columnist Gao Yu 高瑜 (born 1944) posted a newly created Chinese character on her Twitter account. The character consisted of the upper part of the character for "party" (*dang* 党) without the two strokes at the bottom and, underneath it, the character for "country" (*guo* 国). In the accompanying text, Gao, who has multiple times been imprisoned as a dissident in China, states she found the character in a group in the messaging software WeChat. She also explains the character's reading, which consists of four syllables: "*dang zai guo shang* 党在国上", translating to "the party is on top of the country". This reading is inspired by the character's composition: the upper part of the character "party" is written on top of the character "country". At the same time, the reading is not just a description of the character's graphical structure, it also communicates a specific opinion about the contemporary state of politics and the role of the Chinese Communist Party.

The example above could easily be seen as another creative approach to playfully dealing with Chinese script. However, this example also underlines the seriousness inherent in these character

manipulations, even today. As Victor Mair aptly stated in an online comment shortly after Gao's initial post in 2016 "It is particularly poignant that this new character has been circulating at the very moment when the Chinese Communist Party is celebrating the 95th anniversary of its founding." At the border between playfulness and seriousness, creativity and regularity, character manipulation continues to have a significant role in the contemporary Chinese-speaking world, as it did in imperial China. <>

GLIMPSES OF TIBETAN DIVINATION: PAST AND PRESENT edited by Petra Maurer, Donatella Rossi, and Rolf Scheuermann [Series: Prognostication in History, Brill, 9789004407374]

GLIMPSES OF TIBETAN DIVINATION: PAST AND PRESENT is the first book of its kind, in that it contains articles by a group of eminent scholars who approach the subject matter by investigating it through various facets and salient historical figures.

Over the centuries, Tibetans developed many practices of prognostication and adapted many others from neighboring cultures and religions. In this way, Tibetan divination evolved into a vast field of ritual expertise that has been largely neglected in Tibetan Studies.

The Tibetan repertoire of divinatory techniques is rich and immensely varied. Accordingly, the specimen of practices discussed in this volume—many of which remain in use today—merely serve as examples that offer glimpses of divination in Tibet.

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Excerpt: The desire to know the future, to seek answers to questions both spoken and those left unsaid, is a deep-seated human instinct. In evolutionary terms, its origins may lie in the quest for survival itself, in the need to be healed, and in the necessity of effectively fulfilling the social and economic obligations of life such as the planting of fields and harvesting and so on. The human propensity to look into the future, and to try to see what it holds in store for us, might be one of the many psychological features that distinguish humans from other animals.

Rather than having recourse to long and intense critical examination of the possibilities available—weighing the pros and cons of different courses of action for example—which still leave a large element of contingency when it comes to outcomes, it was (and to a large extent still is) very common for Tibetans to consult a diviner, an astrologer or an oracle as means of giving respite from these tensions of uncertainty and offering guidance on how to proceed.

In Tibetan societies past and present, consulting a diviner was and still is as socially acceptable as consulting a healer or a doctor. Such consultations were not considered strange, and such prognostications were not derided as superstition. Such practices have stood the test of time—they have been in use for centuries—and they continue to be widespread today. Nor were such services restricted to people of a particular social status. Diviners were and are accessible to all and anyone can consult them. Going to a diviner when one has a question about the future was (and is) as natural as going to a healer when one contracts a disease. In Tibetan society, only the State Oracles were restricted for use by the government alone, and ordinary people could not approach them with requests for prognostication.

Over the centuries, Tibetans developed many practices of prognostication and adapted many others from neighboring cultures and religions. In this way, Tibetan divination evolved into a vast field of ritual expertise that has been largely neglected in Tibetan Studies. Focused as they tend to be on Tibetan history and Buddhism, scholars have often skirted the activities and beliefs associated with the daily lives and simple needs of Tibetans. This disregard is especially surprising given the popularity of prognostication in Tibet. Prognostication permeates many spheres of life, reveals many fields of knowledge, and lays open many aspects and layers of Tibetan society and culture.

Why study divination? Divinatory techniques and predictions can offer insights into the cultural influences of neighboring countries. They open up a wide field of knowledge on myth, religion, ritual, and culture; on demons and gods, flora and fauna, on secular and sacral activities, on material culture and religious objects, and even on how to live and to die. They can help explain the structure of houses, and the choice of location for cemeteries. However, there is more.

Divination techniques and prognostication can inform us about the structure of society, about its social classes and gendered roles, while at the same time giving us access to the inner lives of people, to the secrets of human emotion and feeling, and to the hopes and fears of the people. Such techniques and predictions may thus be considered a mirror of society, helping us reach a deeper understanding of culture. People are guided by the wish to know the future, to know about the forces that might influence their activities, to know in advance if an upcoming event or project will succeed or fail. Like a game, divination is all about loss and gain. Depending on the technique, predictions can even help achieve specific goals in life and avoid certain dangers. They offer people guidance through life, helping them find answers, achieve emotional stability and to embolden faith, in much the same way that prayer can make misery and pain more bearable.

The events for which diviners were consulted can range from regularly performed everyday activities to particular events such as marriage or a building project that might be performed only once in a lifetime. The questions raised can range from simple to very complex. Some questions may require only a straightforward "yes" or "no" answer; others, concerning the outcome of a particular course of action, can be answered simply with a "good" or "bad", with various shades in between. Alternatively, a client may ask for a range of details and options concerning the future.

Depending on the question presented and the method employed, the information returned about the upcoming activities and events might be closely related to the aspect of timing. To guarantee the success of an activity, the client may be enjoined to embark on the project only at a suitable time, for timing can often be *the* decisive factor for a favorable outcome or a successful achievement. Just as the questions posed about the future can be very varied, so too can the means for finding answers to them.

Techniques

All techniques examine and analyze the current situation and the circumstances of the request in the present. Many techniques—including the medical practice of pulse diagnosis—also examine the past. With pulse diagnosis, a Tibetan healer can read past events like a broken bone for example. As an attempt to survey the various divination techniques, one might distinguish them as falling into the following categories.

First, there are those forms of divination without any specific object, such as divination through dreams (*rmi lam*) or oneiromancy, or through omens that occur spontaneously, such as portents of death. 'Objectless' divination requires profound knowledge on how to interpret the manifold signs and omens that can appear to the diviner in these ways. Oracles and prophets might also be subsumed under this category, as their predictions follow an intuitive knowledge, or else information transmitted by divine agents.

The next category of prognostications concerns those in which divination occurs through the medium of an object that exists naturally or arises by itself. Among these are the interpretation of clear visions that occur on the surface of any clear and even object, such as a lake, the blue sky or a mirror (*pra*), and the interpretation of topography as a branch of geomancy. Dreams are similar to a landscape or a lake, vectors of hidden knowledge disguised in images that require interpretation. Other signs that occur naturally or arise of their own accord are phenomena in nature such as the blowing of the wind—the examination of the flickering of a butter lamp (*mar me brtag pa*), the shape and direction of a plume of smoke (*spos kyi dud pa*), the whorls on a horse's pelage (*gtsug*), the marks on a human body, physical reactions in one's body such as sneezing or the twinkling of the eyes, or animal calls such as the cawing of crows, and so on. The diviner interprets these omens by the signs, patterns, shapes and the events themselves. No further or extraneous calculation is required.

A third category subsumes those divination techniques which interpret patterns using a particular object. This includes methods such as scapulimancy (*sog mo*, divination with shoulder-blades), divination with rosaries (*mo 'phreng*), with arrows (*mda' mo*, in Tibetan culture there are at least two kinds of arrow divination), with pebbles (*lde'u 'phrul* which probably goes back to geomancy, i.e. "the art of dotting"), with dice (*sho mo*), with cords (*ju thig*), and so on.

Chinese divination or calculation (*nag rtsis*) should be regarded as a further separate category. The diviner merely calculates the future of his client by establishing a relationship between the past and the present. Any prediction depends on aspects and dimensions in their relation to time, and this kind of prognostication is a purely technical procedure.

The main purpose of all these techniques is to avoid unfavorable or unpleasant situations and avert damage, calamity, hindrance or disease. Means of preventing harm can include ritual practices (*gto*) and yogic exercises (for example to avoid death) as well as other rituals to overcome and defeat the demon perpetrators of whatever harm is threatened.

The manner in which the various techniques were preserved in Tibet suggests many cultural influences. For example, the Chinese origin of the so-called Chinese calculation or divination (*nag rtsis*) is very clear. Divination with dice was popular in India and Central Asia, but was also widespread in the Islamic tradition. Prognostication involving animals, such as the calls of birds and the whorls on a horse's coat occur extensively in India. The use of knotted cords is likely to be of Bon origin as also may be divination by means of counting beads on a "rosary". This simple practice is performed by laymen and monks, and is very popular in Tibetan communities. Most if not all of these divinatory practises however are of multi-cultural origin and/or influence and not based on originally Buddhist concepts. It was the 5th Dalai Lama who integrated divination into Buddhism and Buddhist concepts such as *rten 'brel* (dependant origination) were obviously consecutively superimposed.

Terminology

The manifold influences and forms of Tibetan divination are visible through the diverse terminology applied to them. It seems that except *pra*, the various terms point to other cultural backgrounds rather than referring to a specific technique. The terms *phya*, *mo* and *pra* already appear in Old Tibetan sources and also in Bon literature, whereas *rtsis* might be of later origin.

A person who predicts the future can be a monk or a layperson, male or female. With the exception of oracles, the technique is not defined by the person who performs it, but rather the designation of the specialist is defined by the method he or she uses. So, for example, the term *rtsis pa* or *rtsis mkhan* refers to an astrologer, diviner or "calculator". In this context it denotes simply the individual who performs the so-called Chinese calculation (*nag rtsis*) by means of reading the zodiac signs, the elements and other dimensions such as *spar kha*, *sme ba*, *srog*, *lus*, *dbang thang* and *klung rta*. It goes without saying that the calculation of planets is also included. Planets such as Rāhu (*gza'*) are regarded as the cause of hindrances and diseases, a further illustration of the relationship between medicine and divination.

The focus in calculation is particularly on time and timing. The relationship between all the relevant elements and dimensions assigned to the person is correlated to the current time, or to the point in time of the undertaking to be assessed, and thus its advisability (or not) is determined and a suitable time is suggested. That means that the relationship between the past—that is, the birth year of the client—and the future or present, depending on the timing, is the decisive factor. The calculation for occasions such as a marriage, for example, is more complex, as two people are involved. In this case, the diviner has to calculate the relationship of each of the two people's elements to each other, and

the relationship of both to the fixed timing. As above, he correlates the past with the fixed time. To complicate the system further, certain planets, directions, months, days, *spar kha* and so on are assessed as negative.

Another term is *mo pa* or *mo mkhan*, denoting an individual who performs *mo* divination. A *phya mkhan* performs a *phya* divination, also called *phya ken tse*, the diviner of Bon. Another special term is *pra mkhan*, in which *pra* denotes a form of divination performed on the clear surface of something such as a lake, the blue sky, or a mirror. The terms *phyva* (!) and *pra* denote at the same time the result, *phyva* the "good fortune" or "luck". The meaning of *pra*, however, seems to be unspecific with regard to the predicted result.

This is not a comprehensive list; there are many other local terms, such as *'on po* in Ladakh. This term denotes a diviner and ritual specialist who also administers medical treatment. Better known is the term *emchi* for a traditional healer, a term which originates in the Mongolian language.

Activities, Events, and Questions

Divination serves the general purpose of improving human life. As such, no human activities or events are excluded from the possibility of forecasting. Each and any undertaking can be prognosticated. Written sources such as the *Vaiḍūrya dkar po* and the *dPag bsam ljon shing* present an insight into the manifold undertakings concerning which a diviner can be called upon to prognosticate. As for the client and the diviner, there are no restrictions or rules with regard to social status, gender, age, and so on. The main criteria for the decision to consult a diviner are the significance the client attributes the event as well as its possible consequences.

What concerns can motivate prognostication? As mentioned above, the desire to remain healthy or to be healed is undoubtedly one, and prognostication is particularly common when choosing the treatment of diseases with an unknown origin. This might stand at the source of the culture of divination for timing life-sustaining activities, since Tibetan traditional society considered demons—whose activities are influenced by time and place—as the causes of obstacles and calamities such as disease, bad crops and natural disasters such as floods, earthquake, and the loss of a harvest.

A good harvest depends on the timing of related activities. The day when the fields should be plowed or the crop gathered in has to be auspicious in order to avoid damage by unsuitable weather conditions and to ensure the most abundant yield. The activity of demons moving at the time can, therefore, influence nearly every activity, and precautions must be taken to offset such influences. This is true of any undertaking, from setting out on a journey in the hope of avoiding robbery or other misfortune and reaching one's destination safely, embarking on a business venture in such a way as to ensure maximum profits, to choosing the time and place for a wedding or the construction of a building.

The questions asked depend on the event or planned enterprise concerned. The client's fears of loss and failure and/or his wishes to make gains or succeed are the basic concern. Below, I will illustrate this with a small series of questions that a client might ask. These correlate with particular techniques applied and are based on a singular possible undertaking or event.

The simplest form of question a client might ask is "should I act or not? Should I go on the journey? Should I stay back? Should I embark on this business venture?" Such questions can be answered by a "yes", a "no", or "it does not matter/is irrelevant".

If the answer is no, then the client may inquire about the reason for the negative response. An unsuitable timing could lead to the undertaking being postponed. If the expected negative influences are not too serious, then a ritual may be enough to deflect calamity. If the obstacles are serious,

however, the client might be advised to abandon the plan altogether. If the obstacles do not forbid the activity itself, then the client may consult the diviner again after a certain period of time has elapsed.

If the answer is a "yes", then the client could still ask for the best timing: "Should I go now? Should I go tomorrow? Should I go in two weeks?"

Activities that involve more than one person are more complicated: a question such as "Should I marry or not?" is more difficult to answer since it involves the elements and dimensions of the couple. If the result of a *rtsis* prognostication is very negative owing to the incompatibility of the couple's elements, then the marriage might be canceled. In any case, improvement of the situation is possible through the performance of rituals. A positive relation between the couple's elements moreover, would nevertheless require the calculation of the right timing.

More comprehensive questions are those that ask for the expected end result of a plan: "Will it be positive or negative"? The possible answers are: "yes" or "no" or "moderate". A negative answer due to unsuitable timing can lead to a postponement. Against other obstacles such as demons, the diviner might recommend a ritual.

Another scenario is the wish to achieve a specific outcome. The client might be striving for a specific result or attempting to avoid loss or failure. Alternatively, the client might ask for the interpretation of a certain portent, or request advice as to the best means by which he might optimize his chances of fulfilling whatever he is striving for. The questions he asks could, for example, include the following: "Where should I construct the house in order to ensure the safety of my family? What does it mean if the place looks like the heart of an elephant? What consequences follow from owning a horse that has a whorl in its forehead?"

Such requests for detailed predictions can be responded to by examining a particular area, interpreting the whorls in the horse's hair, or analysing dreams or other omens. Topomancy—the analysis of an area's shapes and forms—involves not only a broad variety of images that allow precise predictions with regard to specific circumstances. It also declares particular shapes as carrying particular omens. The simple discernment of shapes in a physical area of space allows assessment of the place as positive or negative. The patterns assessed are based, for example, on the tools of daily life, on sacred objects, on human, animal or demonic body-forms and other things. Particular patterns can be exploited, so that the person in question might achieve specific qualities, such as becoming a hero. For example, a place where one becomes a hero looks like the chest of a lion. Others are said to ward off death.

The interpretation of portents of death in the *Mṛtyuvañcanopadeśa*[7] is similar to texts on geomancy and dream interpretation. Detailed and complex images of events, bodily impulses and physical defects, and dreams are seen as signs of impending death. These omens also offer the healer the possibility of diagnosing a patient's disease. This Buddhist text, which is undoubtedly influenced by concepts foreign to Buddhism, furthermore aims at preparing the patient for death. The signs allow the healer to recognize death's approach and to prognosticate an expected time of its arrival. Moreover, it gives the patient the opportunity to prepare himself for his death through spiritual practice. Alternatively, he can try to have rituals performed to cheat death.

Other complex questions that might be posed include questions about the days on which diseases or other calamities (*keg*) might be encountered in the coming year. What are the times of such illnesses and calamities? With regard to health, a healer will answer such questions by feeling and interpreting the patient's pulse. Other matters (aside from healing/disease) would be the task of a diviner. The

portents of death and the predictions in the geomantic texts concerning health again point to a key aspect in prognostication: the importance of time and timing.

Time and Timing

Manifold and multi-layered questions require manifold and multi-layered techniques for answering them. Time and timing are the most significant factors in Chinese calculation (*nag rtsis*) but are also very prominent in other forms of divination. The success of an undertaking often depends on the right timing when the activity is begun. Generally, the timing of events or activities can follow the Tibetan calendar where auspicious and inauspicious days for specific undertakings are marked. The more significant a particular undertaking is for a client, the more likely he is to consult a diviner to obtain the specific auspicious time on which to begin.

Time and timing are not only significant factors for the client and the patient but can also influence the activity of the diviner. Texts on geomancy, for example, recommend that the diviner perform a simple pre-divination to determine whether the day for the examination of an area is auspicious or not. Thus, a diviner may perform a smoke divination to ascertain whether the time is right for undertaking an examination of the land. Particular weather phenomena such as the direction in which the smoke blows can indicate if the day is suitable or not.

On a more general level, prognostication for the whole populace or nation correlates with time, such as in the horse races that were performed in Tibet until the 1950s. A further possibility is prognostication with regard to circumstances that can concern a region or a nation such as wars. There are texts on divination for wars; on such occasions the Tibetan government consulted the state oracles. A failed or incorrect prognostication could lead to an oracle being discharged.

The centrality of timing to the culture of divination calls on us to reflect on the concepts of time and its division in traditional Tibetan society. Peasants and nomads in the formerly agricultural and pastoral society had a simple system to measure time; they followed natural processes and cycles. The seasons determined their activities. Sun, moon, and other planets determined their daily and monthly routines. The seasons of the year determined the timing of specific activities: the plowing and sowing of the fields, the harvest, and the collection of herbs. The life and the death of cattle in Tibet and other Himalayan mountain areas depended on the seasons; cattle were moved from summer and winter pastures. Late summer and autumn were the seasons for sharing and slaughtering. Moreover, the needs of the cattle divided the times of the day, i.e., the feeding in the morning and the milking in the evening. In traditional societies, such natural divisions of time had a much greater impact on daily life than they have in modern societies, in which although time can be measured exactly, it can also be ignored. The seasons and the cycles of day and night were significant to the organization of life throughout the year. The needs of humans and animals structured time.

Time-correlated systems and concepts in Tibet, however, were made more complex by another factor that relates to both locality and religion, namely the hindrances and obstacles presented by demons or demonic forces. Tibetan culture knows numerous demons such as the "lord of the ground" (*sa bdag*), who moves through time and place. This idea influences all plans for any kind of fieldwork, journey, building construction, and so on. On top of the natural and demon-related time-constraints, there were also other units used to structure time as in other societies: years, months, weeks, days, and hours. As in China and India, Tibetans also recognized a sixth unit that a diviner can calculate: the unit of two hours that also denotes the "time of the day" like dawn (*nam langs*), sunrise (*nyi shar*), morning (*nyi dros*), and so on. And as already explained, these units—years, months and so on—were directly related to other factors: the elements, the directions, divinatory dimensions called *sme ba* and *spar kha*, the zodiac signs, and personal elements such as *rus khams* or *rus chen*.

Moreover, another time system came from India, namely the astronomical system known as *grub rtsis*. It is different again, and compartmentalizes time as follows: the day is divided into sixty units called *chu tshod*; *chu tshod* are divided into sixty *chu srang*, and the *chu srang* into six breaths (*dbugs*). Thus, 21,600 breaths make one day of the week.

Theoretical Background

Divinatory techniques try to answer questions by correlating time and place. I, therefore, present below a brief survey of the theoretical structure of time and place. These elements form alike the basis of both medical and divinatory concepts.

The primary causes (*rgyu*) for the world are contained in the world—in the environment that is determined by the four elements. 'Phags pa (1235–1280), the nephew of Sa skya Paṇḍita (1182–1251), explains in his *Shes bya rab gsal* that the composition of the physical world is based upon the four elements earth (*sa*), water (*chu*), fire (*me*), and wind (*rlung*). These are commonly the elements referred to in medicine: the human body is composed of them. A fifth element, ether (*nam mkha'*), may be added. These elements are related to the three humors (*nyes pa gsum*) wind (*rlung*), bile (*mkhris pa*), and phlegm (*bad kan*) which, together with the elements, constitute the balance of any particular body. There is, however, an exception with regard to the correlation between human body and element. *sDe srid* Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, for example, follows a Chinese concept in assigning the organs to the Chinese elements too.

The elements that feature in divination are usually considered as being five in number, and originate in China: they are earth (*sa*), water (*chu*), fire (*me*), wood (*shing*), and iron or metal (*lcags*). These five elements form, among other dimensions, the components of time. They are regarded as factors which influence the life of a person through their correlation. They exist largely beyond our control. With divination techniques, however, their negative influences can be calculated and/or prognosticated, and thereby their effects mitigated or enhanced. A change in human behavior, or a change in plan, can allow a person to avoid the negative influence that might otherwise threaten an undertaking. Furthermore, rituals can help to mitigate or even prevent damage.

The other, so-called secondary, causes (*rkyen*) are, in medical tradition, considered factors such as demons, behavior, seasons, and nutrition. In divination, they are very similar: demons, behavior, and timing. A change in behavior, or in food, or in medical treatment, can improve a body's condition and thus benefit health. The same is valid for social or economic conditions. A change in behavior or a change of plans can improve a current situation and influence upcoming events. If the plans are fixed and unchangeable, then a ritual might serve as a remedy of last resort.

These reflections bring us to the Tibetan conceptualization of the world (or universe) as the "vessel" (*snod*) and living beings as its content or essence (*bcud*). The vessel itself is composed of time and space and consists of six elements. It affects human lives and the variability of its composition can lead to conditions that have to be improved or changed. This is true both with regard to the microcosmic level of the body (the area with which medicine is concerned) and with regard to the macrocosmic level (with which divination is concerned).

Despite these shared theoretical concepts, divination—in contrast to medicine—is not included in the traditional five major sciences (*rig gnas che ba lnga*); astronomy and mathematics of Indian origin (*skar rtsis*) are a part of the five minor sciences (*rig gnas chung ba lnga*). However, in his *Vaiḍūrya dkar po*, Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho (1653–1705) distinguishes eighteen sciences in all, included among which are astrology (*skar rtsis*) and Chinese divination (*nag rtsis*).

Prognostication and Medical Practice

Apart from gaining knowledge about the future, the shared purpose of both prognostication and medicine is to improve life. Intentions behind the wish to consult a healer and a diviner are identical yet different at the same time. A patient usually consults a healer when he is sick—even though the stage of a disease depends very much on the sensitivity of the patient who wants to avoid real physical damage to the body and be healed.

On the other hand, a client consults a diviner, usually beforehand, so as to avoid any kind of damage in the future. Both methods originate in the wish for happiness, contentment, and fulfillment in life. They might be achieved by diagnosis and prescription: just as medical treatment can heal the body, a ritual can turn back or block threatening forces and change the future for the better. Both medical patient and divination client seek information: the patient about his health, the client about the conditions and circumstances of places and times. The aim of both is to prevent damage to one's own life or to those of relatives and friends. It might even be the one and the same person who diagnoses a disease and prognosticates the future. Especially in rural areas, diviners can be oracles—the line between oracles and shamans is also not clear—so a diviner can fulfill the function of a healer and vice versa. Tibetan society has institutionalized this connection by establishing the Medical-Astrological-Institute (*sman rtsis khang*) in Lhasa and, in the 1960s, in its exile community in the Indian hill station Dharamsala.

With regard to the prognostication practices used in medicine and divination, the methods of examination are also comparable. The examination of a patient's body with the pulse or urine analysis is comparable to the examination of the land through observations of the shapes of mountains and rocks and the flow of rivers. Both look at the current states and use them to try to prognosticate the future. Furthermore, pulse diagnosis is not only applied to diagnose health issues but is also used as a means of prognostication for predicting a family's position in society, its wealth, upcoming visits of guests, and so on.

For medical purposes, the subtleness of pulse diagnosis allows early diagnosis of illnesses that may be threatening a client's health. An early diagnosis gives the opportunity for healing through simple means such as a change in daily behavior or diet. Similarly, prognostication offers the chance to avoid harm by changing plans or the timing of planned activities.

Both healer and diviner examine the present while also looking at the past. Both predict the future and make suggestions accordingly, the healer with regard to the patient's health and the diviner with regard to other activities. If present circumstances and conditions suggest that an intervention would be beneficial, the healer and/or diviner can perform rituals or prescribe medicines. Further evidence for the perceived equivalence of the two kinds of services is in the method of payment: in both cases, it is not fixed or mandatory. Both patient and client can show their gratitude with whatever offering, gift, or money they chose to dedicate.

Healer and diviner, patient and client—though for the latter it seems of less significance—should observe similar ethical rules such as abstaining from alcoholic drinks and sexual intercourse, especially before an examination. For the best results, both techniques require the right timing: the best time for a pulse diagnosis is early morning, and likewise the texts recommend, for example, that the best time for an examination of land or a *mo*-divination is also the morning.

A healer's or diviner's activity may be broken down into the following four steps:

- examination of the current status: for example through pulse diagnosis (for a healer) or examination of a piece of land (for a geomantic diviner)

- interpretation, analyses, and diagnosis of the current status quality based on this examination

- prognostication of the future

- prescription, which might involve medical treatment and/or a ritual.

Oracles and Prophets

The correlation between medicine and prognostication is also apparent in the similar activities of oracles, prophets, and shamans whose terms and functions are hard to differentiate. One of the best-known examples of the Tibetan culture of prediction is the Tibetan state oracle, which has a very high status. These "public services" are not unique to Buddhism but are also found in Bon.

The prediction of an oracle is based on the idea that a deity—in the case of the state oracle the deity Pehar—uses a person's body as a medium (*lus g.yar*) and speaks through it. During his performance, the Tibetan state oracle (as do many other oracles) wears ceremonial regalia which include a helmet and a mirror. The state oracle is employed by the government and consulted for state affairs and at times of war. The Fourteenth Dalai Lama even consulted the state oracle before his flight from Tibet. Even though he himself did a *mo* divination that indicated he should stay, he nevertheless left when the state oracle told him to go.

The terminology applied is manifold and depends on the oracles' status: the state oracle of gNas chung is called *sku rten pa*, "the one whose body serves as support", and *chos rje*, "master of dharma". This oracle is usually a monk with a certain training.

Other terms are *lus khog* or *sku khog, lha bka', lha pa* and *lha 'bab* (*mkhan*). The term *lha pa* is also applied for shamans. Important oracles in Tibet—such as the oracles of gNas chung, dGa' gdong, and lHa mo chos skyong—are usually male. Other important oracles acknowledged by the Tibetan government could be male or female. One of the important female oracles, for example, was the 'Bras spungs rten ma, an official of the fourth rank (*rim bzhi*) in the Tibetan government, who was allowed to practice in the temple of 'Bras spungs and the residence of the Dalai Lama. An oracle's prognostication is similar to the utterance of a prophet (*lung bstan mkhan*): oracle and prophet predict the future. Their prediction is based on intuitive knowledge. As for the oracle, the knowledge can be supplied by a deity, the prophet's knowledge is based on insight. Both their predictions can concern any sphere of life.

Final Remarks and Acknowledgements

This short survey is not meant to present a survey on the current studies on divination. The volume on Tibetan prognostication itself is not intended as a complete survey of all techniques, as this would involve too many factors that cannot be dealt with here. However, the articles do show the diversity and multi-cultural influences on divination in Tibet. The anthropological view presented here is based on my observations and experiences while staying in Tibetan communities and living with Tibetan families.

Special thanks are due to the late Dunchu Sonam Dorje of the Medical-Astrological-Institute in Dharamsala, who lost his life too early. He shared his immense knowledge on the Tibetan techniques of Chinese calculation. He was kind enough to tell me only after several months that I had upset him by asking too many questions, because as his student he had expected me to listen and not to ask.

Furthermore, I would like to thank Dieter Schuh, who was my main teacher in Tibetan Studies, for sharing his extraordinary knowledge in practically all fields, including his language skills. Guiding me over many years, he was an excellent and patient teacher. It was he who introduced me to horse medicine and Chinese calculation. His philological expertise helped me to persevere with difficult material, while his vast understanding of traditional mathematics helped me to gain an insight into the Chinese calculation methods preserved in Tibet.

I would like to thank the IKGF in Erlangen for offering me a fellowship in 2017, which allowed me to leave my daily routine of the "Tibetisches Wörterbuch" at the Bavarian Academy of Sciences and Humanities for some time and dedicate my time to this very interesting field of Tibetan Studies.

Finally, I would particularly like to express my special thanks to my two co-editors Donatella Rossi und Rolf Scheuermann. Without their contributions, this volume would not have been completed.
—*Petra Maurer* <>

DIVINING WITH ACHI AND TĀRĀ: COMPARATIVE REMARKS ON TIBETAN DICE AND MĀLĀ DIVINATION: TOOLS, POETRY, STRUCTURES, AND RITUAL DIMENSIONS by Jan-Ulrich Sobisch, contributor: Solvej Hyveled Nielsen [Series: Prognostication in History, Brill, 9789004401952]

DIVINING WITH ACHI AND TĀRĀ is a book on Tibetan methods of prognostics with dice and prayer beads (mālā). Jan-Ulrich Sobisch offers a thorough discussion of Chinese, Indian, Turkic, and Tibetan traditions of divination, its techniques, rituals, tools, and poetic language. Interviews with Tibetan masters of divination introduce the main part with a translation of a dice divination manual of the deity Achi that is still part of a living tradition. Solvej Nielsen contributes further interviews, a mālā divination of Tārā and its oral tradition, and very useful glossaries of the terminology of Tibetan divination and fortune telling. Appendices provide lists of deities and spirits and of numerous identified ritual remedies and supports that are an essential element of a still vibrant Tibetan culture.

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1 Introduction

Excerpt: With this introduction I would like to provide a brief comparative survey of some dice divination manuals of different cultures, languages, and times, to shed a little light on the striking similarities we find in them and, thereby, to place Tibetan dice divination in a broader context. A case in point is the astonishing uniformity of four-sided dice found in Taxila (near today's Islamabad) and Egypt that date to the ninth century (or earlier), although their exact historical connection is not yet established. Both are made of bone, rectangular, "unbalanced" (i.e., their opposing sides do not respectively add up to the same number), their "pips" (little holes representing the numbers) are each surrounded by two concentric circles, and their two ends are marked with two (Taxila) or three (Egypt) lines cut into them.1 Apart from such remarkable material similarities, we also find, for instance, a similarity in numbers deriving from the form (e.g., four-sided dice tend to produce sixty-four omens, on which see below), and, moreover, also a similarity of ideas. The questions posed to the diviners, for instance, recorded in many manuals, testify to the homogeneity of human needs and desires throughout the world. Investigating some of these similarities, the focus of this introduction will be on aspects of the dice, poetry, structures, prognostic categories, and ritual remedies found in divinatory texts.

We use the terms "divination" or "prognosis" (in Tibetan: mo) in the present publication for all prognostic techniques that either make use of standard signs or produce random signs. Standard signs are, for instance, used in butter lamp divination. Here, the diviner watches for certain standard signs like large or small flames and a long or short duration of the flame and then interprets the standard signs according to schemes that have already been laid down in the respective divination manuals. We can find standard signs also, for instance, in the practice of Tibetan bird divination, where we have manuals that describe the behavior of birds or the sounds that they make. The diviner watches particular birds such as crows for the occurrence of typical behavior or sounds and turns then to manuals that provide stock interpretations for each of these "signs." The production of random signs, on the other hand, is achieved mostly through technical devices like dice, sticks, or shells. The numbers obtained through dice, for instance, lead to stock prognoses, often in the form of verses, which provide basic interpretations of the random signs. Such stock prognoses are what we find in the texts investigated here. It should be noted, however, that there is some overlap between the categories roughly defined above, and— although I have used terms like "standard signs" and "stock prognoses" in my description—that there is always plenty of room for the diviner's individual interpretation. The stock prognoses may be very short and often cryptic formulations, leaving much room for imagination, or they can be more concrete such as when a prognosis predicts that one will find a lost item within a week in the north-eastern direction.

There is another crucial difference to be discussed between types of methods. In the Mo divination that is under investigation here, what is to be divined is "received" either in a vision or in the instant when the randomizing technical device "falls" (e.g., when dice fall). In another type of method, fortune and misfortune are calculated (Tib. rtsis), as in the Sino-Tibetan calculation methods (Tib. nag rtsis and 'byung rtsis) that came to Tibet from China during the Yarlung dynasty (7th–9th c.). Instead of relying on visions or randomizing tools, it relies on the idea that the elements fire, earth, iron, water, and wood pervade— or, in fact, make up—all reality of space and time. In practice, one or several elements are related to components such as years, month, days, hours, cardinal directions, planets, and zodiac signs, or to more mysterious Chinese elements such as the nine numbers of the magical square (Tib. sme ba dgu) and eight trigrams (Tib. spar kha). For all these elements such as fire and earth, and so forth, which are either mutually conducive or antagonistic, a system has been developed to calculate the favorable or unfavorable influences of their combinations. Very similar to the process of divination, these calculations are used to determine a prognosis for material wealth, life, health and so forth. However, in addition to the coming together of influences in a given situation, this method also takes into consideration the constellations at the year of birth of a person, which are believed to be determining factors that accompany a person the whole life. Thus, if, for instance, a person's health is in the year of his birth related to the element of water and in another year to fire, that year will be problematic for his health as these elements are antagonistic and certain rituals will have to be carried out to protect him. Sino-Tibetan calculation has common features with Tibetan geomancy (sa dpyad), one form of which analyses the shape of mountains, rivers, and so forth, that are believed to have similar influences like fire, water, earth, and so forth, from among the elements of calculation. There exists, however, in Tibet also a form of geomancy that is more closely related to divination since it uses randomizing tools that produce signs on the ground or in the sand that are then divined. An important role is also played by astronomy and astrology (Tib. skar rtsis) in Tibet. It too is a system of calculation rather than divination to provide prognoses. Thus, the main difference between Sino-Tibetan calculation, landscape geomancy, and astrology on the one hand, and Mo divination on the other is that in the former the prognosis is based on a calculation of the influencing elements, whereas a Mo divines using vision or randomizing tools. In practice, however, diviners often combine methods belonging to both divination and calculation.

Apart from material aspects, structure, poetry, and so forth, dice divination manuals all over the world have also many other aspects in common. Divinatory techniques with dice or similar technical devices for randomization occur in all ancient, medieval, and modern cultures—i.e., they are a timeless phenomenon. Their literary manifestations almost always bear elements of both an elite, literary culture and of folk culture. Moreover, each sample we look at is usually modeled after one or several older ones, eventually going back in some of its elements to divination books in other

cultures. It is, thereby, connected throughout the world to Babylonic, Egyptian, Hellenistic, Persian, Arabic, European, Central Asian, South-East Asian and other cultural spheres. When we find similar structural elements, however, that does not necessarily mean that two manuals have a traceable direct historical connection. In some cases, other factors may predetermine a structural element. As already mentioned, in the case of dice divination (Tib. sho mo), similarly structured dice can lead to the same number of prognoses in different manuals.

Dice for Divination—One of Many Tools of Randomization

As Strickmann has pointed out, there are one-step and two-step systems of divination. A single-step procedure is one where one directly draws a prognosis from pre-fabricated written answers; a two-step procedure has a randomizing technique previous to drawing the answers. These two procedures should again be differentiated from the less pre-structured direct visions arising in a trance or from the surface of a lake or a mirror. Lama Chime describes such less pre-structured signs arising on the surface of a lake or a mirror as being like a vision that originates in the diviner's (or the medium's) mind like a dream. Such a vision still needs complete and original individual interpretation. A somewhat intermediate type of procedure is one where the diviner searches for a sign in the flame of a butter lamp, the ball of his thumb, the behavior of birds, or in the cracks of tortoiseshell or a bone thrown into a fire, and so forth. The signs appearing in such procedures are usually pre-structured in that previous "seers" have seen and transmitted them and someone has laid them down as standardized signs and provided more or less detailed stock interpretations in a divination manual. The diviner may see, for instance, a particular form of a crack in a bone, and he can refer to a manual that describes the sign and lays down some interpretation, often in the form of poetry. The diviner has to connect the stock interpretation with the situation of his particular client. He may have more or less liberty (or ability) to interpret the existing stock prognosis. A fully developed two-step procedure uses a technical device to select a prognosis at random. Such a device can be dice or even a cage bird that is trained to pick one or more of sixty-four sheets of paper with short prognoses, often inverse form.

Dice divination is a classic fully developed two-step approach. Like other methods of this category, it employs one of the many technical devices at the beginning. In the case of the famous Chinese I-ching, for instance, one method is to shake sticks in a tubular receptacle until one or several of them

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emerge from its opening, but many other methods are possible, including the use of coins. For a discussion of the usage of Buddhist rosaries (Skt. mālā) in Tibetan divination, see Solvej H. Nielsen's chapter on mālā divination below.

Another randomizing device is a geomantic process where signs are produced in various ways, for instance by throwing stones or shells on the ground or applying random numbers of dots to a sheet of paper. The idea is always the same, namely to arrive at a number that is then used to select a simple answer such as "good," "bad," or "medium," and so forth. It can also be used to select a text passage (for instance a verse) that contains a prognosis and can—if it is very brief or cryptic—still be further interpreted.

Previous scholars have pointed out that certain graphical patterns visible in divination manuals indicate that dice play a role in the selection of a particular prognosis. In some cases, groups of circles precede each section of a prognosis in the manual. The numbers of groups are always three, and the maximum number of circles per group is four, thus:

o-o-o / o-o-oo / o-o-ooo / o-o-oooo

o-oo-o / o-oo-oo / o-oo-ooo / o-oo-oooo

o-ooo-o / o-ooo-oo / o-ooo-ooo / o-ooo-oooo

o-oooo-o / o-oooo-oo / o-oooo-ooo / o-oooo-oooo (=16 sections)

oo-o-o (and so forth =16 sections)

ooo-o-o (and so forth =16 sections)

oooo-o-o (and so forth =16 sections)—together 64 sections

This particular pattern indicates the use of dice with four sides, i.e., the oblong, rectangular dice with rounded ends that have been described above. The four long sides would bear one to four circles (carved "pips"): o, oo, ooo, oooo. A diviner either uses three of such dice together or rolls one of these three times. Archaeological findings well establish the existence of such dice. According to Stein,6 such dice were discovered in Niya and here the order of dots was 3 opposite to 1 and 4 opposite to 2. Eüders explains that according to the Pãšakakevalï, the dice (Skt. pãšaka) were made from ivory or švetãrka wood and inscribed with the numbers 1–4. As a general rule, such four-sided dice seem to produce always sixty-four results (because the succession of numbers matters), and thus there are 43 possible results.

In other cases we find only sixteen sections in the texts and sixteen numbers from three to eighteen, indicating the (simultaneous) use of three six-sided dice, as they are also visible in images of the Indo-Tibetan deity Šrï Devï (Tib. dPal ldan lha mo) hanging down from the saddle of her mount. For these types of dice, however, the three results are added up, thus:

1-1-1 = 3	1-2-6 = 9	2-6-6 = 14
1-1-2 = 4	1-3-6 = 10	3-6-6 = 15
1-1-3 = 5	1-4-6 = 11	4-6-6 = 16
1-1-4 = 6	1-5-6 = 12	5-6-6 = 17
1-1-5 = 7	1-6-6 = 13	6-6-6 = 18
1-1-6 = 8		

There is no consideration of combinations such as

1-2-3 (= 6) or

3-2-1 (= 6) or

2-2-2 (= 6), and so forth.

What counts is only the total sum of all three dice (or, perhaps, of three rolls of a single die). The number of possible prognoses is thereby massively reduced from sixty-four to sixteen. A particular case is a Turkic text investigated by Thomsen (1912: 192), which has sixty-five sections (due to using a combination twice by mistake). An exception is also the A pa ra tsa na text by the Tibetan scholar adept Mipham (1846–1912), which uses two dice with six sides, resulting in thirty-six different prognoses.

In the case of six-sided dice, it moreover appears to be the case that the numbers or dots representing numbers on their six sides were distributed in the same manner as they are on modern dice, where opposite sides always add up to seven (1+6, 2+5, 3+4). Stein confirms this, i.e., that the opposite sides are always adding up to 7. Both our interviewees, Ontrul Rinpoche and Khenchen Nyima, however, pointed out that the dice used for the Achi Mo were "not like modern dice."7 In Tibet, we furthermore find dice with symbols or letters on them. A widespread example is a die that bears on its six sides the six syllables of a Mantra of Bodhisattva Mañjušrï: A—ra—pa—tsa—na—dhï.8 Mañjušrï figures prominently in Tibetan Buddhist divination systems, but other deities, like Palden Lhamo (Skt. Šrï Devï), occur as well.

Poetry in the Prophecy

Various texts that were investigated show—despite their different origin, language (Turkic, Sanskrit, Tibetan) and religion (Jaina?, Manichean?, Bönpo, Buddhist)—a further striking similarity in that they all employ brief or more detailed poetical expressions (not always metrical), mostly at the beginning of each prognosis. As Dotson noted, they "partake of a heightened register of language involving archaisms, metered song, and impressionistic images." Stein has pointed to the many myths and legends contained in Tibetan-language Dunhuang manuscripts that helped to form Tibetan divination texts. They "illustrate the original Tibetan component of what was to become, in later Tibet and Mongolia, a highly Sino-Tibetan oracular idiom". The poetic element is a regular constituent in divination manuals of different languages, cultures, and religions. <>

DIVINATION IN EXILE: INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO RITUAL PROGNOSTICATION IN THE TIBETAN BON TRADITION by Alexander Kingsbury Smith [Series: Brill's Tibetan Studies Library, Brill, 9789004438194]

In DIVINATION IN EXILE, Alexander K. Smith offers the first comprehensive scholarly introduction to the performance of divination in Tibetan speaking communities, both past and present. While Smith surveys a variety of ritual practices, the volume focuses on divination and its associated rites in the contemporary Tibetan Bon tradition. Drawing from multi-site ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Himachal Pradesh and the translation of previously unpublished Tibetan language materials, *Divination in Exile* offers a valuable, social scientific contribution to our understanding of the perception and usage of ritual manuscripts in contemporary Tibetan cultural milieus.

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Excerpt: On a balmy day in August 1904, shortly after the arrival of the Younghusband expeditionary force in Lhasa, Lieutenant Colonel L. Austin Waddell organized a visit to the Karmashar Oracle. As recounted in his memoir of the 1903–1904 British invasion of Tibet, *Lhasa and Its Mysteries*, Waddell was at first struck by the small building's interiors. Like other temples he had seen in Gyantse, which Waddell romantically recounted as "satanic Aladdin's cave[s] in the dark," the inner-oracular chamber was richly decorated and illuminated with flickering candles (Waddell 1906: 228). Through the smoke and gloom, the oracle leaned forward, jewels clattering against his circular breastplate, and beckoned the Englishman to enter. As with many of the diviners that he had met during his tenure as the Younghusband Expedition's chief medical offer, Waddell was not impressed with the man's prognostications, which he felt embodied nothing more than "pithy and shrewd common-sense" (Waddell 1906: 385). As the story goes, however, just as he turned to leave the chamber, the oracle stared at the Englishman piercingly and asked him his age. Waddell, inadvertently forgetting that his birthday had passed several months earlier, replied incorrectly, saying, "forty-nine years old". With great dramatic poise, the oracle responded, "no, you are one year more. You are fifty!" He then promptly dismissed the British delegation before leaning back and vanishing into the shadows. Not knowing how the Tibetan could have guessed his true age, Waddell left the temple overcome with curiosity.

If this episode reads like historical fiction, it is because it may well be exactly that. It is sometimes difficult to parse out fact from fiction in Waddell's *Lhasa and Its Mysteries*, the prose of which are saturated with both romantic mystique and the ethos of British colonial conquest. At times, he moves seamlessly between nostalgia and disgust in his exploration of Tibetan Buddhism, seeing Tibet as both a degenerate oriental despotism and a mystic cache of ancient wisdom, the inheritor and guardian of 'pure' Indian Buddhism, the rediscovery of which would vivify Western civilization. In this respect, Waddell is very much a man of his times—but also uncannily familiar.

To adapt Lopez (1995, 1998) to my purposes, Waddell's observations stem from two kinds of orientalism. The first, *à la* Edward Said, transforms Tibet into an object of European fantasy, in one moment debased to suit the hierarchies inherent to colonial rule and, in the next, exulted to accommodate narratives of the 'mystical' Orient. The second orientalism would be the eponymousism underlying the field of oriental studies itself, which, in the case of Buddhism, emerged primarily through the textual study of South and East Asian Buddhist traditions. As a consequence, the Western academic study of Tibet tended (and I would argue still tends) to eschew cultural history and ethnography in favor of the collection, editing, and translation of Tibetan Buddhist texts, which are then exhaustively compared to South and East Asian witnesses. In many respects, these orientalisms, which frame the content of L. Austin Waddell's understanding of Tibet, comprise two

major themes in the crucible that shaped early Tibetan studies and, in a fashion, continues to inform the outlook of the field today.

Not unlike *Lhasa and Its Mysteries*, the contemporary study of Tibetan divination exists at the center of a kind of ideological web, in this case suspended between the entrenched philological approach of oriental studies and the qualitative methods central to the anthropology of religion. While a considerable amount of ink has been shed on the importance of exploring the ritual/textual interface in Tibetan cultures, very few authors have adopted an interdisciplinary tack in their consideration of Tibetan divination systems. One significant casualty of this is that we lack a general, scholarly introduction to the forms of divination encountered in Tibetan cultures, both historical and contemporary. Also, not insignificantly, no attention has been paid to the ways in which divination manuals are used by diviners. The variable reading techniques deployed in the usage of texts forms the basis of the discourse analysis central to the reading techniques of social and cultural anthropology. As such, this is a significant lacuna, which cannot be overcome without getting off the verandah, as Malinowski was fond of saying, and studying the performance of divination in the field. In many respects, the present volume was imagined as a preliminary effort to overcome this research gap by consolidating philological and ethnographic methods so as to explore the perception, usage, and interpretation of divination manuals by both diviners and their clientele.

Before broaching the subject in any depth, it is important to note that both of these disciplinary approaches bear distinctive hallmarks of our two orientalisms, which, until very recently, have dictated the intellectual historical development of the Western study of Tibetan divination. Perhaps the most evident of these is that, with a few notable exceptions, Western scholars researching the subject have worked exclusively with monastic informants. There are a number of good reasons for this, not the least of which are the importance of classical literacy and familiarity with canonical literature, as well as the accessibility of refugee lamas in the diaspora community; however, the monastic representation of divination and its associated apotropaic rituals is neither value free, nor is it apolitical. It is my experience that, when speaking with Western audiences, Tibetan monastics are often acutely aware of the value of promoting relatively saccharine, intellectualist depictions of Tibetan Buddhism, which are shorn of many ritualistic aspects of Buddhist praxis. In much of the literature, this informant-bias has combined with the philological orientation of Tibetan studies in such a way as to privilege forms of 'high' Buddhism at the expense of a considerable number of practices that inform the day-to-day lives of lay practitioners (and many monastics themselves). The present volume's emphasis on divination in the Tibetan Bon tradition was conceived as effort to circumvent this gap in the extant literature.

The term Bon has been used historically to indicate a plurality of concepts, the disambiguation of which would require a thorough and lengthy explanation. To speak very generally, however, Bon may be provisionally described as a heterodox branch of Tibetan Buddhism that, according to emic narratives, lays claim to a legacy that long predates the origins of Indian Buddhism. For a number of reasons, Bon has historically been treated with dismissiveness by the followers of other Tibetan sects, who have frequently decried the Bonpos (the followers of Bon) as "outsiders" (*phyi pa*), "heretics" (*mu stegs pa*), or things considerably worse. One advantage, however, of working in Bonpo communities is that, according to Bon sacred histories, long before the birth of Siddhārtha Gautama, an earlier Buddha, known as sTon pa gshen rab, travelled extensively throughout Central and East Asia offering a variety of teachings, including divination practices and apotropaic rites. Consequently, divination in the Bon tradition demonstrates a canonical charter that is lacking in the case of other Tibetan sects. The resultant openness with which Bonpos discuss otherwise esoteric aspects of divination and its quotidian performance is invaluable to advancing the study of divination in Tibetan speaking communities.

While this publication will survey a significant number of divination practices, my primary focus in the third and fourth chapters is a single form of pebble divination performed by Tibetan Bonpos. This practice, which is known interchangeably as "manifestation of knowledge" (*lde'u 'phrul*) or "the pebble divination of the Masang" (*ma sang rdel mo*), possesses a nearly unstudied textual tradition that, according to Bon histories, originates in the eleventh century. In addition to fieldwork conducted in various locations in Himachal Pradesh, India, my discussion of Bon pebble divination is supplemented by the translation of a number of previously unstudied lithomantic manuscripts. Chiefly, I focus on the *sMra seng rdel mo gsal ba'i me long*, written by the 18th century ecumenicist and historian Kun grol grags pa. Certain aspects of this work will be read against two later commentaries on the subject of lithomancy: (1) the *Ma sangs 'phrul gyi rdel mo mngon shes rno gsal gyi sgron me*, written by Slob dpon mkhas grub lung rtogs rgya mtsho, the first preceptor of Yung drung gling Monastery in Central Tibet (founded 1834); and (2) the *sMra seng 'phrul gyi rdel mo mngon shes gsal ba'i sgron po*, a 19th century witness of an alleged 11th century *gter ma* discovery attributed to the Bon "treasure revealer" (*gter ston*) Khro tshang 'brug lha.

The translation and study of these types of divination manuals often raises an important question which, though not central to Tibetological research, emerges as a pressing point in both popular Western and emic discourses. In short, does divination 'work' as a prognostic technique and, if so, how? Travelling back to August 1904, we might imagine Lieutenant Colonel L. Austin Waddell leaving the Karmashar Oracle and, in hushed tones, asking his contemporaries the same question. This issue of efficacy—or of the perceived efficacy of divination—is one around which much of our discourse orbits and to which we will frequently return. As a social scientist, however, I leave questions pertaining to the veracity of ritual practices open-ended by methodological necessity.

As a general rule, the goal of research in the anthropology of religion is neither to propound the factual, objective validity of religious beliefs, nor to disprove any aspect of religious belief or practice. To quote Bader, Mencken, and Baker's groundbreaking work on paranormal subcultures in the United States, "when studying religion, it is relevant to ask how religious beliefs affect the lives of believers. Do these beliefs affect other attitudes and motivate specific patterns of action? What types of groups organize around specific beliefs, and how do these groups operate? How are beliefs maintained and reinforced?" (2017: 11). As sub-disciplines, the anthropology and sociology of religion are built around these lines of inquiry and their qualitative methods have evolved to answer these kinds of questions specifically. In short, no interview will ever prove or disprove religious epistemologies, nor will any textual critique provide evidence that divination practices offer extra-sensory foresight. Leaving these goals aside, one of this volume's main aims is to address what the effects of the belief in divination are upon believers. In particular, how this belief is expressed in terms of the engagement with and interpretation of textual materials.

Before moving on to the structure of the volume, it may first be useful to articulate my usage and understanding of the term 'divination' and its Tibetan language equivalents. To begin with, the Tibetan nouns *mo, phyag mo*, and *mo rtsis*, along with common verbal forms such as *mo rgyab* and *mo bkyon*, may be understood as referring to a heterogenous body of divination practices, largely (though not entirely) cleromantic in nature, which are widely practiced in Tibetan cultures. In many cases, these divinations are textually oriented (e.g. involve the use of an interpretive textual catalogue), though it is not uncommon to encounter illiterate diviners. The syllable *mo* has a number of other linguistic functions; however, limiting ourselves to its relationship to divination, it also appears in a variety of noun phrases indicating specific forms of divination. For example: *sho mo* (dice divination), *'phreng mo* (rosary divination), *rdo mo* (rock divination), and *pra mo* (mirror divination). Speaking of the individuals who perform divination, over the course of my fieldwork in Himachal

Pradesh, diviners were consistently referred to as either *mo pa, mo ma* (f.), *mo mkhan, mo rgyab mkhan*, or *mo rtsis pa*.

Returning to the English language, in proposing a working definition of divination I can do little better that to cite Wim van Binsbergen's excellent remarks on the subject: "within any cultural domain more or less demarcated in time and space, and endowed with meaning within that domain, divination might be defined as the entire set of procedures intended to acquire knowledge which is of a supernatural nature or which is otherwise not available through everyday means such as are based upon direct sensory perception" (1995: 114).

The variable classifications of the types of divination practiced globally are extremely diverse and the value of meta-taxonomies to ethnographic inquiry could easily be called into question. As such, I do not intend to commit to a discussion of etic classifications in any depth. Nevertheless, in the pages that follow, I do advocate a distinction between what I term 'mechanical' and 'inspirational' forms of divination (adapted from Zeitlyn 1990, 1995), which I see as reflected, in a relatively roughshod fashion, in the ways in which the terms *mo* and *mo rtsis* are differentiated from spirit-mediumship in Tibetan cultures.

Inspirational divination here refers to divination practices that depend wholly upon a relationship expressed between the diviner and some form of supernatural or divine agency, typically involving a form of possession as the medium through which revelation is expressed. Within the Tibetan cultural sphere, for example, the prognostics offered by spirit mediums (the *lha pa* of upper Tibet, for instance) and the prophecies given by semi-divine or divine beings in quasi-historical narratives would both represent inspirational forms of divination. Conversely, mechanical divination refers to forms of divination that utilize mechanistic apparatuses external to the operator that, if correctly interpreted, serve as a medium through which truths may be articulated or supernatural agency may be divined.

It is worth noting that similar binary classifications have been proposed by a number of authors writing on the subject of divination (Beattie 1964; Devisch 1985; Vernant 1974; and Zeitlyn 1987, for example). In fact, Nissinen (2010) goes as far as to trace the distinction between mechanical and inspirational, or 'technical' and 'nontechnical' divination to Plato's *Phaedrus* (244a–245a) and the Socratic discussion of μαντική and τέχνη (cf. Barton 1994; North 1990). Jacobs (2010), furthermore, argues that this distinction is popularized by Cicero, who argues for the delineation of 'artificial' and 'natural' forms of divination in his treatise *De Divinatione* (*De Div.* 1.1.1–13, 1.1.12). It has also been suggested that a comparable dichotomy privileging prophetic over mechanical divination can be found in the Hebrew Bible, where prophecy is characterized as a legitimate means of divine revelation while other forms of divination are forbidden (Leviticus 20: 6; Deuteronomy 18: 9–14; Isaiah 8: 19).

It may have been noted that Tibetan systems of astrology are conspicuously absent from this binary taxonomy. In Tibetan cultures, divination and astrology are often treated as separate, though closely related, phenomena. Broadly speaking, the Tibetan astrological sciences are divided into two systems: (1) *nag rtsis* or *'byung rtsis*, which is related to the Chinese *Yijing*; and (2) *dkar rtsis*, which is considered to have entered into Tibet from India via the proliferation of the *Kālacakratantra* (Schuh 1973; Te-min Tseng 05; Gerke 2011: 93–98). It also should be remembered that Bon narratives cast both *nag rtsis* and *dkar rtsis* as derivations of the Kālacakra, the Bon equivalent of which is found in the fourth volume of the *gZi brjid* (cf. Ramble 2013). Broadly speaking, however, *dkar rtsis* refers to a body of calendrical calculations and astronomy, while *nag rtsis*, as Gerke writes, is "not astrology *per se*, but a set of divination techniques based on temporal intervals and their determinants, which [form] the base of calendrical calculations" (Gerke 2011: 94) (cf. Schuh 1972, 1973a). By way of

contrast, divination practices which rely expressly upon the mediation of aleatoric devices belong to a slightly different taxonomic order and are generally classified as *mo rtsis* or, more succinctly, as *mo*. Nevertheless, divination and astrology are closely interrelated; so much so, for example, that sDe srid Sangs rgyas rgya mtsho, the Regent of the Fifth Dalai Lama, treats *mo* and *rtsis* as a single body of knowledge in his penultimate astrological treatise, the *Vaiḍūrya dkar po* (17 c.). Nevertheless, for my purposes, as the majority of my remarks will focus on forms of cleromancy, the astrological and elemental calculatory systems typified by *dkar rtsis* and *nag rtsis* will be treated as separate from—though closely related to—the cleromantic techniques referred to as *mo* or *mo rtsis*.

Turning now to the volume's structure, the first chapter provides a critical genealogy of the representation and study of Tibetan divination in European and American scholarship, ranging from the first appearance of the word *mo* in a Western language publication through to the present day. Having sketched the contours of the field, I move on to discuss some of the roles played by the study of divination in parallel academic disciplines. In this section, I attempt nothing as ambitious as an intellectual history, but instead focus on several theoretical leitmotifs in the anthropology of divination as it has been advanced, generally speaking, in the study of witchcraft and sorcery in African societies.

The second chapter is divided into two parts, the first section of which provides a general introduction to Tibetan divination. This includes a survey of the majority of the cleromantic practices known to ethnographic literature, as well as a discussion of the origins of various divinatory traditions in Tibetan Buddhist mytho-history. In the second section I provide a general introduction to Bon. This focuses, in particular, on Bon historiography and the origins of divination as they are represented in the Bon tradition. As Bon provides us with the only extant pre-modern taxonomy of divination practices in Tibet, aspects of this chapter may be of particular value for the advancement of historical research on *mo rtsis*.

In Chapters 3 and 4, I then offer a detailed analysis of the pebble divination known as *lde'u 'phrul*. Though I discuss the origins, performance, and symbolism of *lde'u 'phrul* in Chapter 3, I pay particular attention to the structure of the divination's prognostications, which are supplemented, in Chapter 4, by the translation of a complete *lde'u 'phrul* manuscript, along with a commentary on a wide variety of related ritual practices. In addition to articulating the practice's more salient features, my hope is that my remarks will help to demonstrate that Tibetan divination practices sit at a critical juncture, mediating multiple ritual systems, as well as a number of social and economic structures. Additionally, I aim to show that divination is associated with the articulation (and, perhaps, validation) of traditional epistemologies which, in some cases, are called into question by the mediating forces of globalization and its effects upon the performance of rites and the usage of ritual texts in contemporary exile communities. <>

Visualizing Dunhuang: Seeing, Studying, and Conserving the Caves edited by Dora C. Y. Ching, contributions by Annette Juliano, Neville Agnew, Jerome Silbergeld, Maria Menshikova, Cary Y. Liu, Roderick Whitfield, Richard K. Kent, Jun Hu, Zhao Shengliang, and Wei-Cheng Lin [Series: Publications of the Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University; P.Y. and W. Tang Center for East Asian Art Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, Princeton University Press, 9780691208169]

A beautifully illustrated study of the caves at Dunhuang, exploring how this important Buddhist site has been visualized from its creation to today

Situated at the crossroads of the northern and southern routes of the ancient silk routes in western China, Dunhuang is one of the richest Buddhist sites in the world, with more than 500 richly decorated cave temples constructed between the fourth and fourteenth centuries. The sculptures, murals, portable paintings, and manuscripts found in the Mogao and Yulin Caves at Dunhuang represent every aspect of Buddhism. From its earliest construction to the present, this location has been visualized by many individuals, from the architects, builders, and artists who built the caves to twentieth-century explorers, photographers, and conservators, as well as contemporary artists.

VISUALIZING DUNHUANG: SEEING, STUDYING, AND CONSERVING THE CAVES is a paperback edition of the ninth volume of the magnificent nine-volume hardback set, and examines how the Lo Archive, a vast collection of photographs taken in the 1940s of the Mogao and Yulin Caves, inspires a broad range of scholarship. Lavishly illustrated with selected Lo Archive and modern photographs, the essays address three main areas—Dunhuang as historical record, as site, and as art and art history. Leading experts across three continents examine a wealth of topics, including expeditionary photography and cave architecture, to demonstrate the intellectual richness of Dunhuang. Diverse as they are in their subjects and methodologies, the essays represent only a fraction of what can be researched about Dunhuang. The high concentration of caves at Mogao and Yulin and their exceptional contents chronicle centuries of artistic styles, shifts in Buddhist doctrine, and patterns of political and private patronage—providing an endless source of material for future work.

Contributors include Neville Agnew, Dora Ching, Jun Hu, Annette Juliano, Richard Kent, Wei-Cheng Lin, Cary Liu, Maria Menshikova, Jerome Silbergeld, Roderick Whitfield, and Zhao Shengliang.

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Excerpt: Strategically located at the convergence of the ancient northern and southern trade routes on the edge of the Taklamakan desert in northwestern China, the oasis town of Dunhuang served as a gateway between China and Central Asia, particularly after it became a Han-dynasty commandery in the second century BCE. West of Dunhuang, trade routes extended to Kashgar and the Pamirs, and then farther west toward Central Asia and Persia, north toward the Russian Steppe, and south toward India. East of Dunhuang, routes led to China and the ancient capital Chang'an (present-day Xi'an). As Dunhuang's prominence grew as a nexus for trade where not only goods but also art, languages, religions, and ideas were exchanged and cross-fertilized, Buddhist cave sites sprang up. The Mogao (Peerless) Caves are 25 kilometers southeast of Dunhuang; 35 kilometers west is Xi Qianfodong (Western Caves of the Thousand Buddhas); and 170 kilometers to the east are the Yulin Caves (see the map on pages 14-15). Today all of these caves, plus a cluster of others nearby, are often referred to collectively as the "Dunhuang caves," or simply "Dunhuang." Two sites in particular, Mogao and Yulin—earlier known as Qianfodong (Caves of the Thousand Buddhas) and Wanfoxia (Gorge of the Ten Thousand Buddhas or Caves of the Myriad Buddhas), respectively—preserve a remarkable trove of Buddhist art and architecture and form the focus of this volume.
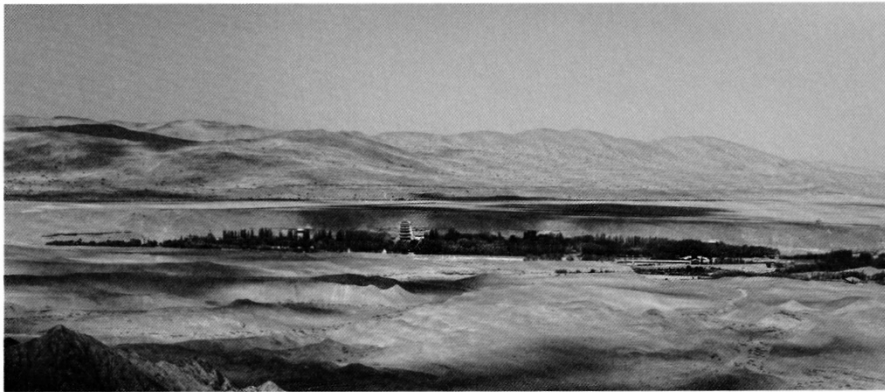
At the Mogao Caves, the largest of these sites, construction and reconstruction spanned a millennium, from the fourth to the fourteenth century. From floor to ceiling, vibrantly colored paintings and clay statues fill nearly five hundred of the more than seven hundred caves that were cut into a 1.6-kilometer stretch of the cliff face. The sculptures and murals, along with portable paintings and manuscripts found in the caves, represent practically every doctrinal and artistic aspect of Buddhism.

From its earliest
construction to
the present,
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figuration in Cave 420. These essays demonstrate how single caves or motifs can be expanded into detailed art-historical studies. Moving beyond the specific to the overarching, Jerome Silbergeld concludes the volume with a historical and expansive approach, reviewing and examining the contributions Dunhuang and all its interpretations have made to Chinese art history.

The essays in this volume demonstrate the intellectual richness of Dunhuang. They can be read individually as stand-alone studies, yet they are also complementary. Diverse as they are in their topics and methodologies, however, they represent only a fraction of what can be studied about Dunhuang. The high concentration of caves at Mogao and Yulin and their exceptional contents chronicle centuries of artistic styles, shifts in Buddhist doctrine, and patterns of political and private patronage, among other topics —providing an immeasurable wealth of material for future study. <>

VISUALIZING DUNHUANG: THE LO ARCHIVE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE MOGAO AND YULIN CAVES, NINE VOLUMES edited by Dora C. Y. Ching Contributions by Annette JulianoNeville AgnewJerome SilbergeldMaria MenshikovaCary Y. LiuRoderick WhitfieldRichard K. KentJun HuZhao Shengliang Wei-Cheng Lin [Publications of the Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University; P.Y. and W. Tang Center for East Asian Art Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University, Princeton University Press, 9780691208152] Set not seen.

A stunning nine-volume presentation of the incredible Buddhist caves at Dunhuang in northwestern China

Situated at an important juncture within the network of silk routes from China through central Asia, the oasis city of Dunhuang was an ancient site of Buddhist religious activity. Southeast of the city, the Mogao Caves, also known as the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas, are an astonishing group of hundreds of caves—carved in the cliffs between the fourth and fourteenth centuries—containing sculptures and paintings. Further east sit the Yulin Caves, another critical and richly decorated site. Featuring some of the finest examples of Buddhist imagery to be found anywhere in the world, these caves have enticed explorers, archaeologists, artists, scholars, and photographers since the early twentieth century.

VISUALIZING DUNHUANG: THE LO ARCHIVE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE MOGAO AND YULIN CAVES presents for the first time in print the comprehensive photographic archive—created in the 1940s by James C. M. Lo (1902–1987) and his wife, Lucy L. Lo (b. 1920)—of the remarkable Buddhist caves at Dunhuang. This extraordinary nine-volume set features more than 3,000 of the original black-and-white photographs that provide an indispensable historical record. Invaluable for their documentary worth and artistic quality, and thorough in their coverage and clarity, the images represent a rare perspective on significant monuments, many now irretrievably changed. The Lo Archive serves as a treasure trove of historical, cultural, and artistic information for researchers, art historians, and conservators.
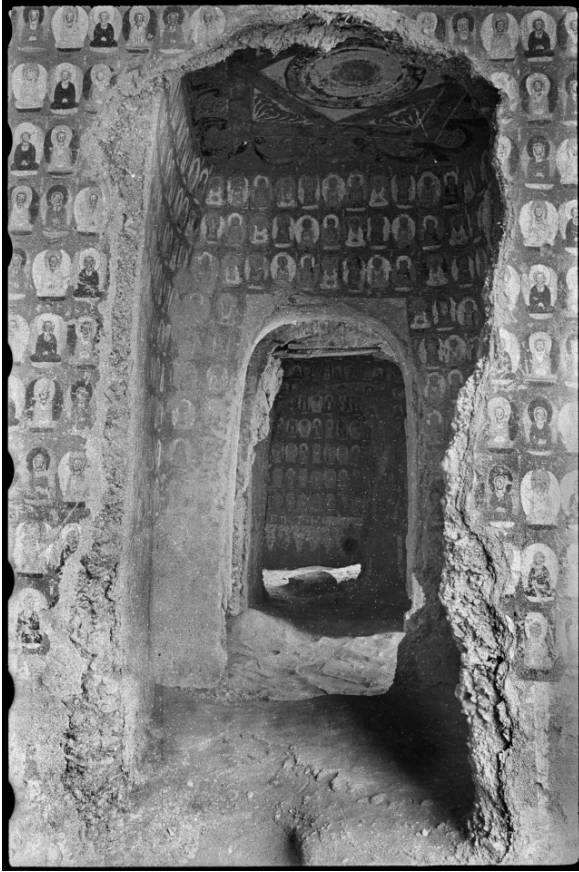
The introductory volume includes an essay about the formation and history of the Lo Archive, as well as maps, diagrams, photographs of the Mogao site, and concordances. The central volumes contain photographs of the Mogao and Yulin Caves, collaged photographs, several hundred newly created diagrammatic plans, and English and Chinese captions. The final volume is a collection of essays that addresses the complexity and richness of the Lo Archive, and how Dunhuang has been viewed from ancient times to the present. Contributors include Neville Agnew, Dora Ching, Jun Hu, Annette Juliano, Richard Kent, Wei-Cheng Lin, Cary Liu, Maria Menshikova, Jerome Silbergeld, Roderick Whitfield, and Zhao Shengliang.

Exquisitely produced, this monumental set's abundant photographs have been lavishly printed as tritones, allowing for the closest possible match to James Lo's original black-and-white photographs, and for the clearest, richest images possible. With numerous silk-screened pages and an eight-page double-sided gatefold, Visualizing Dunhuang stands as a definitive reference for scholars, collectors, and libraries in art history and Asian studies.

Take a look by video inside this monumental nine-volume publication.
< >

A HISTORY OF CHINESE BUDDHIST FAITH AND LIFE *by* Kai Sheng, *translated by* Jeffrey Kotyk, Matt Orsborn, Gina Yang, e*dited by* Jinhua Chen [**Studies on East Asian Religions,** Brill, 9789004431522]

The goal of **A HISTORY OF CHINESE BUDDHIST FAITH AND LIFE** is to study the ways in which Chinese Buddhists expressed their religious faiths and how Chinese Buddhists interacted with society at large since the Northern and Southern dynasties (386-589), through the Ming (1368-1644) and the Qing (1644-1911), up to the Republican era (1912-1949). The book aims to summarize and present the historical trajectory of the Sinification of Buddhism in a new light, revealing the symbiotic relationship between Buddhist faith and Chinese culture.

The book examines cases such as repentance, vegetarianism, charity, scriptural lecture, the act of releasing captive animals, the Bodhisattva faith, and mountain worship, from multiple perspectives such as textual evidence, historical circumstances, social life, as well as the intellectual background at the time.

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Expression and Transformation of Chinese Buddhist Faith: Perspectives of Institutional History, Social History, Cultural History, and Scholarship History

"Holistic Buddhism" and the Sinicization of Buddhism

What is Buddhism? This seems like a very simple question. However, as a religious tradition that has been passed along for 2600 years, Buddhism is rich in thought, scripture, history, and customs. In his *Fojiao changshi dawen* (Buddhist General Knowledge Questions and Answers), Zhao Puchu (1907-2000) explains "Buddhism" as:

> Buddhism, in the broad sense, is a kind of religion, which includes its scriptures, rituals, customs, religious organizations, and more. In the narrow sense, it is the teachings given by the Buddha. If we use Buddhism's own technical term, it should be called "Buddha Dharma."

The core of Buddhism is the Three Jewels, Buddha, Dharma and *Saṃgha*. That is, the three major essential elements of faith, thought and institution. Therefore, Buddhism relies on the Buddha, Dharma and *Saṃgha* as its core and as a root to establish itself as a religion. This includes the doctrinal teaching and soteriological path of religious cultivation from the time of Śākyamuni onwards, its common ideas of religious faith and lifestyle, as well as the religious culture that gradually formed in various countries and regions throughout the world. The "Buddha" is the element of "faith" in Buddhism and refers to the founder of Buddhism, Ś5kyamuni Buddha. Gradually, concepts of the Buddha and the Buddha's bodies, as well as faith in Bodhisattvas and Pure Lands, extended out from the stories of the Buddha's past lives. Furthermore, these also brought about institutions of worship and art depicting elements of Buddhist faith. The "Dharma" is the element of "thought" in Buddhism, namely the theoretical thought that issued forth from the central teaching of the four noble truths. The "*Saṃgha*" is the element of "institution" in Buddhism, it refers to the monastic community which has faith in, propagates and actualizes Buddhist thought. Is also includes the community of lay followers who have faith in Buddhism. Based on the "*Saṃgha*", there are regulatory systems of monastic precepts and the pure rules, as well as later Chinese Buddhist cult of the *arhat*s, and cult of the patriarchs. Apart from these, from the perspectives of history and actualization, Buddhism as a religious social entity also includes society and culture, two major categories that function as Buddhism's external extensions. So-called "holistic Buddhism" refers to Buddhism's entire connected existence, including the three essential elements and the three major levels—Buddhism, society and culture.

The modern anthropologist Melford E. Spiro, utilizing a study of the changes of Theravada Buddhism in Burmese society, analyzes Buddhism as an ideological system, ritual system and monastic system, with a final section on "Buddhism and the world". Within Buddhism's ideological system there are two main types: one, the soteriological system, which has "Nibbanic Buddhism" and "Kammatic Buddhism". "Nibbanic Buddhism" is normative Buddhism, concerned with liberation from cyclic existence; "Kammatic Buddhism" is not normative liberating Buddhism, focusing on the accumulation of merit and elimination of karma, raising people's position within cyclic existence. Two, a non-liberating system, namely including a third kind—"Apotropaic Buddhism"—which deals with benefits for secular humanity, such as the treatment of illness, protection from *yakṣa* demons, and the avoidance of disaster and calamity. From the anthropological perspective, Spiro explores the mutually interactive relationship between the doctrines of the scriptures and the concepts of the lay community—that is, the relationship between religious concepts, ordinary social order, and cultural lifestyle. It is well worth our serious consideration and reflection.

Therefore, Buddhist studies must be conducted from the three major levels of Buddhism, Buddhism and society, and Buddhism and culture to carry out a comprehensive, three dimensional, and integrated exploration. One, from the point of view of Buddhism itself: its scripture, faith, thought, and institution compose four main areas of research. Two, from Buddhism and society: politics, economics, charitable and philanthropic works, and social life make up four large areas of research. Three, speaking from Buddhism and culture: Buddhist literature, art and architecture are important research subjects.

When Buddhism was transmitted from India to China, not only did it bring a completely new spiritual world to the Chinese people, it also transplanted a completely new lifestyle into the living world of the Chinese, enriching the life of the Chinese. At the same time, it also provided a completely new momentum and influence upon Chinese society, influencing the politics, economics, charitable and philanthropic works, and social life of the Chinese. Lastly, Confucianism and Daoism as the social "background" of Chinese people's social life, were also the "background" for the development of Buddhism, with the three of them forming an intimate mutually interactive relationship. Clashing, communicating, accepting and merging, they each appreciated the others' good qualities, and with such good qualities being of benefit for all, together they all provided resources for Chinese people for contemplation and

FIGURE 1   The remains on Mount Gṛdhrakūṭa ("Vulture Peak"), India.

action.

When studying Chinese Buddhism, it is necessary to take China's previously existent faith, thought, institutions, social life, cultural psychology and so on as "background", to then explore the intellectual questions such as Buddhism's "transformation" in China, Buddhism and Chinese society, Buddhism and Chinese culture. That is, the question of "Sinicization". Many scholars divide "Buddhism in China" and "Chinese Buddhism", each emphasizing their own subjectivity. For example, Lü Cheng (1896-1989) rejected the idea that Chinese Buddhism was a "transplanting" of Indian Buddhism, but advocated a "theory of grafting". He said, "Chinese Buddhism is a 'graft' of Indian Buddhism, and therefore the root of Chinese Buddhism is in China, not in India." Mou Zongsan (1909-1995) emphasized in his book *Foxing yu bore* (Buddha-Nature and *Prajñā*):

> Buddhism never changed its character in Sinicization. Rather, the Chinese discoursed on pure Buddhism, directly discussing the doctrinal principles of the *sūtras* and commentaries, and developing them to a state of complete fulfillment. If one claims that Chinese Buddhism has something that Indian Buddhism original did not have, that is because that original content of Indian Buddhism, such as the two schools of emptiness and existence, are not the

final stage of doctrinal principles from Buddhist *sūtras* and commentaries. This difference is a difference of continual development, not a difference of opposition.

Mou Zongsan's standpoint can be said to be completely different from that of Lü Cheng. Emphasizing Chinese Buddhology as a "continual development" of Indian Buddhology is the point of view of the "theory of transplanting". We must take note that the object of concern for both scholars is just Buddhist thought, i.e. the "Dharma", disconnected from Buddhist faith and institution.

In the middle of the 20th century, Western Sinologists came up with the theories of "assimilation" and "transformation" in their research of Chinese Buddhism, for example, the famed work by Sinologist Erik Zürcher from the Netherlands, *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China*, which was translated into Chinese in 1998. Because the title of the translated book lost its subtitle, there was a debate about whether it was "The Buddhist Conquest of China" or "The Chinese Conquest of Buddhism". However, we have discovered that the original sense of Zürcher's "conquest" was stated in reference to Buddhism's "overcoming" various difficulties in its development, during its process of transmission and adjustment in China. It did not have the sense of the Chinese characters *zhengfu* (conquest), i.e. a kind of subjective transformation. In his book, Zürcher states:

> Buddhism is not and has never pretended to be a "theory", an explanation of the universe; it is a way to salvation, a way of life. Its introduction into China means not only the propagation of certain religious notions, but also the introduction of a new form of social organization: the monastic community, the *saṃgha*. To the Chinese Buddhism has always remained a doctrine of monks. The forces and counterforces which were evoked by the existence of the Buddhist Church in China, the attitudes of the intelligentsia and of the government, the social background and status of the clergy and the gradual integration of the monastic community into medieval Chinese society are social phenomena of fundamental importance which have played a decisive role in the formation of early Chinese Buddhism.

This book summarizes the history of Buddhism's transmission into China before the 5th century CE, as well as the process of its mutual adaptation with Chinese culture. From the perspective of cultural history, it analyzes the conflicts and merging between Buddhism and the learned classes of China, and the history of its eventual acceptance into Chinese culture. Buddhism clashed with Confucians over their politics, patriarchal ethics, and notions of the relations between Chinese and foreigners. In the end, patriarchal society was able to accept the existence of the monastic community of renunciants, which was not only an assimilation on the level of thought, but also a mutual "overcoming" and "integration" between the institutional systems of society.

In 1973, Kenneth Ch'en published a work named *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism*, which analyzes the process of adaptation and transformation after Buddhism entered into China from the five aspects of ethical life, political life, economic life, literary life and educational social life. Ge Zhaoguang cites the expression of this book, and raises a question on Zürcher's conclusions. In his *Qi shiji qian Zhongguo de zhishi, sixiang, yu xinyang shijie* (An Intellectual History of China: Knowl edge, Thought, and Belief Before the Seventh Century CE), Ge states:

> The course of Chinese intellectual history from the fifth to the seventh centuries does not seem to have confirmed the Buddhist conquest of China, but rather to have witnessed a transformation of Buddhist thought under the influence of Chinese culture. Buddhism underwent a quiet shift in the three aspects of the relations between (1) the Buddhist community and secular political power, (2) Buddhist precepts and social ethics, and (3) the essential spirit of Buddhism and ethnic Han Chinese nationalism. As noted above, to survive

in the area of Chinese culture with its long historical tradition of civilization, Buddhism could not help but adjust to Chinese ways. Under the rule of authoritarian Chinese political power, they could only accept the divine laws unconditionally, and acknowledge that religion should exist under imperial power.

Given that China's collective consciousness at the time was predominantly ethnically Han, Buddhism avoided any forceful resistance against ethnic sentiment. While continuing and extending Buddhism's subjectivity, it vigorously adjusted and transformed Buddhism's thought, faith, ethics, organization, and institution.

Therefore, "the Chinese transformation of Buddhism" is precisely Buddhism's "Sinicization". However, most of the research on Chinese Buddhism in the last 100 years has focused on the area of Buddhist thought in its exploration of "Sinicization", and in examining this question, very little has come from the perspective of "Holistic Buddhism". Furthermore, research on the "Sinicization of Buddhism" fails to consider China's "holistic" background. Finally, researchers each come from the backgrounds of their own disciplines, and will

favor the relevant fields within Buddhism that relate to their own backgrounds (such as thought and philosophy, society and economics, faith and culture, history and archeology, and texts and manuscripts), but they lack the illumination of "Holist Buddhism". Concerning the development of Buddhist studies, further attention must be paid to the "Sinicization" of Buddhist faith and Buddhist regulations.

The Perspective of Institutional History in Chinese Buddhist Faith

In addition to its own unique qualities, Buddhist faith has commonalities with religious faith in general. Renowned anthropologist Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) emphasizes that "religion is a whole composed of parts—a more or less complex system of myths, dogmas, rites, and ceremonies." He divides all religious phenomena into two fundamental categories: beliefs and rites. Beliefs are states of public opinion, and are formed through all manner of expressions. Rites are rather some specific modes of behavior. He states that: "Between these two categories of phenomena lies all that separates thinking from doing." He makes a bipartite division of things of the world, i.e. the sacred and profane, and in his view:

> Beliefs, myths, dogmas, and legends are either representations or systems of representations that express the nature of sacred things, the virtues and powers attributed to them, their history, and their relationships with one another as well as with profane things. Rites are rules of conduct that prescribe how man must conduct himself with sacred things.

Durkheim also points out that religion has another necessary feature that distinguishes itself from magic: the church. This is because a proper religious faith has some kind of common faith within their specific group, and this group not only professes loyalty to that faith, but it also has to perform the various rites corresponding to that faith. The members of the group not only think in the same way about the world of the sacred and related issues in the profane world, but they also turn these common views into common practices, thus forming their society, which is referred to as the "church". However, magic lacks this kind of commonality. Lastly, he defines religion as follows: "A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them." This fully explains how the concept of religion and the concept of church cannot be separated, and that religion is a matter of the collective group. Therefore, Durkheim emphasizes the three essential elements of religions as faith, rite and church. The core feature of faith is its sacredness—the qualities, character and power of sacred things, and

the relationship between the sacred and the profane. Rites are a mode of symbolic action, expressing ideals of faith, as well as the intention to influence the sacred or produce profane results such as the treatment of illness. They are an important way to express notions of faith through symbolic actions, and are also an important pathway to produce religious experiences. The church uses shared expressions of faith to collectively demonstrate some form of regulation.

The three essential elements of Buddhism, Buddha, Dharma and *Saṃgha*, are all sacred, and are the core elements of Buddhist faith. Within the history of Chinese Buddhist faith, the objects of faith such as Sākyamuni Buddha, Maitreya Buddha, Amitābha Buddha, Avalokiteśvāra, Mañjuśrī, Samantabhadra and Kṣitigarbha are constantly in a state of transformation. For example, in Hou Xudong's study of Buddhist faith in the northern populace during the 5th and 6th centuries, he indicates that 9ākyamuni, Maitreya and Avalokiteśvāra were the figures with the broadest influence at that time. Apart from the cult of Avalokiteśvāra which was more stable, worship of 9ākyamuni during the later Northern dynasties gradually changed to worship of Maitreya. Contemplation of Maitreya and Prabhūtaratana Buddha was popular for a period, and the influence of Amitābha and Vairocana slowly ascended during the end of the Northern dynasties. During the Northern dynasties, the "Three Sages of the West" were not very influential.[15] Faith in the Buddhas and bodhisattvas not only used the construction of statues to manifest the goal of votive prayers, but also combined with repentance rites, such as the worship repentance rites of the Western Pure Land, the Medicine Buddha repentances, Maitreya repentances, and Avalokiteśvāra repentances, which have continued to be transmitted up to the present day, and have remained popular without decline.

Śarīra are the relics of the Buddha, which Buddhists have worshipped and made offerings to throughout history. The Buddha's *śarīra* were transmitted to China during the Northern and

Southern dynasties. Due to the promotion by Emperor Wen of Sui (Sui Wendi [r. 581-604]; i.e. Yang Jian [541-604]), common people participated enthusiastically, and offerings to *śarīra* became a shared religious activity for all society. The *śarīra* cult formed an important component of politics and society during medieval China. When Emperor Wen of Chen (r. 559-566) in the Southern dynasty founded the state, he used the Buddha's tooth *śarīra* to embellish his own political legitimacy. Sui Wendi made an intimate union of his Buddhist faith and ideals of state governance. Within the four years of the Renshou period (601-604), he mobilized the entire state's force of human and material, and issued three decrees to construct *śarīra* pagodas in every province throughout the land. The imperial house of the Tang continuously developed *śarīra* offering activities around Famen Monastery in Shaanxi. In his *Zhongguo gudai sheli yimai zhidu*

FIGURE 2   Pagoda dedicated to Kumārajīva's (344-413) Reputed Tongue.

yanjiu (Research on *Śarīra* Entombment Regulations in Medieval China), Ran Wanli, studies the system for the burial of *śarīra* during medieval China, including content on the types of *śarīra*, and their incoming transmission and external dissemination. In addition, based on archeological data, he undertakes an in-depth exploration of the issues with the appearance of vaults under pagodas, their evolution, and the relationship between vaults and tombs. He also makes a detailed analysis of the arrangement of *śarīra* containment vessels and their special features during each of the historical periods.[16] With the ongoing discovery of *śarīra* and underground vaults in many locations, *śarīra* scholarship will deepen further under the comprehensive viewpoints of religious sociological, historical, and archeological methodologies.

Faith in the "Dharma" is mainly shown through worship of *sūtra* texts and rituals for lecturing the *sūtra*s. In particular, there has historically been an emphasis on the merit of transcribing, making offerings to, reciting, explaining and contemplating Mahayana *sūtra*s such as the *Fahua jing* (Lotus *Sūtra*), *Huayan jing* VOff (Flower Adornment *Sūtra*), *Da boniepan jing*) (*Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*) and others. This has brought about the notion of Chinese Buddhists worshipping scripture. The thought and faith of the *Fahua jing* has had immense influence on Chinese Buddhism, and it ultimately became the central text for the Tiantai tradition. Japanese scholarship on the textual history of the *Da*

boniepan jing and the history of its religious community has already achieved important results. However, in the course of history of Chinese Buddhist faith, a "*Nirvāṇa* repentance (*Niepan chan*)" centered on the *Niepan jing* appeared, and it was quite popular during the Southern dynasties period. In Buddhist monasteries during the Tang and Five dynasties periods, it was popular to hold "*Nirvāṇa* services (*Niepan hui*)" to commemorate the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa*. The Northern Song Tiantai scholar monk Jingjue Renyue (992-1064) specifically composed the *Shijia rulai niepan lizan wen* Śākyamuni Tathāgata *Nirvāṇa* Worship and Praise Text, *T* 1947) for holding Nirvana service. Concerning research on the *Huayan jing*, Korean scholar Lee Do-op has explored the thought of the Dharma-body Buddha, Bodhisattvas, consciousness only, dependent origination and the Pure Land, as well as the key content for each assembly in the *Huayan jing*. "*Huayan* vegetarian feasts" (*Huayan zhai*) and "Samantabhadra vegetarian feasts" (*Puxian zhai*) appeared from the Northern and Southern dynasties to the Sui and Tang periods. As the practice of forming Buddhist societies became popular, societies with the *Huayan jing* as their center of faith appeared during the Song dynasty. The Huayan school system of repentance practices includes Guifeng Zongmi's (780-841) *Yuanjue jing daochang xiuzheng yi* (Ritual for the Realisation in the Altar of the *Sūtra of Perfect Awakening* in 18 fascicles and Huijue's (d.u) *Huayan jing haiyin daochang chanyi* (Repentance Ritual in the Ocean Seal Altar of the *Huayan Jing*) in 40 fascicles as its most representative works. These are two of the largest of all presently extant repentance services in terms of their textual length. Zongmi based his ritual on the methods of cultivation in the *Yuanjue jing* and the systems of actual practice from Daoan (314-385) in the Eastern Jin to Zhiyi (538-597). He used Zhiyi's *Tiantai xiao zhiguan* (Tiantai Lesser Teaching of Calm and Insight, (*T* 1915) and *Fahua sanmei chanyi* (*Lotus Samādhi* Repentance Ritual, *T* 1941) to explain the methods of sitting meditation and contemplation and repentance of transgressions that Buddhist practitioners should engage, in terms of actual cultivation and religious activity. He also made rules for the practices of praise, recitation and worship, and composed the *Practice and Realization Rite* in 18 fascicles. Later, Jingyuan of the Song dynasty simplified the *Practice and Realization Rite* into the *Yuanjue jing daochang lüeben xiuzheng yi* (Abbreviated Ritual for the Realisation in the Altar of the *Sūtra* of Perfect Awakening), in one fascicle.

The union of faith in the "Buddha" and "Dharma" ultimately manifests in the popularity of repentance practices. We can see the influence and status of repentance practices in Chinese Buddhism from the wealth of writings on repentance practices preserved in the *Taishō* and *Manji Zokuzōkyō* canons. There are two categories of repentance practices that have been in common use through history. The first category is collations of the teachings in the *sūtra*s, which are routines for the repentance of transgressional faults. The second category is based on the Dharma method of the five regrets (prostrations, repentance, beseeching, rejoicing and dedication), and is practiced to cultivate the practices of calm and insight. However, the reason why repentance practices have particular characteristics of Chinese Buddhism is because of the influence of local Chinese culture, especially the influence of Confucian and Daoist thought. The Chinese Buddhist repentance practices, which are based on various elaborations about repentance practices in the *sūtra*s, formed different rituals for repentance in different schools and sects. In particular, Tiantai's *Fahua sanmei chanyi* had an important influence on the composition of later repentance methods. In terms of their thought, when each school interprets their thought on repentance, they all express different ideas. However, some more universal ideas of Chinese Buddhist repentance practices can still be seen. From the Ming and Qing dynasties on, the development of repentance practices slowly diverged from their original concepts and led to some abuse, which became a predicament for their further development.

In the last twenty years of research on Buddhism, repentance practice has gradually become a hot topic. Scholars across the Taiwan strait, in Japan, Europe, America and elsewhere, such as Shioiri

Ryōdō, Kuo Li-ying (Guo Liying), Wang Juan, Shi Darui have achieved many results in their studies of Buddhist repentance practices. Research on Buddhist repentance practices includes ideas on repentance, transgressive karma and meditative contemplation. It also touches upon the origins and transmission of repentance ritual texts, the history of transmission of repentance practices, and also the interactive relationship between repentance, society and politics. In particular, research on the Yoga Flaming Mouth Service, the Water and Land Rite, and Water and Land Paintings continues to find new information and breakthroughs.

The "*Saṃgha*" represents the aspect of Buddhist institutional systems. It includes the disciplinary precepts and religious lifestyle of the monastic community. Common society does not share the disciplinary precepts, though it does share some elements with the monastic community's lifestyle. Faith in the "*Saṃgha*" primarily refers to the institutional expression of faith or, we could say, an expression of the sacredness of the monastic lifestyle. For example: although the arhats are the *śrāvaka* disciples at the time of the Buddha, however, the *Fazhu ji* (Record of the Perpetuity of the Dharma) states that sixteen *arhat*s vowed to remain in the world for a long time and not enter *parinirvāṇa* in order to act as fields of merit for living beings during the Dharma ending age and to safeguard the Dharma-body ideals of Mahayana. From this, the "cult of arhats" in Chinese Buddhism was formed. Another example is the formation of the tradition of vegetarianism for monks and nuns in Chinese Han tradition Buddhism. This has its textual basis in Mahayana scriptures, but also includes Emperor Wu of the Liang's (Liang Wudi [r. 502-549]) promotion of a policy of uniting politics and religion, in addition to his advocating Mahayana Bodhisattva precepts. This dual tiered application of "royal law" and "Buddhist law" pushed the development of the "prohibition of alcohol and meat" movement.

Within the Buddha, Dharma and *Saṃgha* faith, faith in the Buddhas and bodhisattvas has the power of being a call to inspiration for religious faith, and the lifestyle of the *Saṃgha* of religious faith has the power of practical influence. Therefore, Buddhist faith gradually permeated into society, and became an element of shared spiritual life for Chinese civilization.

The Perspective of Social History in Chinese Buddhist Faith

When many scholars discuss the types of Buddhism, they are influenced by Western Sinology, and often divide Buddhism into "elite Buddhism" and "popular Buddhism". The term "popular religion" is often used in Western Sinology, which is translated in Chinese as "folk religion" (*minjian zongjiao*) or "Buddhism for the masses" (*dazhong zongjiao*). The popularity of this concept indicates that scholars have paid attention to the social history dimension of religion besides its doctrinal system. When discussing the function of "popular religion", Victor Turner emphasizes that:

> Society (societas) seems to be a process rather than a thing—a dialectical process with successive phases of structure and communitas. There would seem to be—if one can use such a controversial term—a human "need" to participate in both modalities. Persons starved of one in their functional day-to-day activities seek it in ritual liminality. The structurally inferior aspire to symbolic structural superiority in ritual; the structurally superior aspire to symbolic communitas and undergo penance to achieve it.

> Through participation in Buddhist ritual activities, individual members use rituals to establish a relationship of equality, which displays the integration of a communally shared lifestyle. This instigates a loosening of rigid notions of social structure, and thus fulfills Buddhism's social function.

The relationship between Buddhism and society is shown mainly in the interaction and influence between Buddhism and politics, economics, charitable and philanthropic works, and social activities.

The relationship between the history of the monastic community of Buddhist monastics codes and social activities has been given a great deal of attention by academia. For example, Japanese scholar Moroto Tatsuo has discussed specific issues in Buddhist monastic codes such as moral standards for the *Saṃgha*, regulations for monastic tonsure, and so on. He has also examined the relationships between the Buddhist monastic community and regulations for tax exemption, and between the monastic community and the start of the Tang dynasty. Hasebe Yūkei has mainly explored questions in sectarian consciousness during the Ming and Qing. He has also worked on Ming and Qing dynasty royal law and Buddhist Dharma, monastics' internal politics and external assistance, monastic institutional organization, and social ethics and so forth. However, the relationship between Buddhism and medieval society was made extremely complicated by the conflict between Buddhism and political power, and also mutual exchange and exploitation between officials and Buddhism. The influence of Buddhism upon Chinese traditional local society includes the appearance of prohibitions against slaughter, vegetarian fasting precepts, and other such folk customs, as well as local public engineering works and construction for other charitable works. Furthermore, there is the influence of the uniquely Buddhist customs of funerals and mourning upon Chinese folk society, which brought about forest burial, rock cave burial and pagoda burial practices. We have mainly discussed Liang Emperor Wu's promotion of the vegetarian tradition, inner altars in the Sui and Tang periods, and Emperor Taizu of Ming's rectification of *sūtra* recitation and repentance services, which all show the interactive relationship between Buddhism and politics.

The cult of the patriarchs is originally a system of faith from within the Chinese Buddhist monastic community. However, the cult of the patriarchs slowly joined with folk faith practices such as Fu Xi's (497-569) revolving Buddhist canon, Wanhui's (632-712) transformation into a god of harmony, Hongren (602-675) and other patriarchs becoming gods of industries, the popularization of the Venerable Budai (?-916) within Chinese folk beliefs, faith in Yizhong (781-872), Yinsu (1115-1169), Daoji (1149-1209), Dingguang and so forth, which demonstrate the simplified and practical attitude of Chinese people toward Buddhist faith. The particular features of openness and sociality of Buddhist faith encouraged its owning into society, slowly entering into the daily life of the common people. For example, the custom of life release not only had scriptural support and advocacy from eminent monastics, it also had the promotion of emperors and participation of the populace. From the Northern and Southern dynasties up until the present, it has always flourished without decline.

Buddhism advocates concepts such as "loving kindness and compassion", cause and effect, and merit, which have always instigated the Buddhist world to engage in works of charity, relief and so on. Through Buddhist folk organizations such as "groups" (*yi*), "associations" (*yi*) and "societies" (*she*), Buddhism in the Northern and Southern dynasties were dedicated to disaster relief, care for the sick and hospital works, drilling wells, building bridges and construction of roads. From this, there was the development of charitable works such as public wells, bridges and grave sites. Through the cooperation of Buddhism and government during the Tang dynasty, institutions for compassion field infirmaries, hospitals and so on were first set up. Many types of charitable institutions appeared in Song dynasty Buddhism, such as nursing homes and rest homes for taking in sick and destitute elderly, orphanages for taking in abandoned infants and children, grain subsidies to assist indigent families for raising their children, as well as professional funereal services for unidentified decedents and the remains of the poor.

The interaction between Buddhism and society includes both the mutual influence between Buddhist faith and social ideas and the constraint and support between Buddhist monasteries as public institutions and political power, economics, social life and charitable works. Timothy Brook explores donations to monasteries by the late Ming gentry, and points out that there are three constraining environments for religions as public institutions: One, the relationship between religious groups and

the leadership of state power creates a kind of political constraint on the organization of religious activities. Two, economic resources and labor relations determine the feasibility of funding religious works. Three, social structures shape the supporters of religious works and their internal relationships. Based on these points of view, the constraining environment of Buddhist monasteries as public institutions indirectly influences the content of Buddhist doctrines and faith. To put it more precisely, the Buddhist social ecosystem indeed constrains the social expression of Buddhist faith, and influences the interaction in daily life between Buddhism and the common populace.

Ge Zhaoguang promotes the research of intellectual history on "worlds of general knowledge, thought and belief". He opposes turning intellectual history into the intellectual history of elites and scripture, and rejects arranging elites at the center. His reasons are as follows. First, thought which is formed by intellectual elites and scriptural texts does not necessarily have a definite thread with a very clear continuity. Rather, knowledge and thought of the kind which actually exists within universal life does instead continue and evolve in some slow manner, allowing us to clearly see its conceptual lines. Second, thought from elites and scripture does not necessarily play the most important role in the world of daily life. Therefore, Ge states that apart from elites and scriptures, "there is another form of general knowledge, thought and belief that served as the background and the cornerstone. This general knowledge, thought and belief genuinely function in people's decisions, interpretations and dealings with the world around them." For example, Stephen Teiser has two works which aid in understanding the influence of Buddhism upon society: One, *The Ghost Festival in Medieval China*. It explains how the Buddhist Ullambana festival evolved into the Daoist ghost festival, as well as the influence that this kind of evolution produced on the social life of the populace. The emphasis is on analyzing the story of "Maudgalyāyana saves his mother". Two, *Scripture of the Ten Kings and the Making of Purgatory in Medieval Chinese Buddhism*. This is a study of the religious cultural background to the *Scripture of the Ten Kings*, the manuscript of which was found in Dunhuang. It discusses the historical and cultural context of this text and how the medieval cult of the "Ten Kings" entered into the Chinese funeral rites for the deceased. We may ask: what is the common foundation for the interaction between Buddhism and society? In other words, apart from the constraining environments of politics, economics, social life, charitable works and so forth, which concepts of Buddhist faith were accepted by the people of China, and ultimately became "general knowledge, thought and belief"? This requires us to turn from a perspective of social history of Chinese Buddhist faith, to a perspective of cultural history.

The Perspective of Cultural History in Chinese Buddhist Faith

For Buddhism in China to take root and develop, in terms of thought, it needed to incorporate the original Chinese cultures of Confucianism and Daoism; in terms of faith, it needed to integrate with the culture of "ritual; in terms of institution, it had to receive acceptance from imperial power; in terms of propagation, it had to gain the tolerance and support of society; in terms of economics, it needed the sustenance of flourishing economic development. From the Han, Wei, Jin, Northern and Southern dynasties, up until the Tang and Song, Buddhism successfully completed the process of Sinicization. Since Confucianism and Daoism were parts of China's original culture, Buddhism's entry inevitably brought about confrontation and conflict with Confucianism and Daoism. The "cultural dialogue" between Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism became an important element of Chinese culture.

However, when discussing Chinese Buddhist faith and lifestyle from the perspective of cultural history, the influence of intellectual elites and scriptures of the three religions (Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism) upon the lives of the common people was very limited. Also, between the three religions there are some fundamental conceptual ideas that through "cultural dialogue" entered into each other's conceptual systems, and have together influenced the material and spiritual

lives of Chinese society. Feng Youlan(1895-1990) examined the background of Chinese philosophy, and emphasized the geographic and economic background of the Chinese people, the systems of families and clans, the socially engaged and the transcendent. Because of its special family and clan institution, Chinese civilization places heavy emphasis on "filial piety" and ancestor worship. Among debates between the three religions from the Northern and Southern dynasties to the Sui and Tang, the ethics of "filial piety" was the biggest problem that Buddhism faced. It was because of this that the *Sanpo lun* (Treatise on the Three Ruinations), the conffore, Buddhism continuously "transformed" and "adjusted" its own theories and standpoint, emphasizing that many Buddhist scriptures also gave favorable attention to the way of filial piety. It created many "apocryphal scriptures", and even emphasized that Buddhist "filial piety" was loftier than that of Confucianism. For example, the *Lianghuang chan* (Emperor Liang Repentance; i.e. *Cibei daochang chanfa* [Repentance Rituals of Compassion Altar])

FIGURE 3   The grotto remains of the Nālandā University, India.

strongly proclaims the grace of one's mother and father, and hopes that those who perform the repentance will generate gratitude toward that grace, and states that one should worship the Buddha on behalf of one's past mothers and fathers:

> Today, in the great assembly of common practice at the altar, there are some people who lost their parents when they were young. They wish to meet their parents with no avail. Since they have not attained transcendental powers, they are unable to know which realms their parents have been reborn to. The only thing they can do now is to do good deeds and transfer the merits to their parents. If they do not cease performing good deeds, they will certainly achieve success. The *sūtra* says: Accumulating the merits for the deceased is like giving gifts to someone who lives far away. If the deceased were reborn in the realms of human and heaven, the merits would increase their virtues. If the deceased were reborn in the three evil destinies or under the eight difficult conditions, they would be liberated from all sufferings forever. They would live in a period when the Buddha is still alive, receive the proper Dharma, and thus attain enlightenment. The worries and fears of their parents of the past seven lives and of their relatives of past eons would be eliminated. Therefore the wise ones know that the best way to repay the gratitude is to be compassionate and kind to their parents.

For one's parents of this life, one should care for them and be filial. For one's parents of past lives, one should let them grow in merit and become liberated by performing repentance and worship of buddhas. This idea is founded on the assumption that one can communicate with the spiritual world through one's mind. As long as one is sincere and devout, one thought of sincerity is able to directly communicate with the activity of the spirits (souls) of one's deceased family and friends. This concept not only successfully resolved the gulf which was present early on between Buddhist ethics and Chinese indigenous filial ethics, it also fully satisfied the thought of filial piety of the Chinese people. Repentance rites have been popular right up to the present without decline, and can be said to have an intimate connection with the continuity of China's filial ethics.

From the expression of faith in Chinese Buddhism, the greatest element of constraint is "ritual" (*li*). "Ritual" (*li*) is the value goal of ancient Chinese society, where seeking rank and order within human interaction is a common social ideal. "Ritual" (*li*) not only manifests as many diffuse forms of ritual institution and ethical norms, it is also a universal social institution. With centralized concentration of power institutions and institutions for ritual as background, Chinese Buddhism took Buddhist ethical precepts as the source of their thought, and in the middle of the Tang period established Chan-school pure rules which have particular Chinese characteristics. This provided an essential institutional safeguard for the survival and development of the Chan school.

From the latter half of the Six dynasties up until the Sui and Tang, the Daoist and Confucian rejection of Buddhism was mainly from the standpoints of the ethics of the three mainstays and five constants, politics of the royal way, and the dispute between foreigners and the Chinese. These three aspects are the special feature of the Chinese sociopolitical system, cultural tradition, and ethnical psychology. The setting up of Buddhist repentance practices was influenced by Chinese Confucian culture's emphasis on "ritual" (*ti*). This is just as indicated by Max Weber: the obvious contrast between Confucianism and Buddhism is that Confucianism wanted an adaptation to secular life and its social order and customs, which would be no more than a large canon of laws for the educated to establish political standards and social rites and protocol.[47] Within the conflict between the ideas of the three religions, China's indigenous thinking criticized Buddhism because it is a "religion of the Western barbarians", and only appropriate for the needs of undeveloped foreign people. Confronted with China, a nation of ritual and protocol, Buddhism had to adapt to the demands of Chinese "ritual" culture, and thus formulated repentance practices. For example, during the Liu Song period, Huitong (415-477) refuted the Daoist master Gu Huan's) (420-483) *Yixia lun* (Treatise on Foreigners and Chinese), stating:

> If one burns incense at the altar in the evening, intones a Buddhist scripture at the temple in the morning, worships, repents and entreats unceasingly, [the merit] will reach his relatives in successive eons, and below [will reach] all people of the world. The immensity of filial piety and benevolence like this cannot be surmised by the ignorant.

Under the influence of Chinese culture, and in the unconscious process of countering Chinese "ritual" (*ti*), Buddhism was gradually melted down, and thus Buddhist rituals such as repentance practices were born. Therefore, Jacques Gernet has pointed out that procedures for prayer rituals pose an issue which is both fundamental and significant, namely, that Buddhism had been assimilated by religious lifestyle in Chinese society.

Comparing Buddhism and Daoism, in terms of doctrine, Buddhism far surpasses Daoism, but in terms of the arrangement of rituals, Daoism is richer than Buddhism. Therefore, in its process of development, it was inevitable that Chinese Buddhism absorbed the ritual of Daoism. Xiao Dengfu has thus directly stated that Buddhist repentance texts, considering their concepts of repentance

before the buddhas of the past, present and future, prayers to eliminate calamity and extinguish transgression, and liberating the deceased to higher rebirth, have the same motivation as Daoist memorial presentations. As early as in the Eastern Han, Daoism already had the practice of memorial presentations to the three officials of the heaven, earth and water, during which one writes all of one's transgressions on a sheet of paper and repents before the three officials, seeking amnesty. Daoist *Yulu* (Jade Records), *Tutan* (Mud and Soot) and *Bajie* (Eight Seasons) vegetarian offerings take repentance as their focus, and thus the practice of Daoist memorial presentations (*shangzhang shouguo*) appear to have inspired Buddhist repentance practices. An additional example is the ritual of reciting the benediction text during services in Han tradition Buddhism, which also an absorption from Daoism: a reshaping of the blue paper prayer ritual (*qingci biaowen*) used during vegetarian offerings.

The most popular and representative elements of ancient Chinese religion are with respect to heaven, service to spirits, and worship of ancestors. Within these three, religious studies scholarship can include worship of ancestors within the scope of worship of spirits, and the worship of spirits is founded on the idea of the imperishability of the soul. Ancient Chinese usually considered that after a person is dead, the independent existence of the soul which has left the physical body was called a "spirit". The "Jifa" ("Law of Sacrifices") in the *Liji* (Book of Rites) states: "All that lives within heaven and earth is called a 'life'. The death of the myriad things is called 'departing'; a human who dies is called a 'spirit' (*gui* i,)." The concept that people die and become spirits is a common notion in ancient China. Later Daoism and Chinese Buddhism all took this as a fundamental doctrine of their own.

That serving the dead just as one serves the living, and serving gods just as one serves humans, is a religious tradition, and is Confucianism in their treatment of spirits. Therefore, toward this kind of spirit which comes from the "immortal soul", one should choose an attitude of respect, yet from a distance. However, toward the spirits of ancestors, one should instead reverently respect and worship them. Therefore, the Chapter of "Xueer" (Learning) in the *Analects* records: "One takes care to the end of life, and commemorates after they are long passed, the people's virtue will return to its depth." This was explained by Zhu Xi (1130-1200), as follows:

> "Takes care to the end of life", is their ritual of bereavement. "Commemorates after they are long passed", is their sincerity of sacrifice. "The people's virtue will become deep", means the common people are educated by it, and their virtue will return to a deep state.
>
> So, "the end of life", is easily overlooked by people, yet it is to be taken seriously; "long passed", is easily forgotten by people, yet it is to be commemorated; "depth", is the way (*dao*).
>
> Thus, one so acts, and one's virtue is deep; the common people are educated, and their virtue also returns to a deep state.

It was precisely under the influence of these kinds of ideas like "deceased people become spirits" and "one takes care to the end of life, and commemorates after they are long passed", that there was recitation of *sūtra*s and performance of repentance for the deceased in order to save the departed. Only under these circumstances did the commemoration and memorialization of the deceased by the living come about.

In ancient China, the idea that "beneath the broad heavens, all land belongs to the monarch" was already a natural truth ordained by heaven and earth. This kind of divinely mandated power extended to all aspects of the state. Once Indian Buddhism, which originally transcended and kept itself removed from politics, was transmitted into the great land of China, it brought about a conflict

between religious and secular power. Thus, there were the matters of the debate "on why monks do not bow down before kings" in the Southern dynasties, and the event that "the emperors are Tathāgatas" in the Northern dynasties. Therefore, Buddhism could not help but adapt to China: Under the governance of autocratic Chinese political power, Chinese Buddhism could only unconditionally accept the political power that was ordained by heaven and earth, and accept that religion could only survive beneath imperial power.[56] For example, in the *Lianghuang chan*, there is worship of the Buddhas on behalf of the king and princes, and the *Guoqing bailu* 國清百錄 (Hundred Records of Guoqing Monastery), "Practices of Respect and Worship", teaches the respect and worship of the Buddhas for the emperor, empress and princes:

> For the sake of Emperor Wuyuan, Empress Dowager Yuanming, and the holy spirits of the seven shrines, wish that [they] spiritually travel to the pure land and enter the status of the Dharma Cloud; respect and worship the eternally abiding Buddhas.

> For the sake of the Holy Lord Emperor, wish that the precious age will last for prosperity, that the heavenly blessings will continue forever, that they kindly come to the many states and save the four classes of living beings; respect and worship the eternally abiding Buddhas.

> For the sake of the Revered Empress, wish [her] adorned with a hundred merits and protected by the thousand sages; respect and worship the eternally abiding Buddhas.

> For the sake of the Prince and those of his court, wish that [they] guard the nation and bring peace to the people, that blessings be extended for ten thousand lives; respect and worship the eternally abiding Buddhas.

> For the sake of the many ministers of the court, the hundred officials, and five grades, wish that [they] support and praise the imperial household, fulfilling all responsibilities; respect and worship the eternally abiding Buddhas.

There are blessings and dedications of merit for the state and emperor like this everywhere in the repentance texts. We can thus see that repentance practices display the special feature of Chinese Buddhism as a "State Buddhism". In addition, it also shows the special feature that Chinese Buddhist repentances emphasize practical benefits.

To summarize, looking from the perspective of cultural history, the concepts of filial piety, ritual institutions, spirits of the deceased and the state are constraining elements on the expression and transformation of Chinese Buddhist faith. During the process of the formation of Chinese Buddhist faith, it has also continuously responded to the constraints of these concepts. For example, the Kṣitigarbha cult states that Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva takes care of the nether world, which has very vigorously merged into the culture of filial piety. Yü Chün-fang mentions another example: the cult of Avalokiteśvara is a response produced by the positivistic faith and practical system of "neo-Confucianism" (Lixue). The most representative result of the Sinicization of Buddhist faith is the formation of the "Four Great Mountains". The general layout of the cult of the "Four Great Mountains" began in the period of Wanli (1572-1620). During the reign of Kangxi (1662-1722), it had already become a consensus within Chinese Buddhism, and became a "central dream" within the Chinese sense of cultural superiority.

The Characteristics of Chinese Buddhist Faith

The three major objects of Buddhist faith include the Buddha, the Dharma and the *Saṃgha*. Chinese Buddhism inherited Buddhist faith from regions of India and Central Asia. Based on this foundation, it fused elements of faith based on Chinese patriarchal system, Confucian ritual systems and Daoist faith, to give creative interpretations and expressions to devotion to the Buddha, Dharma and

Saṃgha. During the process, it abandoned parts of the original devotional modes from India and Central Asia that were incompatible with Chinese culture. The Chinese also generated their own innovations. Therefore, under the scope of the institutional histories, society and culture, the characteristics of Chinese Buddhist faith were investigated and concluded on as the objects which were emphasized or newly created by Chinese Buddhist faith, and the background and mode in which these expressions occurred. These are the most important findings from the study in Chinese Buddhist faith and lifestyle.

Spatial Creation for Objects of Chinese Buddhist Faith

The framework within which Chinese Buddhist faith constructs, interprets and expresses itself is still based on the Three Jewels, the Buddha, Dharma and *Saṃgha*, and takes Mahāyāna Buddhist doctrine as its backdrop. However, in terms of selecting and creating objects of faith, characteristics of Han Buddhism like discourse, identity and reproduction of expressions of faith were shown. At different times and places, Chinese Buddhists still created structure and modes of expressions of faith that were in accordance with characteristics of Chinese culture, ethical society and mass psychology. Buddhist faith was closely intertwined with social relations, making it a concern for the daily lives of common people. Hence, when studying Chinese Buddhist faith, we need to approach it from aspects of history, "holism" and locality in order to grasp the practices of Chinese Buddhist faith. The lifestyle of faith should be understood in specific contexts of daily life, and connect threads of society as a whole. This would certainly incline to a view of lifestyle practices that transcends differences in class, region and sect.[1] The Sinicization of Buddhist faith unfolded itself through the connecting threads of practices, and was an inevitable process in history and society.

Faith in the Buddha was based on reminiscing about the Buddha. For instance, reverence toward the Buddha's remains, heirlooms, and places associated with him were all examples of this reminiscence. Also, Buddhists showed their reverence and admiration for the Buddha himself. Furthermore, exploration into the path of awakening led to devotion in the Buddha's birth stories and the bodhisattva path. The distance between China and India is vast. The change in space brought about a change relating to the faith in the Buddha. For instance, the Buddha's heirlooms and places associated with him are sacred objects and sacred sites respectively. These are immovable spaces. However, the Buddha's remains, his *śarīra*, are movable sacred objects. They are popular in China, forming a rich *śarīra* devotion. Moreover, the creation of the Four Great Sacred Mountains in Chinese Buddhism demonstrates the relocation of sacred sites. These fully represent spatial creation in Chinese Buddhist faith.

The most important elements in faith in the Buddha were the body and land. That is, the Buddha's body and the Buddha-land. In terms of the Buddha's body, there are the Buddhas of the three times and the Buddhas of the ten directions in Indian Buddhism. The Buddhas of the three times include the seven or 24 Buddhas of the past, Śākyamuni Buddha of the present and Maitreya Buddha of the future. The Buddhas of the ten directions is a special concept referring to the Buddhas of the worlds of the ten directions. Following the popularity of concepts of merit and Buddhas of the ten directions in Han regions, the names of many different Buddhas were developed. According to the objectives in scriptures of the Buddhas' names, through the merits of worshiping and chanting the Buddhas' names one can drive out evil, protect oneself, remove obstacles, eradicate transgressions, strengthen the power of meditative contemplation and recitation, rapidly be reborn into the Pure Land, or ultimately attain Buddhahood. Since the Wei and Jin periods, many scriptures on the Buddhas' names were widespread and popular in the Central Plain. Many Buddhists believed that through chanting, worshiping or repenting with the Buddhas' names, they could obtain various merits described in the scriptures on the Buddhas names, as well as fulfilling the wholesome wish of finding luck and avoiding calamity. By combining the scriptures of the Buddhas' names and

repentance rituals, chanting and singing the Buddhas' names, and prostrating and repenting, the foundation for the development of repentance ritual texts was established. The decline of the devotion to the Buddhas of the three times and the flourishing of devotion to the Buddhas of the ten directions in Han regions reflects the changes in space in Chinese Buddhist faith.

In terms of the Buddha's body, the remains of the Buddha and subsequently the remains of eminent monastics, have always received veneration and offerings by Buddhists. The Buddha's *śarīra* arrived in China during the Northern and Southern dynasties. Promoted by Emperor Wen of Sui, people in society actively participated in making offerings to the *śarīra*, and it became a collective religious activity in society. Devotion to the *śarīra* was an important component in constructing medieval images of politics and society.

In terms of faith in the Buddha-land, the Wondrous Joy Pure Land of Akṣobhya Buddha has never gained popularity. On the other hand, the faith in the Pure Land of Maitreya's Ascension and Amitābha Buddha's Western Pure Land have been widely accepted. In other words, the Pure Land faith of this place and this land was not accepted by the Chinese. This fully indicates the ethical and historical character of Chinese thinking, which rejected the sacralization of this land. The reason why Amitābha Buddha's Pure Land was accepted by the Chinese was not simply because of the simplicity of the recollection of the Buddha method. Rather, it was because the "West" acts as another land in this world, and it extends the Chinese concept of space. Hence, it enabled China to become a complete space.

Besides the Buddha's body and the Buddha-land, Chinese Buddhism accentuated faith in bodhisattvas. This finally led to the formation of faith in the Four Great Sacred Mountains and the Four Great Bodhisattvas. They are: Mount Wutai of Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva, Mount Emei of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, Mount Putuo of Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva, and Mount Jiuhua of Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva. This reflects that Chinese Buddhism, in a historical sense, proactively defined itself as a future Buddha-land. Following the decline of Indian Buddhism, the status of China as the center of world Buddhism became even more prominent. The formation of the Buddhist Four Great Sacred Mountains is the most representative outcome of the Sinicization of Buddhist faith. The devotion to sacred mountains has six major elements, namely: scriptures, geography, sympathetic resonance, pagoda temples, devotees, and state support. The Four Great Sacred Mountains became widely known in society after the time of Emperor Kangxi. The shift in the location of sacred mountains meant a shift in space at the center of Buddhist faith. From then on, China had truly become the second home land to Buddhism.

Faith in the Dharma primarily reflected the worship of Mahāyāna Buddhist scriptures, combined with faith in the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. It is especially so for devotion to Mahāyāna scriptures like the *Fahua jing* and *Huayan jing*, as well as devotion to Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattvas. Devotion to Medicine Buddha was formed through practices like prostrating to Medicine Buddha, recitation of the *Yaoshi jing*, or combining the setup of "life extension practice" shrines, conducting life release and charitable activities. These Medicine Buddha Dharma service practices drove the formulation of Medicine Buddha repentance rituals. Pagoda devotion and upholding the text of the *sūtra* were two core elements in *Fahua jing* devotion. Kumārajīva and his disciples' interpretation of the *Fahua jing* influenced the later iconography of two Buddhas sitting together. On the other hand, due to the spread of the wish that "the true Dharma remains long in the world", and the influence of the concept of the Dharma ending age, transmitting scriptures through transcription to ensure their wide dissemination became a pressing task. Scripture transcription first began by using hard rock as the medium. This ensured that the transcriptions would withstand against destruction in the chaotic world during the Dharma ending age and be able to be disseminated for a long time. Examples

include stone carved scriptures from the Northern dynasty and the Fangshan stone scriptures. Among all the transmitted scriptures through transcription, scriptures transcribed with blood were of unique significance. This embodied the combination of scripture worship, bodily sacrifice, merit making and ascetic practice.[4] In addition, scriptures transcribed with blood took blood, the essence of the physical body, as a medium for writing. This transformed the physical body into a sacred space whereby scripture as a material form underwent sacralization to become a sacred medium.

In order to disseminate Buddhism and to ensure its penetration into society, there were two styles of explaining the scriptures. There was a philosophical style of lecture by monastics, and another style like public lectures which were easy to understand. Through illustrative lectures and public lectures, Buddhist faith permeated into common society and finally integrated to become part of the daily life of the people in society. Chinese Buddhism placed great emphasis on the actualization of scriptures. Hence, this prompted a series of specific practice methods that were also in harmony with Chinese ritual culture. Among them, the most representative one was the formation of repentance rites. Repentance rituals centered on scriptures became popular. For example, Zhiyi's *Fahua sanmei chanyi* was composed during the prevalence of the cult of the *Fahua jing* in the Sixteen Kingdoms, Northern and Southern dynasties. It was modeled on Huisi's *Fahua jing Anle xing yi* and incorporated the method of the *Lotus Samādhi* of the time, to become a complete system of repentance and meditative contemplation.

The faith in the *Saṃgha* primarily referred to the institutional expressions of faith, or in other words, the sacred expressions of the monastic community's lifestyle. For instance, the *arhats*, the Buddha's *śrāvaka* disciples are among these expressions. According to the *Fazhu ji*, sixteen *arhat*s remained in the world and did not enter *parinirvāṇa*, for the sake of acting as merit fields for sentient beings in the Dharma ending age and to protect the Dharma body of Mahāyāna Buddhism. This gave rise to the formation of devotion to *arhats* in Chinese Buddhism. Devotion to patriarchs was an internal faith system within the monastic community of Chinese Buddhism. It assimilated the patriarchal system of Chinese traditional society to develop an ideology of Dharma lineage that was unique to the Chinese. This structure was adopted to establish and regulate faith in patriarchs in Chinese Buddhism.

Therefore, in the discussion of the Three Jewels, Buddha, Dharma and *Saṃgha*, as the objects of faith in Chinese Buddhism, the phenomena of creation of space and relocation of sacred space are evident. Moreover, the faith in the "*Saṃgha*" was influenced by the ancestor worship of lineage-based religion to create a unique devotion to the patriarchs.

Rituals of Chinese Buddhist Faith, Politics of Imperial Power and Systems of Ritual

Chinese Buddhist religious faith takes the centralized bureaucracy and systems of ritual as its foundation and presupposition, which are the most influential factors in the expression of faith. In terms of politics, Chinese Buddhism has the special feature of being a "state Buddhism", which is fully expressed in its prayers for the state, its political will, and its involvement in power. In ancient China, the idea that "beneath the broad heavens, all land belongs to the monarch" was already a natural truth ordained by heaven and earth. This kind of divinely mandated power extended to all aspects of the state, and on this piece of territory, political will possessed a sense of leadership over religious organizations. Within the Dharma service activities, ritual procedures for practice and cultivation, and constructed images in stone caves of Chinese Buddhism, we see preserved a great amount of votive texts of prayers for the state. Prayers of blessing and repentance rituals on behalf of the state show the special character of Chinese Buddhism as a state Buddhism, acknowledging that religion survives beneath imperial authority. For the emperor, being the authority of centralized power, his

religious activities serve as the best point of union between the state and Buddhism. The most important expressions of these were inner altars and *śarīra* worship. During the Sui and Tang periods, in particular the times of Emperor Wen of Sui and Empress Wu Zetian, Buddhism became part of the ideology in the construction of the empire, bringing together different levels of society and acting as a medium for various ethnic groups within the empire. Therefore, inner altars which appeared in the Sui and Tang periods were centers used to call together well known monastics and act as centers for the propagation of Buddhism. This helped make considerable progress in exchange between Buddhism in the north and south, directly influencing the rise of Buddhist traditions in the Sui and Tang periods. The establishment of inner altars fully shows the cooperation between imperial and religious power, and was the point of intersection in the relationship between Buddhism and the state, not only embodying the personal religious faith of the ruler, but also showing the status of monastics in society and politics. During the regnal period of Renshou, Emperor Wen of Sui bestowed *śarīra* on the state and established *śarīra* pagodas, and held dharma services for the installation and receiving of *śarīra* at many locations throughout the land. This fixed the ideology of imperial governing power as well as the emperor's personal will to implement them within the foundational levels of society. Through this method, acceptance for the emperor's governing authority was strengthened in different areas, ethnic groups and all strata of society. The offerings to *śarīra* at Famen si by the Tang emperors also displayed the depth of unification of imperial power and the Buddhist faith. Buddhism aided the emperor in educating the populace, and also helped in gaining the people's acceptance to the emperor's political power.

State Buddhism also appears as power directly involved with Chinese Buddhism. For example, the formation of the tradition of vegetarianism, which was from Liang Wudi's promotion of his own Buddhist policy. Taking Fayun (467-529) and others as examples and directed at the malpractice of the traditional Buddhist *saṃgha*, he raised a new spirit of bodhisattvas strictly upholding the precepts out of compassion, starting from the practice of "Proscription of Meat and Alcohol" to rectify Buddhism. Since then, the tradition of vegetarianism has crystalized to become an important way of life for Chinese Buddhists. Through establishing the Jiangshan Dharma Service, Ming Taizu summoned eminent monks of the early Ming period to Nanjing, which undoubtedly unified the strength of Jiangnan Buddhist circles. As eminent monks participated in the Mount Jiang Dharma Service in the form of national offerings and carried out offerings and prayers as a national undertaking, the majority of Buddhist power was under the rule of imperial authority. It played an important role in consolidating and regulating Buddhism in the early Ming period. Through laying down the requirements of ritual and timing for making offerings to ghosts and gods, and organizing the Mount Jiang Dharma Service ritual, Ming Taizu was the driving force behind the rectification of Buddhist *sūtra* recitation and repentance services in Ming dynasty.

Ritual (*li*) is a value goal of ancient Chinese society, which seeks the common social ideal of order in hierarchical rank between different people. The *Saṃgha* community is the main element of the embodiment of the Buddhist religion. "Religious community" is made up of monastics, the monastic community and monasteries. This organized religion was embedded in the Hancultural-circle regions of China. Its forces and counter-forces exhibited a kind of real "life experience" and historical setting. Therefore, apart from the underlying ideological conflict between Indian and Han cultures, there was a more realistic, practical, and living conflict between institution and way of life. In the very process of ongoing conflicts and contentions between Indian Buddhist ideas about disciplinary regulations and customs in daily life, and that of traditional systems of ritual in Han culture, Chinese Buddhism gradually adopted practices that suited the Chinese ritual culture. An example is the Monastic Regulations formulated by Daoan, which has "Procedures for sending envoys and confession of transgressions and so on at *poṣadha*". In the Northern and Southern dynasties,

repentance rites including practices of preaching, *sūtra* recitation and purification gathering, were continuously refined based on the needs and beliefs of the community.

Repentance is an important practice method in Buddhism. Following the transmission and translation of Buddhist repentance scriptures into China, repentance rites were brought into the beliefs and lifestyles of Chinese Buddhists. However, repentance rites possess characteristics of Chinese Buddhism because of the influence of native Chinese culture, especially from Confucian and Daoist thought. Chinese Buddhist repentance rites were developed by eminent monks. On the basis of repentance rites from India and Central Asia, they were formed from the debates among the three teachings during the Wei, Jin, Northern and Southern dynasties, and gradually adopted practices that suited the Chinese "ritual" culture as a form of expression. For example, the doctrines of contemplation of the empty nature of transgression through contemplating the true characteristic, repentance of the six faculties, and the emphasis on seeing the physical body of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva from the *Puxian guanjing* became the basis for developing Tiantai repentance rites.

From the perspective of Buddhism's own ability to transform itself, its own wisdom of skillful means and system of two truths of the ultimate and conventional reveal Buddhism's original functions of openness, fusion and creativity. Inter-subjectivity as an expression of Buddhist faith was formed within the background of politics and systems of ritual. Based on the wisdom of the two truths, this is not in contradiction with Chinese imperial politics and systems of ritual, but further displays the transcendent nature of Buddhist religious faith.

Rationalism and Communalism as Chinese Buddhist Expressions of Faith

Having passed through the chaos brought to China by the five barbarian tribes and the chronic disorder of the North and South dynasties, in the subsequent unification of the Sui dynasty, various forms of Buddhism from India and other areas of northern and southern China gathered together in Chang'an. This brought about contention between the many traditions of thought and the most splendid period of Sui and Tang Buddhism. Buddhism, which had already Sinicized its religious faith, went through the process of blending into daily life, and then slowly seeped into Chinese systems of thought and regulation. Actualizing an unprecedented development and transformation, it produced the greatest accomplishment of Chinese Buddhism: the various traditions, in particular Sanlun, Tiantai, Huayan, Chan, Pure Land, Esoteric and so forth. These traditions held the exchange and transformation between Indian thought and Confucian and Daoist thought, to reflect the richness and changes of Buddhist thinking. This manifested Buddhism's successes in terms of conceptual thought and novelty of institutional systems, another high peak in the convergence between the heights of Chinese and Indian thought. The establishment of these schools represented the completion of the Sinicization of Buddhist thought. Chinese Buddhist thought was formed by taking the ideas of *Zhouyi*, *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi* as its standards, lecturing and commenting on *sūtra*s as its method, the Buddhist philosophical schools of the Northern and Southern dynasties as its foundation, and the Buddhist sects of the Sui and Tang dynasties as its representative characteristic. With respect to lifestyles of faith and the standardization of regulations, the establishment of Buddhist schools in the Sui and Tang even further displays rationalism in the expression of religious faith in Chinese Buddhism. Furthermore, many more intellectuals and literati became Buddhists, and to a certain extent the expression of Buddhist rational faith replaced folk religion to become common spiritual values of the Sui and Tang society.

As Buddhism became prevalent during the Northern and Southern dynasties, groups gradually formed with the assembly of those connected by the bonds of the same faith. When monastics with the power of virtuous inspiration were carrying out indoctrination, devotional groups centered on them were formed. These collective bodies, organizations or assemblies based on faith were called:

she (society), *fashe* (Dharma society), *yi* (group), *yihui* (club), or *yiyi* (devotional society), *yiyi* (association), *yi-hui* (congruence), and so on. Through these organized bodies, Buddhists of the Northern and Southern dynasties constructed Buddha statues, cave temples or conducted services like purification gathering, transcribing *sūtra*, *sūtra* recitation and so on. They also engaged in meritorious activities such as building bridges, roads, digging wells, planting trees, providing burial grounds for the destitute, giving food to the poor and others. Buddhist faith organizations like "groups" and "societies" showed the communal nature in the expression of faith within Chinese Buddhism. Within this, kindness and compassion in Mahāyāna Buddhism became the slogans of communal activities. Sui and Tang Buddhism was an important force in society, actively participating in charity and philanthropic works. Together with the government, it set up compassion field infirmaries, hospitals and so forth, developed disaster relief for the poor, and did civil engineering works. Buddhist temples and monasteries were living spaces for public society, and through providing short-term dwelling accommodation for scholars and literati, further advanced the influence of Chinese Buddhism on the learned classes. Buddhist charitable activities were very well-developed in the Song dynasty. There were charitable institutions like institutes for shelter and care and nursing homes for taking in sick and destitute elderly, orphanages for taking in abandoned infants and children, grain subsidies to assist indigent families in raising their children, as well as public cemeteries providing professional funeral services for the poor and unidentified deceased. Buddhist organizations were actively involved in many public welfare works. They provided funding and labor for affairs such as building bridges, water works, roads and local security patrols. In addition, monastics set up life release ponds in the monasteries. The development of life release customs later became an important tradition in Buddhism's penetration into society after the Song dynasty.

Pragmatism as Chinese Buddhist Expression of Faith

The thought of Indian Buddhism revolves around and developed from suffering. With the four noble truths at the core, doctrines like suffering, emptiness, impermanence, and no-self evolved. The four noble truths are the understanding of suffering—its arising, the causes for its arising, the cessation of suffering, and the method to the cessation of suffering. That is, the four noble truths of suffering, arising, cessation and the path. An emphasis on suffering and emptiness is a special quality of Indian Buddhism. The hot climate of India brought about the Buddhist theory of "suffering" and concepts of transcendence, such as the fasting precepts, bathing, sitting meditation, and other religious activities. After Buddhism was transmitted to China, it went through clashes and merging of concepts, thoughts and regulations, and its point of focus moved to the present moment, which was applied within human life.

Chinese Buddhist faith expresses pragmatism in practical life. Repentance, recitation of *sūtra*s, meditative contemplation and other practices to cultivate the path were fully put in the service of pragmatic goals for the physical body, power and the state. Chinese Buddhist faith in Buddhas and bodhisattvas shows extremely strong features of relief in the present life. For example, during the Northern and Southern dynasties, the already thriving faith in Medicine Buddha has eradication of calamity, longevity and treatment of illness as its religious aims. Through the acts of faith such as worship, production of statues, repentance, transcription of *sūtra*s and Dharma services, the devotion to Medicine Buddha shows its focus on "happiness in the present life" as its religious character. Furthermore, Chinese Buddhist methods of repentance also display the trait of stressing benefit in the present world. There are prayers and dedications of merit for the state, the emperor and so forth throughout repentance texts. Apart from repentance practices containing state Buddhism content, we cannot overlook the pragmatism of Chinese Buddhist faith.

Under the background of Confucian humanistic thought, as Chinese society focused on benefits in the present life, Chinese people lacked concern for life and death. Buddhism emphasized the nature

of mind and concern for life and death, which supplemented the gap in Confucian and Daoist theories, and fulfilled people's spiritual needs. Buddhism's function of offerings to the deceased became the greatest supplement on the level of concern for life and death by the Chinese.

Around the start of the Common Era, following the cultural exchange between the East and West under the climate of commercial trading, Buddhism was transmitted to the great land of China. Through Wei, Jin, Northern and Southern dynasties, up to the Sui unification of China at the end of the 6th century, there were clashes and merges between Buddhism and Confucianism, and Daoism, Buddhism helped to shape and supplement Chinese culture, and Buddhism's unifying and communicative role among the ethnic groups of China, all of which formed a rich and multifaceted historical context. The core factors contributing to the clashes between Buddhism and Confucianism as well as Daoism were concepts and regulations. For instance, between monastic renunciation and filial piety, liberation and assuming responsibilities of benevolence and righteousness. These were fused together on the basis of the spiritual needs of faith and the pragmatic needs of daily life. Through the vocation of values that transcend clan, race and region, and the medium of organizations such as devotional societies, Buddhism successfully transformed the value of faith into a force for the practical merging of resources with the distinct mode of a world religion. This joined together the particular estrangement of "family" society in China and shaped the Chinese world view from the world of faith. Through practical need and the merging of lifestyles, it went beyond the dichotomy of disputes between barbarians and Chinese. Hence, the first Sinicization that was accomplished during the Northern and Southern dynasties was Sinicization of faith. The Chinese accepted Buddhist faith, and expressed their own world of faith through the rituals of Chinese culture. Furthermore, the Chinese also accepted, studied and expressed modes of lifestyle that were directed by Buddhist faith.

Following the scope of the history of society, institutions and culture, Chinese Buddhism accepted the influence of politics of imperial power and systems of ritual. On the level of faith in the Buddha, there were the creation of faith in sacred mountains, *śarīra*, the Buddhas of the ten directions, and so on. On the level of faith in the Dharma, there were the production of methods of repentance, stone carved scriptures, blood transcriptions of scriptures, and other forms of spatial expression. In terms of faith in the *Saṃgha*, there were faith in the *arhat*s and faith in the patriarchs, displaying a definite inclination toward substantialization. In terms of expressions of faith, Chinese Buddhism displays the characters of rationalism, pragmatism and communalism. These fully reflect that Chinese Buddhist faith is a fusion of Indian Buddhism with Chinese thought and lineage-centered religion. <>

ILLUMINATING THE MIND: AN INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHIST EPISTEMOLOGY by Jonathan Stoltz [Buddhist Philosophy for Philosophers, Oxford University Press, 9780190907532]

Explores topics in Buddhist epistemology thematically, as opposed to historically and articulates a novel view of the Buddhist portrayal of knowledge as a kind of "truth-tracking" theory of knowledge; written specifically for scholars with little or no exposure to the Buddhist intellectual traditions

ILLUMINATING THE MIND puts the field of Buddhist epistemology in conversation with contemporary debates in philosophy. Jonathan Stoltz provides readers with an introduction to epistemology within the Buddhist intellectual tradition in a manner that is accessible to those whose

primary background is in the "Western" tradition of philosophy. The book examines many of the most important topics in the field of epistemology, topics that are central both to contemporary discussions of epistemology and to the classical Buddhist tradition of epistemology in India and Tibet. Among the topics discussed are Buddhist accounts of the nature of knowledge episodes, the defining conditions of perceptual knowledge and of inferential knowledge, the status of testimonial knowledge, and skeptical criticisms of the entire project of epistemology.

Stoltz demonstrates how many of the arguments and debates occurring within classical Buddhist epistemological treatises coincide with the arguments and disagreements found in contemporary epistemology. He shows, for example, how Buddhist epistemologists developed an anti-luck epistemology-one that is linked to a sensitivity requirement for knowledge. Likewise, Stoltz explores the question of how the study of Buddhist epistemology can be of relevance to contemporary debates about the value of contributions from experimental epistemologists, and to broader debates concerning the use of philosophical intuitions about knowledge. ILLUMINATING THE MIND is essential reading for scholars and students interested in epistemology and its treatment in intellectual traditions beyond Western philosophy.

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Excerpt: It is not uncommon for me to be asked—either by my students or by nonacademic acquaintances—who my philosophical heroes are. As common as the question is, I invariably struggle to give a satisfactory response. Regardless of the philosopher, my first impulse is to find fault with his or her views, It could very well be that this struggle stems from my belief that it is far easier in philosophy to be wrong than it is to be right. This hesitation with respect to identifying my philosophical heroes should not be taken as evidence that I do not appreciate the works of earlier philosophers. Even among the accounts of those philosophers with whom I am inclined to disagree vigorously, there are many cases in which I am nothing short of in awe of the authors' argumentative acumen and philosophical creativity.

My first deep exposure to what is now commonly called "analytic philosophy" came as an undergraduate student, from reading numerous articles on the philosophy of logic and mathematics by (among others) W. V. Quine and Hilary Putnam. I did not necessarily agree with the conclusions

that Quine and Putnam reached, but I was captivated by their approach to philosophy and the style of their writing. I could say the same in reference to philosophers like David Lewis and Timothy Williamson, whose writing I was first exposed to in graduate school. I am far from persuaded that they get the right answers in their respective writings, but the rigor of their philosophical analyses has long struck me as truly remarkable, In short, what I've learned to appreciate most in philosophy is not the writing by thinkers whose views I take to be correct, but the writing that I take to be the most argumentatively rigorous and creative.

At the top of my list of philosophers whose writing impresses me the most is the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century German logician, Gottlob Frege. His style of writing epitomizes the argumentative rigor that I take to be central to analytic philosophy. Yet there is much to disagree with in Frege's writing. Take, for instance, the opening two sentences of his truly excellent work The Foundations of Arithmetic:

> After deserting for a time the old Euclidean standards of rigour, mathematics is now returning to them, and even making efforts to go beyond them. In arithmetic, if only because many of its methods and concepts originated in India, it has been the tradition to reason less strictly than in geometry, which was in the main developed by the Greeks.

Even when I first read this passage, I could see that Frege was revealing his ignorance of Indian intellectual history. It is true that many arithmetic concepts originated in India, and also true that the axiomatic proof system of geometry was popularized in ancient Greece. But Frege was also insinuating—though, admittedly, not directly stating—that the methods of reasoning in (ancient?) India are not as rigorous as those in Greece. It is this presumption that, even as a twenty-two-year-old graduate student, I knew to be mistaken.

During my years as a graduate student pursuing a PhD in philosophy, and while immersed in the analytic tradition of philosophy, I was simultaneously exploring the Indian tradition of philosophy—and, in particular, the Indian and Tibetan Buddhist traditions of logic and epistemology. Historical Indian treatises on logic and epistemology are undoubtedly more tersely written and more stylistically rigid than are writings in the Greek tradition of philosophy, but Indian philosophy is no less argumentative in tone or content than Western philosophy, and it certainly grapples just as intensely with many of the same questions. In this respect, it is beyond question that the Indian intellectual tradition and its thinkers reason no less rigorously than do European philosophers.

One of my overarching goals as a philosopher working in the area of Buddhist philosophy has always been to show readers that the themes addressed (and arguments made) by Buddhist philosophers are just as relevant and incisive as are the themes (and arguments) put forward by philosophers in the Western tradition of philosophy. I use the word show in the preceding sentence because I do not believe it to be necessary to argue that, let alone prove that, the writing by Buddhist philosophers contains insightful arguments on themes that are relevant to contemporary philosophy. In this regard, I adopt a perspective slightly different from that held by the late University of Oxford philosopher B. K. Matilal. As Matilal noted in his excellent book on Indian philosophy, Perception:

> I have sometimes faced, rightly I believe, the criticism that there is a little "leaning over backwards" in my writings to show the analytic nature of Indian philosophy. I accept the criticism and can only say that this gesture is needed to correct persisting misconceptions, and sometimes remove ignorance.

In my view, there is no need to lean over backwards in order to demonstrate the analytic tendencies of Indian philosophy or Buddhist philosophy. I do want readers to see that Buddhist epistemology shares much in common with contemporary analytic epistemology, including a reliance on sharply

argumentative reasoning. But I do not believe that one must lean over backwards in order to show this.

In this book I will be providing readers with an introduction to Buddhist epistemology—an introduction that is foremost written for those who have some familiarity with "Western philosophy," including epistemology, but little or no knowledge of Buddhist philosophical thought. While the topics in this book should be of interest to, and accessible to, persons with backgrounds and/or interests in Indian philosophy and Buddhist intellectual thought, the book presupposes no background knowledge of Indian Buddhism, let alone Buddhist epistemology. Given these two points, in calling this An Introduction to Buddhist Epistemology, the term "Introduction" is applied more directly to the Buddhist part of "Buddhist epistemology" than it is to the epistemology side of the topic.

Because the central aim of this book is to make the themes and arguments of Buddhist epistemology accessible to philosophers and students of philosophy who have little or no familiarity with Buddhist philosophical thought, I have deliberately chosen to structure this book around a series of prominent themes in the field of contemporary epistemology. In other words, I have pursued a "topical approach" to writing about Buddhist epistemology. This topical approach stands in contrast to the perhaps more common "historical approach" to writing about a given philosophical tradition. Authors who adopt a historical approach generally structure their books in a more or less chronological order and tend to focus individual chapters on the contributions of specific philosophers or time periods.

It is my firm belief that the most fruitful way by which to communicate the power and relevance of Buddhist epistemology to those whose primary training and background is in the European and Anglo-American traditions of philosophy is by adopting a topical approach. I want to show readers that, for example, just as contemporary analytic epistemologists are concerned with issues like the problem of skepticism, the status of testimonial knowledge, and disputes about epistemic luck, so, too, were Buddhist epistemologists worried about these same matters.

Be that as it may, arranging this book into chapters devoted to specific epistemological themes is not a wholly unproblematic endeavor. There can be reasonable concerns about pursuing a topical approach—an approach that pulls Buddhist philosophical arguments and debates out of their textual and historical contexts and then repackages those arguments into neatly formed chapters dedicated to specific themes. I believe those concerns to be well-founded, and I acknowledge that a deeper understanding of Buddhist epistemology can be achieved by being attentive to the development of philosophical theories within their historical context. Such a historical treatment of Buddhist epistemology, including an examination of the gradual changes to philosophers' views over time, would be well worth the reader's time once a foundational understanding of Buddhist epistemology has been secured. But as an introductory work on Buddhist epistemology, and one whose primary audience is persons trained in the Western tradition of philosophy, I believe that a topical approach provides the most fruitful point of entry to the Buddhist tradition of epistemology.

Of course, even if one is accepting of a topical approach to Buddhist epistemology, there can be disagreements about what the most relevant topics are to be covered. As can be seen from the chapter titles in this volume, I have focused on a set of themes that I take to be central to both Anglo-American epistemology and Buddhist epistemology. While I believe that this is right and proper, it would also have been possible to provide a topical approach to Buddhist epistemology that zooms in on a very different set of philosophical themes. Within classical texts on Buddhist epistemology, the authors develop a range of philosophical views, not only on matters pertinent to epistemology but also on issues of ontology, logic, and language. Insofar as this is the case, it is not

uncommon to see some modern scholars of Buddhist philosophy focus largely or entirely on these latter topics when writing about the Buddhist tradition of epistemology. This approach may be rooted in the view that "Buddhist epistemology" refers to a specific historical school of thought—one that is linked to a specific group of texts and a commentarial tradition, sometimes now referred to as Pramanavada-wherein any and all philosophical questions taken up in those texts are accepted as a part of "Buddhist epistemology."

To cite a more specific example of this phenomenon, in various writings about the Buddhist tradition of epistemology one can find scholars focusing on the Buddhist theory of exclusion (apoha), which is a prominent topic in Buddhist philosophy—one relevant to core questions about the nature of language and its connection to reality. But though the topic of exclusion is an incredibly important one in Buddhist philosophy, and though the topic is indeed developed by classical Buddhist epistemologists, it is not, at its core, an epistemological thesis. The Buddhist theory of exclusion is something that would most properly be addressed in an introductory book on Buddhist philosophy of language or philosophy of mind. The point that I am making about the Buddhist theory of exclusion is just one example among many that could be cited.

I believe that we should understand the scope of "Buddhist epistemology" differently. On the view presented in this book, Buddhist epistemology is an area of philosophical investigation that is demarcated by a range of themes intimately connected to questions about the nature and scope of knowledge. It is true that these themes are foremost addressed in Pramanavada texts, but it is not the case that all topics addressed in those texts are inherently epistemological. An author's theory of, for instance, perceptual knowledge may very well be impacted by that author's ontological commitments, but it is important to distinguish these ontological concerns from those that are more properly epistemological. In this book, I have tried to distill the most important epistemological themes from the Buddhist tradition of epistemology, and I have been careful not to let these epistemological topics get overwhelmed by the surrounding questions of metaphysics, language, and mind.

Above all else, this book seeks to introduce Western-trained philosophers to the field of Buddhist philosophy. I hope that the chapters that follow succeed in giving philosophers and students of philosophy a deeper understanding and appreciation of Buddhist contributions to the field of epistemology, and that this understanding is accompanied by a recognition that Buddhist epistemology is neither philosophically vapid nor inscrutable to those who have been trained exclusively in the Western tradition of philosophy. If these hopes go unrealized, the fault is entirely my own and not due to any failure of the Buddhist philosophers discussed herein.

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The Value of Buddhist Epistemology

Let us move on to the broader matter of what sort of value there is in having contemporary philosophers learn about and grapple with the arguments found in the Buddhist tradition of epistemology. Epistemology, as currently taught in colleges and universities in Europe, the United States, and elsewhere, is widely agreed to be central to contemporary philosophy. It is, moreover, an active field of research in philosophy, and an area with numerous thriving branches of contemporary scholarship. Insofar as this is the case, it may be difficult to see how the views of classical Buddhist epistemologists—some of whom were writing about knowledge nearly fifteen hundred years ago—can be of benefit to contemporary epistemologists. It would be a stretch to argue that there is some present void in contemporary analytic epistemology that can only be filled once philosophers gain a deeper understanding of classical Buddhist epistemology. (This is not to say that there are no voids

in contemporary epistemology. It is just to acknowledge that raising philosophers' understandings of Buddhist epistemology will do rather little to fill whatever voids presently exist in epistemology).

Yet there are multiple ways in which contemporary philosophers can benefit from learning about the claims and arguments put forward by epistemologists in the Buddhist tradition of philosophy. The value that derives from learning about Buddhist epistemology falls, I believe, into two categories: Buddhist-specific value and diversity-general value. By Buddhist-specific value, I am referring to any measure of value that derives from learning that Buddhist philosophers supported these-and-those epistemological positions and did so by such-and-such arguments. For example, there may be some value in learning that classical Buddhist epistemologists (by and large) adopted something along the lines of a sense-datum theory of perceptual experience, and that they supported the view that perception, properly speaking, is devoid of conceptual activity. Likewise, there may be some value in learning that classical Buddhist epistemologists were (by and large) proponents of a reductive account of testimonial knowledge and that their theory of inferential reasoning supports the counterclosure of knowledge. Yet I can imagine that for many contemporary analytic epistemologists, these Buddhist-specific values would be considered less relevant than the diversity-general value associated with learning about Buddhist epistemology.

The diversity-general value that derives from learning about Buddhist epistemology is, in many ways, easier to articulate. The Buddhist tradition of epistemology that was built upon the Indian treatises of knowledge composed by Dignaga and Dharmakirti in sixth and seventh centuries is a clear example of an epistemological tradition that developed largely independent of the historical trajectory of theories of knowledge in the European tradition. As such, exposure to the claims and arguments made by philosophers in the Buddhist epistemological tradition can help contemporary philosophers reflect on their own assumptions about how the nature of knowledge is to be understood and how claims of knowledge are to be investigated. It allows them to see, in short, that there are other, very different, ways to think about the core problems of epistemology.

At an even broader level, learning about Buddhist epistemology can help contemporary philosophers to see that epistemology, as a core area of philosophy, arose in India well before the so-called epistemological turn in European philosophy. While ancient Greek philosophers certainly grappled with questions of knowledge, the idea of epistemology as a distinct field of philosophy is a relatively recent one. The actual English term "epistemology" did not come into usage until 1847, and it is only sometime thereafter that epistemology was thought of as a full-blown field of philosophical study. In the Buddhist tradition of philosophy, however, there was a much earlier recognition of epistemology as a distinct and fundamental area of study.

In the preceding paragraphs, I have spoken of Buddhist epistemology as though it is a set of theses and arguments whose present value lies in exposing contemporary analytic epistemologists to another historical tradition of epistemology. I would now like to suggest, however, that there is a different way of thinking about the value of Buddhist epistemology—one in which this value comes from reorienting how philosophers think of the domain of epistemology. While analytic epistemologists often portray their musings on knowledge as having a universal scope, one thing that the recent work on experimental epistemology shows us is that any and all investigations of the theory of knowledge are, by necessity, tied to the specific linguistic and conceptual frameworks in which philosophers speak and think about knowledge. This is certainly not to say that there are no universal truths about the nature of knowledge. It is, instead, simply to acknowledge that one's historical, linguistic, and philosophical background plays a role in shaping the ways in which thinkers make sense of philosophical questions about knowledge. Insofar as this is the case, epistemologists would be well served

(a) to appreciate the existence of these alternative epistemological frameworks,

(b) to explore the differences between these frameworks, and in so doing

(c) to engage in cross-cultural epistemology.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will discuss what I see as some of the most important benefits of pursuing cross-cultural epistemology. <>

THE ART OF LISTENING: A GUIDE TO THE EARLY TEACHINGS OF BUDDHISM by Sarah Shaw [Shambhala Publications, 9781611808858]

The *Dīghanikāya* or *Long Discourses of the Buddha* is one of the four major collections of teachings from the early period of Buddhism. Its thirty-four suttas (in Sanskrit, sutras) demonstrate remarkable breadth in both content and style, forming a comprehensive collection. **THE ART OF LISTENING** gives an introduction to the *Dīghanikāya* and demonstrates the historical, cultural, and spiritual insights that emerge when we view the Buddhist suttas as oral literature.

Each sutta of the *Dīghanikāya* is a paced, rhythmic composition that evolved and passed intergenerationally through chanting. For hundreds of years, these timeless teachings were never written down. Examining twelve suttas of the *Dīghanikāya*, scholar Sarah Shaw combines a literary approach and a personal one, based on her experiences carefully studying, hearing, and chanting the texts. At once sophisticated and companionable, **THE ART OF LISTENING** will introduce you to the diversity and beauty of the early Buddhist suttas.

Reviews

"For many years I regarded the *Dīgha Nikāya*, the Buddha's Long Discourses, as of little personal relevance, seeing it as primarily aimed at enhancing the status of Buddhism in the social and cultural milieu of ancient India. Sarah Shaw's book has radically transformed my assessment of this collection. Beautifully written and rich in observations, her inspired work shows the Digha to be perhaps the boldest and most majestic of the four Nikāyas. In Shaw's treatment of the text, the Digha merges two contrasting perspectives in a tense but happy harmony: a panoramic vision of the vast cosmic significance of the Buddha and his teaching, and an earthy view of the Buddha's concrete physical presence in this world. This contrast, she argues, is seen most poignantly in the Mahaparinibbana Sutta, the long narrative on the Buddha's final journey and passage into nirvana, where he himself exemplifies his teaching of universal impermanence. I believe that for others, too, this book will have a lasting impact on their appreciation of the Digha, offering many new ways of looking at this fascinating collection of early Buddhist texts." —Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, author of *Reading the Buddha's Discourses in Pāli*

"In this quietly revolutionary book, Sarah Shaw shows us that Buddhist sutras are also Buddhist practices, and that listening can be a form of meditation. She shows that our modern habits of skim reading and skipping ahead in texts are very different from the way the sutras have been appreciated in the past, and that if we can better understand the way the dharma has been recited and listened to over so many generations, it will allow us to engage with it more fully. Cultivating a quiet and attentive practice of listening seems more necessary than ever and this is a book that shows us how it can be done." —Sam van Schaik, author of *Buddhist Magic* and *Tibetan Zen*

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Excerpt: Most of us liked hearing stories in the evening as children. At my boarding school, during sewing in the evening after dinner, our teacher used to read us long novels over a number of evenings. We complained, of course, but I used to like just hearing someone's voice telling me a story. Something in my mind relaxed, and events of the day fell into perspective. Such reading aloud, particularly in the evenings, was widespread in Western cultures until recently. For every Victorian novel bought, nine people "heard" it: families used to read to one another as everyone relaxed after the day.

While writing this book during the COVID-19 pandemic, I was struck by how people again find listening at home so helpful and soothing in times of fear and, for many, solitude. Our genetic code must be hardwired to this method of letting go, and we have refound the pleasure of listening. Before the virus confined us all to our homes, we could sit on a train, plane, or bus during the evening rush hour and see others, having finished a hard day's work, shut their eyes and visibly unwind with earbuds in place: they would be just listening, transported, to music, a story, or perhaps a talk on a podcast. And this has continued. We are at home in our various states of quarantine or social distancing, and many of us are listening to apps, the radio, music, or, if we're lucky, birdsong in surprisingly unpolluted skies.

I do not suppose human nature changes very much. When the Buddha composed the talks discussed in this book, people would have had hard days, done a bit too much work, had a great deal to think about, and would have wanted something to help them unwind. The texts would have been chanted then; people would have gone to temples to hear them; and they would have liked just hearing something for a long, sometimes very long, time.

Doing something while listening also helps. At school, we used to sew; in Benedictine monasteries, monks used to eat while scriptures were read aloud. In this book, I argue that those who heard the suttas at the time they were first recited may well have been "doing" something. Some would have been snoozing, some figuring out a work problem, and some hoping the recitation finished soon. But some could well have been genuinely listening   perhaps practicing mindfulness,

perhaps watching their own responses in body and mind as they listened. Some anthropologists have been bemused by the Asian love of listening to texts even when the meaning is not fully understood.' But there is a spectrum of attention and a way in which words are semi-understood, even if they are in another language, whereby you somehow get a feel for the shape, rhythms, and pace of the chant if you hear it often enough. Buddhist chanted texts have a rise and fall, sometimes stressed by pitch changes. Those of the Dighanikaya, which we are looking at in this book, deal primarily with the way things arise, exist, fall away, and repeat: these elements lie at the core of Buddhist teaching. The repetitions of a heard text, whether in its original or a vernacular language, communicate these movements in all sorts of ways. The attention span of listeners was probably as varied and capricious as it is now, but this and other texts would have been received as a kind of enactment of Buddhist teaching.

The Dighanikaya (The Long Discourses of the Buddha) is a collection of early Buddhist texts. It is one of the four major nikayas, or collections, of teachings from the early period of Buddhism. (These are the Dighanikaya, the Majjhimanikaya, the Samyuttanikaya, and the Anguttaranikaya. When referencing individual suttas or specific passages from them throughout this book, the collections are abbreviated as D or DN, M or MN, SN, and AN, respectively—see Abbreviations and Bibliography, in the back matter, for more information on sources.) The Dighanikaya is usually listed first of the four, all composed sometime after the Buddha's death. While some of its suttas employ archaic language, it is not thought to have been written earlier than the others; all four are usually treated as a whole for historical purposes. We do not know if the Pali canon is the earliest canon; it is certainly the only complete one. This book is intended to give an introduction to the Dighanikva in particular and, more generally, to Buddhist suttas from this time, around the fourth century B.C.E. Such texts were heard at the outset by people who certainly did understand their meaning. Full of debate, imaginative scope, and the evocation of sometimes breathtaking vistas of time and space, it is the body of texts where we see early Buddhist practice and thinking in its most expanded and expansive form. The Dighanikaya embeds understanding in debate, interchange, and sometimes mythical landscapes, thus offering some of the most emotionally rewarding and satisfying texts in the Pali

canon. Among modern Buddhist practitioners, it is perhaps the best loved of the early Buddhist collections of suttas.

Many people who come to be interested in Buddhism would like an introduction to how suttas work: they want to find out more about sutta style. This book is intended as a guide to exploring the style and form of the suttas in the Dighanikdya. Its primary contention is that approaching the suttas from the vantage point of their original context, wherein they were encountered not as printed texts but as chanted enactments—what we now call "oral literature"—opens up possibilities of understanding and insight one otherwise misses. But it takes time to get used to different types of text and their terminologies. So how does one begin? I don't suggest that you immediately try to read them straight through. I have found taking one at a time, letting it sink in without rushing it, is the best way to become familiar with them. If you can arrange to have them read aloud to you, you are lucky! Reading them out loud to yourself is also a helpful way of letting them have their effect. It is worth remembering that for centuries—and indeed now—they have been recited, as group performances, to perhaps a large number of listeners. So there would be no skipping to the end to find out what happens or skimming over repetitions. You would be listening to them in "real" time. A modern reader might not want to read each repetition, but bearing the oral context in mind is helpful and means the process is more leisurely. Just becoming familiar with one text at a time, at your own pace, is really the best way of getting a feel for what it is doing.

This book is not a historical survey of the Dighanikiya, but it is worth knowing that for hundreds of years, these texts were intended to be heard, not read. They were passed on through groups of monks, who trained others in sustaining the tradition, and the students in turn trained others. The Mahavamsa, a fifth-century C.E. epic poem on the history of the region we now call Sri Lanka, says that the full canon was inscribed there around 29 B.C.E. Heat, insect infestation, humidity, war, and other factors mean that nothing has survived. We do not know the extent to which, in what manner, or even if written texts really supplanted oral transmission in Sri Lanka.' In China, where writing had developed in the second millennium B.C.E., extant Chinese versions of Buddhist texts emerged from the second century C.E. From the centuries after this Sanskrit, Tocharian, Uighur, and Khotanese texts have been found in central Asia. Some texts from the Gandharan region date from the first century B.C.E. Orality may have operated somewhat less frequently in China and central Asia. Chronological dating of various phases of the transmission of Buddhism to different regions is ongoing work. While writing may well have come in earlier than is usually supposed, it is clear that for centuries, in many Pali Buddhist regions, the delivery of the suttas was primarily oral. The question of the Pali canon's duration as oral literature is complex, but some orality appears to have continued well into the twentieth century.

The texts of the Dighanikaya comprise a literary tour de force, demonstrating Buddhist philosophy as a lived tradition expressed in often highly distinct ways. The collection has been part of the imaginative world of many forms of Buddhism and contains some of the key Buddhist texts. But as a literature that evolved before the use of writing, it must also have been regarded as something more interactive: you would listen, perhaps investigate the content (and yourself), and then allow your mind to move on to the next stage of the text. Each text is a paced, rhythmic composition, a choreographed movement in time, that works in a different way from something you read alone with book or iPad in hand. So, with these texts, you start to feel the Buddhist principles of rising, sustaining, and falling—with circling rhythms repeating in "real" time—in the very structure of the words. If you hear the texts as recitals in a temple, you look, listen, and attend; you are conscious of those around you, how you are sitting, and the environment. You are open to the text in a different way. Much of Buddhist meditation and ethical teaching is based on this underlying delivery of the text itself by living people to those who have met, perhaps, just to listen.

Nowadays, the texts are recited at events all the time, such as on temple days; however, the language is no longer clear to those listening, as it once was. But the rhythms, repetitions, and styles; the sense of ebb and flow; and the way that inflected languages, with so many words that all end in the same cases, have internal resonance even in prose—these remain familiar. For anyone who has grown up with such texts, they are a bit like ancient paths and landmarks cutting across the countryside: they have just always been there. We cannot replicate that familiarity or contact, but it is useful to bear this in mind as we read them.

Despite the fact it contains many of the major texts of the Buddhist tradition, often studied individually, it is curious that the Dighanikaya as a complete collection tends to be quietly pushed aside. Recent trends in scholarship have rightly pointed out that Pali suttas are less taught or understood in some Southeast Asian Buddhist regions than they used to be, that they might for long periods have been the domain of monastics, and that they are probably not the first versions of Buddhist texts. This is not the place to comment on such issues. The Pali suttas are certainly still used in many regions, as I myself have seen. In some places where their presence is less evident, vernacular versions of the Dighanikaya, as well as its stories, similes, and anecdotes, have seeped into the popular understanding of Buddhism or its manuals, teaching devices, and chanting books. Many of the suttas are still chanted frequently and with passion; they live on as performative oral texts, as they were intended. Practitioners who read them, West and East, love them. The Pali Text Society still finds the Dighanikaya to be the most popular of all the Buddhist collections. The Art of Listening is an assessment of these suttas as a whole, as a synchronic collection. Such a collection must have been known well in various historical periods, as it still is in many regions now, by both monastics and laity.'

Buddhist studies as a subject is, necessarily, often for specialists in the many languages that are involved and in philology, manuscript work, and historical dating. These kinds of research are essential. But there is little or no examination of the literary content of texts or any appreciation that style may be a reflection of meaning. The internal cohesion of any body of texts, and a sense that this may be the result of deliberate care, is one helpful way of understanding them. Such an approach is not yet taken seriously as a field of study for Buddhist texts.' In Western literary culture, one would not dismiss whole collections of early texts on the grounds that they are a little later than the earliest strata of teachings, not mainstream, only monastic, or just propaganda for laypeople. Narratives from an Anglo-Saxon monk or an early Arabic historiographer would not be overlooked because they are full of myths, legends, and "literary embellishments." They are explored and examined for what they are: they tell us about the people who composed them and the world in which they lived. I have heard all of the previously mentioned charges made against the Pali Dighanikaya some at the same time! Given the need for so much specialization in this subject, all of this is understandable. In time, perhaps, the historical reception of texts and their literary content will become a part of Buddhist studies and given the sympathetic attention they deserve.

Underneath all of the surface objections, we can safely assume that at one time, and probably in many Buddhist periods, texts in the Dighanikaya were both heard and understood by a great many people, both lay and monastic. As part of my argument in this book, the distinction between lay and monastic audiences is not really one we need to make for the Dighanikaya. Both audiences are actively addressed individually and collectively, and within the texts themselves, both are clearly demarcated and celebrated. This comprehensive, encompassing corpus of texts presents a Buddhism that embraces the great and living symbiotic relationship that developed between the two poles of the lay and the monastic life.

Before we look at the texts, it will be helpful to explore some of the skills and expectations of an oral society. Oral cultures clearly vary, but they share some features that can help us understand how the Dighanikaya works. These cultures have their own idiosyncrasies that allow the mind to build up associations and connections over time and make its own patterns, with different kinds of engagement at different times.

These are not just charmingly arcane ways of working. We possess many of the same skills, which still tend to operate in our culture, as if we search for them unconsciously: the way Internet links branch into one another; the way information is listed, organized, and accessed through portals opening onto other portals that open onto yet others; the way we like repetitive games or respond to and remember a striking image to distill a large amount of information. And sometimes it's just a good story, often told along highly formulaic patterns, that satisfies our deepest instincts. We do not now have the capacity of oral societies to build and structure knowledge in the mind over a long period of time, but repetition, rhythm, and a good sustained yarn still let us relax and free up parts of the mind that may have been sleeping while we've been going about our lives.

If we link these tendencies to a sense of engaging with the texts as a means of bringing ourselves to the path, and that this happens alongside mindfulness, we tend to wake up. For what is a meditation other than engaging with a repetitive series of events, familiar yet fresh, with a sense of alertness? What does our breath do but move in and out again and again? The use of such rhythms, and finding how to steer through their tidal paths, is the essence of meditation practice.

The varied texts in the Dighanikaya use such techniques in abundance, far more than the other nikayas. The way they do so shows that these devices make some, though not all, of the texts work as full meditations and appears to give us explicit instructions. The intention here is not to analyze each one in detail or to suggest that we can replicate their original setting, but rather to explore some of the suttas in this light. Where they are not meditations in the sense of formal exercises, they are like guided meditative journeys through aspects of the teaching. Philosophical and psychological discourse is expressed through pattern, number, fable, and parable; the text itself becomes a way of arousing a sense of the path simply by its structure and through how it is heard.

This book is called **THE ART OF LISTENING**. There is a way of listening to Buddhist texts that is light but attentive, sympathetic without having to "believe." It can be there when you are reading to yourself and you feel you "hear" the text. This kind of attention is quite simple. It occurs sometimes while you are hearing about something that has happened to a friend, listening to a good story on the radio or a podcast, or just going for a walk and hearing trees murmur like water: the listening can be quiet and receptive, yet active and awake at the same time. In my experience, it is just this kind of mindfulness that can be there when hearing a Buddhist text.

The first part of this book deals with the background to oral literature, some features of Buddhist texts in general, and those of the Dighanikaya in particular. The second part looks at a sample of twelve texts from that collection and, although not exhaustive, demonstrates the diversity in the Dighanikaya. At the outset, I should also say that these interpretations are based on two strands: a literary approach, as this is my academic background, and personal observation after hearing the texts, both in Pali and English, at meditation meetings; visiting Southeast Asia; and being involved in chanting groups in Asia and the United Kingdom. The discussions are based on reflections arising from these experiences. I try to present known historical facts accurately but have made no attempt to isolate the earliest levels of the text; I am taking the Dighanikaya as the synchronic, discrete collection it has been for so long. <>

Israel and the Cosmological Empires of the Ancient Orient, Symbols of Order in Eric Voegelin's Order and History, Vol. I edited by Ignacio Carbajosa and Nicoletta Scotti Muth [Series: Eric Voegelin Studies, Volume: 1, Brill | Fink, 9783770564873]

Since the publication of the German edition of *Israel and Revelation* a noteworthy turnaround in the method of conducting research on this book has taken place.

The innovation consisted of bringing its interdisciplinary nature into greater relief, an aim which is further pursued by the essays collected in the present volume. Its four thematic sections focus respectively on civilization forms, on the order of human history, on specific aspects of Old Testament exegesis, and finally on the meaning of the term "revelation" in the context of the biblical events narrated.

CONTENTS

The essays collected in the present volume are the fruit of contributions their respective authors delivered at an interdisciplinary conference on Israel and Revelation, the first volume of Eric Voegelin's opus magnum Order and History, held in Munich at the Hochschule für Philosophie, May 15th–16th, 2017. The occasion for the conference—which was sponsored by the Voegelin-Zentrum für Politik, Kultur und Religion of the Geschwister-Scholl-Institute at the Ludwig Maximilians University of Munich and the Department of Philosophy at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan—was to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the book's publication in 1956. The goal of the initiative, however, was much less obvious than that which the official event would have allowed one to expect, given the fact that this anniversary could not consist in giving weight to the influence of a book inserted into a five-volume work, and whose value has been established and unanimously recognized for some time. Focusing, in fact, on the opening of a work that, in spite of the ambitious claim it seeks to confront in an unprecedented way the powerful theme of human history, still remains scarcely noticed, the goal of the initiative needed to be something other. It consisted, in one way, in offering new perspectives on the reading of Israel and Revelation, and in another way, to call on the carpet ambiguities and discrepancies—for example, the fact that its very author seemed to distance himself from the thesis here formulated as the drafting of the entire series proceeded. This intention was well received by the speakers at the conference as well as declined by them in varying degrees in their respective contributions.

In front of the markedly interdisciplinary character of Order and History and in particular of Israel and Revelation, some contributions addressed the integration of themes treated by the different disciplines the work approaches; others instead focused on the originality of its complex hermeneutic approach, which adds a horizon of meaning that is far wider than those of the individual disciplines involved in the work. As a result, it thus emerged that Israel and Revelation preserves within it a range of stimuli that still await development, and whose potentiality concerns both the individual areas from which the investigation draws as well as its general theoretical framework. It should also be noted that, starting from the new millenium, the revised original English edition of Order and History included in Voegelin's Collected Works and, even further, its first German edition,3 have brought to light a noteworthy turnaround in the method of conducting research on the work, and particularly on Israel and Revelation. The German edition's innovation consisted in fact of bringing the work's interdisciplinary nature into greater relief, notably increasing the perspective of observation regarding the political science Voegelin partook of from the academic point of view. This goal was made explicit above all in Israel and Revelation, which was entrusted to the care of renowned Orientalists and Old Testament scholars Jan Assmann, Peter Machinist, Friedhelm Hartenstein, and Jörg Jeremias. Their examination helped to place more in focus merits and critiques of the volume, which produced a renewed push on studies and initiatives both on this volume and on the entire work.

The Munich conference was structured with four panels, concentrating on the many thematic areas on which to focus discussion. The first panel—Forms of Civilization—raised questions about the origin and legitimacy of the expression "forms of experience" applied to a typologizing of the

civilizations of the Ancient Orient (contributions by N. Scotti Muth, P. Machinist, D. Wildung and G. Buccellati); the theme of the second panel—Order and History—was the structure of history formulated by Voegelin starting from the first three volumes of Order and History, in order to verify its tenets also in his successive works (contributions of M. Marassi, F. Hartenstein7 and J. Milbank); the third panel—on the Old Testament—examined specific aspects of Voegelian exegesis of the books of the Old Testament (contributions by D. Markl, E. Otto and I. Carbajosa). Finally the last panel—Israel and Revelation—gathered contributions that focused on the meaning of the term "revelation" in the context of the biblical events narrated (contributions by M. A. Sweeney, D. Walsh and C. Chalier). Rather than retracing the outline of the conference, the present Introduction will try to give account of the thematic cores of individual contributions, inserting them into a table of reference that explains, on the one hand, the origin and goal of the book, and on the other the principles treated by the Old Testament hermeneutics it delineates. A glance at the variety of perspectives offered by individual contributors might also be carved out from a reading of the abstracts located at the top of each one of them.

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When Eric Voegelin, historian of political ideas and professor of Government at Louisiana State University, finally tackled the last revision of the final section remaining of his long History of Political Ideas,8 he realized this not only made necessary an umpteenth thematic enlargement, but that even this would not be enough. What it made necessary was rather a complete rethinking of the theoretical scaffold upon which the work was built. The section in question had been written first. Already complete by the end of 1939, it dealt with the ancient Kingdoms of Egypt and Mesopotamia. In the face of the large series of critical studies published in the second half of the '40s on the civilizations of the ancient Orient, the enlargement in question ended up requiring an authentic going beyond the horizon: It truly seemed that within the political world of the ancient Orient, there had to absolutely be space given for the consideration of ancient Israel. In the four years that followed, Voegelin dedicated himself to this field of research with extraordinary commitment, immersing himself in the study of its sources (the Hebrew Bible) and in the most creditable critical reference literature. The angle of the political scientist he really was allowed him to discover and valorize a line of studies that had still not found an adequate echo in the exegetical camp: that is, with the line of Scandinavian tradition by Sigmund Mowinckel at the beginning of the twentieth century and exemplarily continued by Ivan Engnell.

But this inquiry allowed him above all to finally clarify for himself his ideas with respect to fundamental methodological and theoretical questions that had tormented him throughout the entire drafting of the History and with respect to which he still had not managed to settle on satisfactory solutions.

In 1954 Voegelin justified to his publisher the umpteenth enlargement of the work, with the assurance that "[t]he intention of the work has not undergone any change at all. It is still a history of political ideas, as competently as possible representing the present state of the science," adding that "[t]he inclusion of the part on Israel will make it a 'must' in theological seminaries ... because (though that may sound almost unbelievable) no book on the political ideas of Israel has ever been written at all." Yet already at the end of September of that same year he found himself forced to admit the complete revolution of the original theoretical conception: "I am engaged in a major piece of work. It is entitled Order and Symbols and tries to execute a program suggested in the New Science, of giving a history of philosophy of political order and its symbolization." There followed another year of intense work on the section about Israel, which concluded with taking up the predominant part of

the entire volume, whose definitive title was finally established: Israel and Revelation. Voegelin justified the enterprise in this way:

> This winter has been a strain, because I didn't know how the whole work hangs together before I had competed the analysis of the Prophets. Now everything is done, with the climax in the songs of the Servant of Yahweh. And the results far exceeded my expectations—the entire work is now really a philosophy of history.

This concise reconstruction of the final stages of his scaffolding of the History cannot naturally bring to light in an adequate way the intricate path Voegelin traveled in order to move from a more or less conventional history of the political ideas of the West to another type of history, above all unconventional, and having to do with the symbolization of the experience of order starting from the political societies of the third millenium B.C. through the present. Today it is possible to shed light on this path much more than in the first decade following his death. Nevertheless, the vanity of whatever claim of understanding any authentic philosophical thought along the linear stages of its more or less purported evolution should be reiterated. Breaks and jumps are in fact normally the test of the intuitions people had in a remote epoch, and which accompany that thinker, occupying the mind for a long time well before he or she comes to an adequate realization of their effective importance. Voegelin does not make for an exception in this regard, which among other things is a qualifying sign of his stature as a thinker.

History and Meaning

An essential trait of the revolution finally announced in 1954 should nevertheless be made clear: It was not provoked by the input of theoretical selective principles from elsewhere, but resulted from the simple but rigorous application of the basic principles of the historical method applied to facts (or to symbols) observed. The jump from a history of the political ideas of the West to the attempt to develop a philosophy of history is extensively examined by John Milbank, who in his essay compares Voegelin's enterprise with those of other prominent meta-historians. This shift was above all favored by the comparison between the structures of order in the empires of ancient Orient with and entirely different structure of order symbolized in ancient Israel. The reciprocal connection that was given between them allowed Voegelin to identify "the emergence of the Chosen People from the ambience of cosmological empires" and to date the formation of the first in an epoch that was contiguous with the seconds. This consequently resulted in the formulation of a plausible historical dating for Mosaic revelation starting from an analysis of experience symbolically expressed in the three biblical events that constitute it: the burning bush, exodus, and the covenant. The dating of these symbolizations should have been traced to an epoch that was far more remote with respect to what did not allow the scrupulous philological application of the historical-critical method of the biblical text.

Yet the passage to a philosophy of history also had motives of a theoretical type. The tension between historic-empirical research and hermeneutic yearning was somehow inherent in Voegelin's inquiry from the outset, as documented by Scotti Muth in her contribution. With regard to this it is worth mentioning, on the one hand, his reflections on the historicity of the human spirit, and on the other hand the prolonged confrontation with attempts by historians of universalistic aspirations, namely, Edward Meyer, Oswald Spengler, and Arnold Toynbee. The inseparable link between political theories and concepts of history was long since established as valuable for Voegelin and toward this research he had dedicated a series of studies whose results had been regularly proposed to the attention of colleagues. The crucial theme connected to these reflections, that is, whether there can be a meaning of history, was widely discussed at that time by philosophers and theologians, above all of the German language, and at the end of the '40s it had declined in important

publications. There were above all theoretical solutions proposed respectively by Karl Jaspers and Karl Löwith, those by whom Voegelin felt himself to be mostly provoked.

With his theory of an axial-age datable between the VIII and II century B.C., Jaspers retained that he had identified an epoch marked by very important parallel spiritual eruptions throughout the entire world, whose importance at the global level would have changed the course of universal history, remaining perceivable up through today. Löwith, for his part, was preoccupied with distinguishing sharply between Heilsgeschichte (history of salvation) and Weltgeschichte (world history) and sustained that, while the first, not being of an empirical nature, clearly manifests a meaning, that is a directionality, because it runs linearly toward a fulfillment, the second instead has an empirical nature but appears as characterized by a cyclical proceeding of perennial loss and reconquering of the conquests of civilization, of the type Nietzsche already emphasized. Common to both positions moreover was the presupposition that the events the Bible narrates were devoid of empirical confirmation and that one needed to negate their universal significance because they were valid exclusively for Christians and only in the camp of religious faith. These are precisely the two positions that were overturned by Voegelin in Israel and Revelation, and it is curious to note that Löwith, while during the years of a reciprocal exchange of letters, expressed a lively interest in Voegelin's reflections even if they diverged from his own, to the point of inviting him to publish a book on Nietzsche together, then brusquely interrupted the relationship already starting from the time of the publication of Voegelin's New Science.

Which theses of the two German thinkers did Voegelin contest? Voegelin advanced to Jaspers the critique of having completely overlooked and therefore excluded two figures of universal relevance like Moses and Christ from the temporal band of the axial-age, while he contested Löwith's wanting to trace a clear opposition between Judeo-Christian history and empirical history. Against: Even the events narrated in the Bible exhibit an empirical nature, provided one detaches oneself from the narrow concept of "experience" that belongs not so much to the natural sciences as it does to much modern philosophy, which has ousted from the ambit of experience all that is not able to be made objective or that presents characteristics that are not reducible to measurability. With that Voegelin intends all spiritual phenomena, from fundamental moral intuitions to the demand for meaning, that is for an origin and an end, which structurally belong to human experience even as they transcend the boundary of spatial-temporal immanence. From this point of view, new above all from the philosophical perspective, even religious events assume a specific relevance, and the separation of the camp does not imply that it has to do with realities incompatible with all other experiences or in fact with "unrealities."

But what does a philosophy of history have to do with political ideas?

In writing his History of Political Ideas Voegelin right away came up against a theoretical difficulty that might appear obvious: A history of this type cannot be an almanac, and so to write it it is indispensable to have a principle for the selection of material. The most diffuse in the panorama of the time consisted in selecting political ideas on the pulse of the national state with institutions and democratic governments. This however had the undesired consequence of eliminating an enormous quantity of materials that were interesting in and of themselves, and that more than anything were indispensable for understanding some aspects of the current political situation. Here, then, is how the first years of work were marked by the attempt to resort to an adequate principle of relevance both in the extensive sense and the intensive sense, that would allow an understanding of the political phenomenon in all its amplitude and depth. There thus began to loom with always greater clarity the indivisible link between history and meaning: To write a history of political ideas that had

the claim of identifying a common thread, a meaning, that joins the different histories in one history, there was the need for an interpretive key that political ideas were not capable of forging.

A possible alternative may have consisted of a study of civilizations, insofar as these seemed to offer the widest point of view possible. John Milbank compares Voegelin's attitude in this respect—largely indebted to Vico and Bergson—with those of other meta-historians such as Spengler, Toynbee and Dawson among others. They all shared a deep dissatisfaction with traditional criteria of relevance for arranging the course of history like "nations" or "progress," but disagreed on how civilizations could offer a better opportunity in this regard. In Voegelin's opinion the examples of Spengler and Toynbee were about to demonstrate that, adopting this path, there was the risk of crushing once and for all the sense of history in the awareness the historian must have of it.29 Both scholars in fact considered civilizations as individual entities lacking a reciprocal link and offered a reading of them in a vitalistic key, almost as if they had to do with natural realities subjected to a biological cycle of birth-development-decline. Despite the title of Toynbee's work, according to Voegelin, speaking of "history" in a theoretical context of this type would have been arbitrary.

Experiences of Order

The solution to the puzzle began looming starting from an anthropology of metaphysical openings, regarding which Massimo Marassi offers a wide interpretation touching on the most significant Voegelian texts. He emphasizes the symmetry of relationships that exist, on the one hand, between the transcendental opening and its different symbolizations, while on the other between political existence and its intrinsic historical dimension. This anthropology found its first application in the original theory of the three levels of political "representation" formulated just a few years before the drawing up of Israel and Revelation in The New Science of Politics. In it Voegelin speaks not only of an institutional and existential representation but even of a third level— on which Milbank dwells— attributable to the fact that each society that is institutionally organized can subsist in the manner in which, more or less consciously, it advances the claim of representing some type of "truth." In a paradigmatic sense one can say that each political society is comparable to a cosmion, or a small, ordered universe that has the claim of analogically representing the order of being. This remains true even if the case of the truth represented being an ideology and therefore a mystification. The study of ancient civilizations offered Voegelin the possibility to verify his intuition. He observed that human societies, as soon as they left the tribal stadium behind, tended to organize themselves by reproducing a certain type of cosmological truth and that this phenomenon was widely diffuse, even in different epochs, making therefore impossible a theory of diffusion by influence. This has to do with what in the first part of Israel and Revelation is described as a "cosmological form of experience" symbolizing a "cosmological order" and which, according to the examples offered by the different successive societies in the Mesopotamian area and in Egypt, may be thus characterized:

> The rhythms of plant and animal life, the sequence of seasons, the revolutions of sun, moon and constellations may serve as models for analogical symbolization of social order. The order of society may serve as a model for symbolizing celestial order. All these orders may serve as models for symbolizing the order in the realm of divine forces.

In the intervening years between the publication of the first three volumes of Order and History and the fourth, Voegelin deepened the study of the experience of order of the cosmological type. In one sense, he researched the sense of history proper of cosmological societies, e.g. the Egyptian, an issue Dietrich Wildung addresses in his contribution. In another sense, he retained a growing attention for the symbolizations of primitive societies made accessible by archaeological findings, and concluded that the cosmological experience of order contains structurally indelible aspects that remain independently of the transition to a higher order a society may have experienced. Buccellati's

contribution focuses on this point, as it brings to light how the seeds of cosmological experience are not only present but already potently active in prepolitical human societies.

Because the third level of representation is discernible through the symbolic expressions that human beings of a certain civilization have given it, the enigma of whether it is possible to retrace a valid meaning for the whole of human history seemed to promise a possible solution: Reconstructing the traces of symbols from each civilization and comparing these among themselves would have potentially allowed discerning epochal differentiation ("leaps in being"), breaking the compactness of cosmological orders toward transcendent being and affording to acknowledge a direction and therefore a meaningful history that links various typologies of order. This program is incisively formulated in the incipit of Order and History: "The order of history emerges from the history of order." This is the reason for having the investigation start from the most ancient cosmological civilizations: Egypt and Mesopotamia. These have identified an order offered by nature to human reason, welcomed and expressed by it in symbolic forms, through different efforts according to the cultural sensibility. Recurrences and cycles constitute in fact foreseeable dynamisms that lend themselves not only to a mythic symbolization but also to a rational appropriation.

References to the society of Indian and above all Chinese culture are not lacking in this volume and in the next. These will find more extensive consideration in the IV volume of the series, but the fact that here Voegelin limits himself to simple hints is not due to contingent yet intrinsic reasons, as he explains very clearly in the argument with Toynbee. The reasons for their disagreement, which were later mitigated, deserve to be mentioned.

Following a critical confrontation with Jaspers's axial-age theory, Arnold Toynbee, in the second part of his monumental work (vols. 7–10), had radically corrected the theoretical system of the first, according to which the structure of universal history would consist of cycles of civilization, to introduce a new one, in which the history of religion and precisely the history of the four parallel higher religions became history proper. Voegelin recognizes that the merit of having contributed to enlarging the Europocentric, unilinear constructions of precedent historiography belongs to both Jaspers and Toynbee. This nevertheless does not stop him from imputing two misgivings to them by virtue of which even if the plan of their work is purely ambitious, it is still not possible to recognize in it traces of a philosophy of history—to which they nevertheless both aspired.

The first misgiving consists of the arbitrariness of the selection of that which reenters the axial-age and that which remains outside it, which places the entire concept at risk. The second misgiving consists in a theoretical limitation, or in the fact that neither "the problem of the successive leaps in being within the various societies, nor the problem of their differences of rank, have been worked through."

In fact, according to Voegelin,

> there are societies in which the leap in being has not broken the cosmological order as thoroughly as in the West.... For philosophy of history can arise only where mankind has become historical through existence in the present under God.... only the Judaeo-Christian response to revelation has achieved historical consciousness.

In the unitary complex of the first three volumes of Order and History Voegelin also examines the emergence of a second break in the cosmological myth: the one which took place in the area of Hellenic culture. From the comparison of the typologies of cosmological civilization examined here compared with Chinese civilization, he retains the ability to conclude that:

> Comparing the three cases—the Mesopotamian, the Chinese and the Mycenaean, we can perhaps touch ... one of the obscurest problems in the intellectual history of mankind: that is, the attitude of various civilizations for development in the direction of the "leap in being".

Therefore, cosmological civilizations of the areas considered in Order and History, in addition to being the most ancient in the world, are also those that have prepared the terrain for the two most significant "leaps in being" ever realized in the history of humanity, the first presumably occurring in the XIII century B.C. with Mosaic revelation, the second occurring between the VI–V centuries B.C. with the emergence of philosophy in Greece. These two "leaps" coincided with a breakthrough on the cosmological plane respectively, starting-from and moving-toward the transcendent Principle of all reality and, as such, had approached whoever had completed these–individuals and indirectly entire communities–to the true order of being. Therefore, both assumed an authentically universal value and both have given a direction to all of human history.

The Present under God

It has been seen that in its political aspect "cosmological symbolization in a strict sense can be defined as the symbolization of political order by means of cosmic analogies."

With Israel we suddenly find ourselves in the presence of an entirely different political order, which both Milbank and Walsh point out in their essays. In place of the empire and its governor, which is a manifestation of the god and a mediator of his strength, we now have the theopolis of a people who lives directly in the presence of God, no longer having a need for an intermediary. Voegelin dedicates the third and fundamental part of the book to the analysis of the anomalous historical fact consisting of the emergence of the Chosen People from the environment of cosmological empires:

> A truth about the order of being, seen only dimly through the compact symbols of Mesopotamian, Canaanite, and Egyptian societies, becomes articulate, in the formation of Israel, to the point of clarity where the world-transcendent God reveals himself as the original and ultimate source of order in world and man, society and history, that is, in all world-immanent being. Under this aspect of the dynamics of history, the otherwise autonomous study of cosmological order acquires the character of a background for the emergence of history, as the form of existence in response to Revelation, gained by Israel's exodus from civilization in cosmological form.

To live in the "present under God" means to enter into a new experiential modality. The Voegelian analysis brings to light the main features of historical experience, whose more obvious symbolic documentation is the peculiarity of the biblical narrative from Genesis to 2 Kings, in which pragmatic narrative (history) and paradigmatic narrative (story) are strictly intertwined, to reciprocal advantage.

The eruption of transcendent Being into time coincides in fact with a precise event, with it communicating itself to concrete persons who not only in their turn efficiently communicated this to others to the point of founding a people sui generis, but who had an awareness of continually aspiring to reactivate it. Without the continual reactivation in the present of the event with which the Transcendent made itself present in time, in Voegelin's view, the permanence of historical experience would not be possible and would fall back into the type of experience closed to transcendence that constitutes the common trait of cosmological civilizations. In describing the dynamism of the event that made possible the historical form against background of cosmological civilizations, Order and History proposes itself as a valid contribution to the reactivation of an experience for which our time has progressively lost the ability to access.

The eruption of the event of revelation onto the horizon of the cosmological order constitutes a nearing to the order of being. This places the historian in front of two difficulties of a hermeneutic nature that correlate reciprocally. The first consists in the fact that revelation of the God who transcends the cosmos who entered into a determined point in human history is not available to the historian in the same way as Constantine's decision to make Christianity a religio licita documented by the Edict of Milan in 313 A.D. Revelation in history comes down to us rather witnessed in a paradigmatic history. The distinction Voegelin works between pragmatic history and paradigmatic history is, above all, one of the greatest merits of his work.

Pragmatic history would be the history of actions that produce results within the ambit of the immanent worlds of political power in the measure in which these can be accessible to the historian through more or less trustworthy sources. On the other hand (and this has to do with paradigmatic history), there would be no revelation without facts, events that touch the awareness of persons or peoples and pushes them to move themselves, to respond. What comes to us in the Bible is not a pragmatic history but rather a paradigmatic story, that is the symbolism with which Israel expresses its encounter with historical revelation. However, even if paradigmatic, it has to do with narratives that begin from pragmata, except that it welcomes these as part of the (sacred) history of the relationship of Israel with God, whose main thread remains hidden to the simple "objective" observer of historical facts. That main thread valorizes some events and develops them with rhythms and narrations, while others are limited to mere mention or even passed over in silence. The facts narrated are thus recounted in function of a paradigmatic scope, not because of an archival interest. The narrative will be true if its essence as a paradigm is carefully elaborated. Precision with regard to the pragmatic details of time, location, participating persons, their action and speeches will be much less important than precision with regard to the will of God on the particular occasion.

This distinction allows Voegelin to grasp and valorize the interpretive nature of biblical literature, fleeing the naïve claim of identifying biblical history with the history of Israel. In Peter Machinist's opinion, this hermeneutic distinction allowed Voegelin's work to "age" better than others, for example Albright's (cf. Machinist, pp. 110–113), who sought to confirm the stories in the Bible with archaeological discoveries.

The second difficulty is linked to the first. To accept an order that tears away the previous one, setting itself up as the revelation of a God who transcends the cosmos obviously implies a religious openness. To place an event of revelation as the cornerstone of a descriptive path for history is normally perceived by the historian as an invasion of an unacceptable field, even if that cornerstone is presented as an hypothesis that must be verified in the same history. Voegelin is entirely aware of the risk in this choice of field and does not waste time defending it even if from the beginning his work justifies an approach to reality and therefore to historical events that cannot help but bring into play the factors of freedom or hermeneutic choice.

As the 20th-century hermeneutic has well demonstrated (let us think first of all of Gadamer and Ricoeur), the claim of liberal enlightenment exegesis is naïve to want to arrive at biblical events without the "prejudice of faith," that is, by disavowing in principle the true content of the story. And in general, it is naïve to think of being able to approach an historical document without prejudices. Voegelin, anticipating for certain verses the fundamental gain of that school (let us recall Gadamer's main work, Wahrheit und Methode, was published in 1960), affirms in the introduction to Israel and Revelation:

> God and man, world and society form a primordial community of being. The community
> with its quaternarian structure is, and is not, a datum of human experience. It is a datum of
> experience insofar as it is known to man by virtue of his participation in the mystery of its

being. It is not a datum of experience insofar as it is not given in the manner of an object of the external world but is knowable only from the perspective of participation in it.

The "perspective of participation" implies the act of interpretation even on the part of the historian. But to those historians who consider faith a "subjective" starting point and therefore something that deforms the events, Voegelin responds:

> Now, historical form, understood as the experience of the present under God, will appear as subjective only, if faith is misinterpreted as a 'subjective' experience. If, however, it is understood as the leap in being, as the entering of the soul into divine reality through the entering of divine reality into the soul, the historical form, far from being a subjective point of view, is an ontologically real event in history. And it must be understood as an event of this nature, as long as we base our conception of history on a critical analysis of the literary sources that report the event and do not introduce subjectivity ourselves by arbitrary, ideological surmising.

Voegelin's starting point (as it emerged in his polemic with Toynbee and Jaspers), is born from a Judeo-Christian hermeneutic, the origin of which is not an ideology but a significant present:

> a historian supposedly relates the past of mankind to a meaningful present. Why should a thinker be concerned about history at all, if apparently it is his purpose to show that there are no meaningful presents but only typical, recurrent situations and responses? This apparent oddity will now become intelligible as an expression of the tension between the Judaeo-Christian historical form, in which Western civilization still exists, and the loss of substance it has suffered.

It is a significant present that allows Voegelin to identify an event in history, the revelation of God in the historical form of Israel that finds its fulfillment in Jesus and in the historical form of Christianity, open to all nations. And in this there consists a further extraordinary break with the particular and concrete history that bears the name Israel (and before even Abraham or Moses), a people who live in the "present under God" and bring that order, through historical occurrences, to consign it to all nations. the covenant was a divine revelation of true order valid for all mankind, made to particular group at a particular time. Hence, there could be, and historically there was differentiated from it both the idea of a mankind under one God and the idea of a nucleus of true believers ... the idea of mankind was cast in the form of genealogy going back to Adam ... the idea of mankind could never be understood in its fullness, in spite of the arduous endeavors of the prophets.

Israel's Exodus from Itself

Voegelin retraces the history of Israel, extracting the symbols from the textual stratification, and curiously follows two historically inverted paths. The narrative that emerges from his analysis is in fact subdivided into two parts (respectively the third and fourth parts of the book), of which the first is characterized as pragmatic, and the second instead as paradigmatic. In the first part, History and the Trail of the Symbols, the pragmatic history of Israel is traced from the society of the clan to the foundation of the monarchy, describing its very brief apogee and its peculiar decline ending in 586 with the Babylonian conquest of the Kingdom of Judah and the exile, which signal the End of Israel's Worldly Existence. In the second part, Moses and the Prophets, a notable jump back into the past is

made to arrive at the heart of the paradigmatic history, or at mosaic revelation and its permanence, thanks to the Prophets, in the life of the people of Israel as a political entity sui generis. Here we come to the roughest part of the book, and consequently the most avoided by critics, insofar as Voegelin applies his method to verify the outcome of two centuries historical-critical research that consists, as is known, in the suspension of a judgment regarding Moses's historicity and the reality of the event of revelation, retaining in the best of cases that it has to do with "a late Deuteronomist creation." The Voegelian method, which consists of following the trail of the symbols, yields interesting results in both parts. The first shows the specificity of the symbols that characterize Israel's consolidation of itself as a political entity also from the institutional point of view. In the biblical narrative, in spite of the repeated successive re-elaborations, there remain clear traces of the attitudes that would otherwise not be explainable if not presupposing the unique origin of that people. One of the clearest signs of this difference is constituted by the resistance to institutional monarchy which, even if necessary to political survival, risked liquidating the theopolis. It is thanks to some particular signs— the intimate link between monarchy and prophetism, the anointing of the king on the part of the prophet, the suppression of rites of magic by legislative decree—that the monarchies of Saul and David are distinguished from other analogous forms. Even historiographic activity, which presumably was begun thanks precisely to the monarchy, has a very different character with respect to the character of the surrounding imperial historiography.

In the extremely rich second part, among other things, the symbols of Revelation are identified: burning bush-exodus-berit (covenant) and those of the promise of liberation: sheol-desert-Canaan. The historical elaboration in written form of the cultural legends linked to Moses needed to be motivated by the risk of the people of losing their living tradition also following the change of political regime. The theme of the exodus in particular will present always more profound and personal levels of reading in the course of Israel's tragic history. With Deutero-Isaiah the promise Israel had rejected remains alive, contracting itself into the figure of the Suffering Servant, in whom is realized the Exodus of Israel from itself.63 This moment coincides, on the one hand, with political irrelevance, but on the other with the dramatic becoming aware of the mysterious universal weight of the Revelation received. And the most heated point of this mystery is its method, which always passes through an intermediary.

In this regard it is interesting to stress that the dynamic of Israel and Revelation reflects very well that tension expounded in the most recent centuries of western civilization, among the "Judaeo-Christian historical form ... and the loss of substance it has suffered."64 In fact, Voegelin argues with those who, even anchored in this cultural tradition, have detached its values and its ethics from their historical matrix in order to create a universal ethics of a rationalistic type.65 In this regard, he has in mind that line of thinking of Enlightenment origin which, passing through Kant, Lessing66 and their followers arrives at Hegel and his speculative system of dialectic development of the Spirit through its various historical figures, culminating in the state understood as the most evolved and definitive form of the universal Spirit.

By contrast, Voegelin brings forth in a consistent way his starting point for the development of all of his work: the key to access in order to speak of an adequate representation of the truth of being and thus of a universal history is, and continues to be, an historic event whose meaning is revealed in a paradigmatic history. These two hermeneutic positions in tension, at the point in which they separate (the permanent value of or lack of it toward the past and present history of Revelation) generate two different approaches with regard to those particular "providential" histories (Judaism and Christianity) whose forms continue today. The Enlightenment thinkers tend to melt Judeo-Christian history into a history of evolution of ideas, in such a way that the ideas and ethics proposed by these do not depend on a particular history, by nature not available to everyone

through purely rational means. This position has unfortunately had deadly consequences in twentieth-century history.

Thus, in 1920, Adolf von Harnack, a historian of Christianity with a wide influence, and debtor of the "climate of opinions" mentioned above, had effected the "transition" from a Jewish Jesus to a man who represents the maximum and purest expression of religious awareness, in that it comes to conceive of God as father. Jesus represents a summit in the universal spirit and therefore, all the Jewish "casing" with which it came to us—and in this is included the sacred Hebrew texts (Old Testament)—it is destined to disappear as an obligatory but intermediary stage (since the Spirit must of necessity incarnate Itself in determined spatio-temporal coordinates):

To reject the Old Testament in the second century was an error the Church rightly resisted; to maintain it in the sixteenth century was a destiny the Reformation could not escape; but still to preserve it in the nineteenth century as one of the canonical documents of Protestantism is the result of religious and ecclesiastical paralysis.

Well anchored in Judeo-Christian history, not only as a tradition but as a form of historical experience,70 Voegelin's position was quite far from that which contributed to the unfortunate removal of obstacles to the Jewish extermination policy in the Germany of the Third Reich, as witnessed by his hasty flight from Vienna in July of 1938.

Even if the opposition to German racist laws is clear in Voegelin, his attitude with regard to Judaism, of the type born after the Babylonian exile and of the Rabbinic-Pharisaic type that continues it down through today, nevertheless appears controversial, as evidenced by the contributions by Sweeny and Chalier in the present volume. There is needed, therefore, a word of clarification which, however, must distinguish those two stages of Judaism previously noted.

In fact, one of the most surprising of Voegelin's reading of the Old Testament, at least starting from that which could be expected in a Christian hermeneutic, is the "negative" role the book of Deuteronomy assumes within the development of the historical form that moves forward the present under God in Israel (cf. Carbajosa pp. 236–237). With Deuteronomy—Voegelin affirms— "the myth of Moses as legislator" is born, and the deuteronomist Torah is born, in a way that "the existence in the present under God has been perverted into existence in the present under Torah" that means "a past under God."

It is correct to say that decisive aspects of Deuteronomy have remained concealed to Voegelin.74 Dominik Markl, in this volume, critiques "Voegelin's view of an early universalist 'prophetic spirit' of Israelite religion that was 'mummified' in Mosaic Torah" while valorizing the role the latest editions of this book have had on the development of a strong awareness of monotheism, a merit not detected by Voegelin. Carbajosa asks himself if Voegelin understood well the insistence of Deuteronomy on the "today" (hayyom), since to consider that the insistence on the 'today' of Deuteronomy betrays the transcendental-eternal presence of God with his people in order to turn it into a world-immanent, permanent presence of his revealed word, entails introducing a criterion that threatens to turn against the dynamic of the Incarnation, which I do not believe is Voegelin's intention

Eckart Otto's contribution to this volume compares two very different receptions of Deuteronomy: that of Max Weber and that of Voegelin. Keeping in mind that Voegelin knew Weber's work very well, including his commentary on Deuteronomy, we can intuit, if not the origin of, at least some of the reasons for Voegelin's negative attitude toward the ultimate book of the Pentateuch. In fact, for

Weber, Deuteronomy represents a great conquest for the human spirit as a document that points out the separation of religion from the state. The law is spiritualized and at the same time rationalized. In a certain sense, Deuteronomy represents a step forward in Lessing's scheme of the education of humankind: It is the book that leaves behind magical Levitical religion and moves toward a theological rationalism and a universal ethics.

We have already previously noted how Voegelin radically refuses this vision of the history of ideas, of which Weber is a clear representative (cf. Otto, pp. 224–225), a vision that brings one from a particular history to a universal abstract. The fact that Weber had identified in Deuteronomy that virtuous path was perhaps able to influence Voegelin's negative vision of this book. That being said, Voegelin's principal interlocutor when he constructs his image of Deuteronomy, do not appear to be authors of the European 18th or 19th centuries who favored the "loss of substance" of the historical Judeo-Christian form of western civilization (of which Weber is an heir). His interlocutor is rather that great theological and literary working that lies behind the creation of Deuteronomy and that represents, in Voegelin's view, a step backward with respect to the historical form of the present under God: the creation of a religion under a "fossilized Torah." That would seem, in effect, the contrary of what Weber sees in Deuteronomy.

According to Voegelin, with the Deuteronomist Torah there would be the beginning of what we precisely call Judaism, a movement that with its "present under the Torah" threatens the continuity in time of that "leap in being" that can be only lived and brought back to a present under God. But this is also the moment of the prophets who, in an individual way and in tension with the new legislative body, move forward that present under God and consign it, in the twilight of Old Testament revelation, to symbolic forms or prophetic figures of the future (Voegelin first and foremost stresses the Jeremian new covenant and the suffering servant figure of Deutero-Isaiah). This moment of passage is characterized by Voegelin as "the Exodus of Israel from itself," an expression which, written in 1956, a few years following the Shoah, provoked criticism from its Jewish readers (cf. Sweeny, Chalier).

It remains clear that what Voegelin intended with this expression is to describe the historical path that identifies in the form Israel the bringer of revelation or present under God for all nations:

> The Israel that rises from the storm that has blown over all mankind is no longer the self-contained Chosen People but the people to whom the revelation has come first to be communicated to the nations. It has to emigrate from its own concrete order just as the empire peoples had to emigrate from theirs. The new Israel is the covenant and light to the nations (Is 42:6), the servant of Yahweh through whom God will make his salvation reach to the end of the earth (Is 49:6).

The synthesizing gaze of Voegelin seems to be determined by the historical figure of Jesus, as the typos to which the symbolic forms of the prophets tended, as an event that opens the doors of the present under God to all peoples. However, Israel always remains the historical form that received the leap in being and that brings salvation to the pagans, even if, in this last stage, it will be in a "contracted" form: the figure of the prophet (Jeremiah, Isaiah) as representative of the people.

In spite of all this, Voegelin reserves a providential role for the Deuteronomist Torah. The birth of Judaism managed to preserve the Yahwist order that risked disappearing with the drama of the Babylonian exile. Without the preservation of this order, there would have been no context for the "contracted forms" (from Jeremiah to Jesus) that brought salvation for all nations.

Once the present under God arrived to all peoples through the figure of Jesus, recognized as the suffering servant of Yahweh (significantly, Israel and Revelation concludes with the episode narrated

in Acts 8:26–40, of the apostle Philip who encounters the Ethiopian eunuch of the queen who was reading the passages about the servant from Deutero-Isaiah), what will become of those people who are the heirs of the Deuteronomist Torah? Voegelin does not exactly mention this in this first volume which, embracing a historical period that goes from the third millennium to the sixth century B.C., stops at the exegesis of some passages of Deutero-Isaiah. The Rabbinic Judaism that is developed in the Mishnah and after in the Talmud hardly finds space in the main thread of the history of order in Voegelin's Order and History.

Both Sweeny and Chalier, in this volume, accuse Voegelin of sustaining that supersessionism that is dominant in the history of Christianity for which the Israel of history was substituted by the New Israel that would be the Universal Church of the new order. In reality, this is an old argument between Judaism and Christianity that has little to do with Voegelin and that must be set (and perhaps resolved) at its origin, precisely in the first century A.D. In this sense, a Christian gaze on Judaism that does not reckon itself with the thought of St. Paul in chapters 9–11 of his Letter to the Romans cannot have the claim of calling itself truly "Christian." It is in that letter that the apostle, speaking of the laws and promises made to the Israel that did not accept the Gospel, affirms that "the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable."

To understand the problem well it is interesting to start from Chalier's critique, again in this volume, of Voegelin for not using Rabbinic literature in the historical reconstruction of Israel's past. In that literature it is decisive to understand that the Written Torah is interpreted in the context of the Oral Torah, received also on Sinai and handed down through the centuries to the rabbis, who enriched it and belatedly delivered it in writing in the Mishnaic and Talmudic eras. Voegelin himself recognizes his ignorance with regard to Rabbinic literature (cf. Chalier, 301), and it is correct to observe that this first volume of his magnum opus would be enriched by a greater knowledge of the Rabbinic interpretation of the Written Torah.

But precisely regarding this point one must recognize, and Voegelin does not hide it, that Israel and Revelation also works a hermeneutic choice in the historical reconstruction of Israel's past. Just as in the Rabbinic literature the Written Torah is interpreted from within the Oral Torah (gathered in the Talmud), in Christianity (and Voegelin's gaze is Christian) the Old Testament is interpreted from within the historical event of Jesus the Christ, witnessed in written form in the New Testament. Both of these (Rabbinic Judaism and Christianity) are "legitimate" interpretations brought forward by the only two surviving branches of Judaism of the first century A.D.: Pharisaic Judaism (which becomes Talmudic Judaism) and Messianic (christianoi in Greek) Judaism (and therefore, Christianity). The other branches, Sadducess, Essenes, and Zealots disappeared with the Roman response to the Jewish revolts (70 A.D. with the destruction of Jerusalem—even before Qumran in 68 A.D.— and 135 A.D. after the Bar Kochba revolt).

Here is how Voegelin describes both branches, whose interpretive capacity of the Written Torah and of the history of Israel must be judged a posteriori and not a priori:

> For from the postexilic community there emerged, surviving historically to this day, the branch of Talmudic Judaism—at the terrific price of cutting itself off, not only from the abortive Maccabean nationalism, but also from its own rich potentialities that had become visible in Hellenization, the proselytizing expansion, and the apocalyptic movements. The representative separation of the sacred line through divine choice petered out into a communal separatism, which induced the intellectuals of the Roman Empire to attribute to the community an odium generis humani. What had begun as the carriership of truth for mankind ended with a charge of hatred of mankind. As the other and, indeed, successful branch emerged the Jewish movement that could divest itself not only of the territorial

aspirations for a Canaan but also of the ethnic heritage of Judaism. It became able, as a consequence, to absorb Hellenistic culture, as well as the proselytizing movement and the apocalyptic fervor, and to merge it with the Law and the Prophets. With the emergence of the Jewish movement that is called Christianity, Jews and Greeks, Syrians and Egyptians, Romans and Africans could fuse in one mankind under God. In Christianity the separation bore its fruit when the sacred line rejoined mankind.

Having reached the end of this introduction, may we be allowed to briefly pull together what has been said as well as the aim of what a miscellany like this seeks to accomplish. As stated by David Walsh in the opening of his contribution, a fundamental characteristic of Israel and Revelation is that it is not classifiable from within any of the disciplinary areas which, however competently, deal with the larger picture of the biblical mindset. On the other hand, as Dietrich Wildung argues starting from his perspective as an Egyptologist, each particular discipline that is called upon within the overall framework of Voegelin's book into question experiences, precisely thanks to the widening of its disciplinary confines, an enhancement of its own specific contents rather than their banalization. The Munich conference of 2017 gave us an opportunity to summon scholars from many different fields to dialogue among themselves starting from the personal dialogue of each one of them with this book. This volume, which grew out of it, intends to offer a sort of benchmark for a strong interdisciplinarity, particularly needed in our times.

As we have already shown, Eric Voegelin was not content with gathering data, whether historical or empirical, but rather interrogated himself on their meaning and therefore went so far to trace the outline of a philosophy of history. From this attempt—both subdued and audacious at the same time— important results emerge with regard to the two main subjects of our book: Israel and revelation.

This innovative reading of the books of the Old Testament discloses a never-archivable meaning of Israel. It can never have to do with a page from a distant past that is closed once and for all, since the meaning in it remains active, expounding itself symbolically on more levels: 1. as the "leap in being" Revelation meant with respect to the compact order symbolized by cosmological civilizations, which were closed to transcendence; 2. as the making of a new form of experience in virtue of the revelation of a God who is present. It is thanks to this presence that the dimensions of historical existence—aware of a past and open to a future—can open themselves up; 3. as a vehicle for a universal message, insofar as it is potentially directed to every person, and capable of splitting tenacious ethnic and cultural closures; 4. finally, as a result—and not as a presupposition—of all this, the theological weight of Israel emerges, still as active and real for Jews as much as for Christians.

But this unique and complex historical role is something Israel fulfills not as the realization of an historical "figure," but as the living exemplification of the fact that progress of history remains a mystery. And this not so much because we do not know "how it will end," but because we perceive that the strength that acts in the background remains unpredictable and even incomprehensible for us. To say it along with Eric Voegelin:

> [The mysterious structure of history] "can be summed up in three questions, often asked in the age of Enlightenment and since: 1. Why is there a history of revelation at all?... 2. Why does revelation operate by the clumsy method of being given to representative men or communities, to be communicated by them to the rest of mankind?... 3. Why do the centers of reception become only partially effective? Why do men engage in the resistance from which the structure of historical mankind as we know it results?"

(Translation by Dino D'Agata) <>

MYSTICAL RESISTANCE: UNCOVERING THE ZOHAR'S CONVERSATIONS WITH CHRISTIANITY by Ellen D. Haskell [Oxford University Press, 9780190600433]

First book devoted exclusively to revealing the Zohar's critiques of Christianity, providing a new approach to Kabbalah that contextualizes the Zohar in both intellectual and material culture of the thirteenth century

The thirteenth-century Jewish mystical classic Sefer ha-Zohar (The Book of Splendor), commonly known as the Zohar, took shape against a backdrop of rising anti-Judaism in Spain. Mystical Resistance reveals that in addition to the Zohar's role as a theological masterpiece, its kabbalistic teachings offer passionate and knowledgeable critiques of Christian majority culture. During the Zohar's development, Christian friars implemented new missionizing strategies, forced Jewish attendance at religious disputations, and seized and censored Jewish books. In response, the kabbalists who composed the Zohar crafted strategically subversive narratives aimed at diminishing Christian authority.

Hidden between the lines of its fascinating stories, the Zohar makes daring assertions that challenge themes important to medieval Christianity, including Christ's Passion and ascension, the mendicant friars' new missionizing strategies, and Gothic art's claims of Christian dominion. These assertions rely on an intimate and complex knowledge of Christianity gleaned from rabbinic sources, polemic literature, public Church art, and encounters between Christians and Jews. Much of the kabbalists' subversive discourse reflects language employed by writers under oppressive political regimes, treading a delicate line between public and private, power and powerlessness, subservience and defiance.

By placing the Zohar in its thirteenth-century context, Haskell opens this text as a rich and fruitful source of Jewish cultural testimony produced at the epicenter of sweeping changes in the relationship between medieval Western Europe's Christian majority and its Jewish minority.

Features photographs of cathedrals and churches still standing today from the Zohar's time and region of origin.

Reviews

"Mystical Resistance-an aptly chosen title-will be useful for scholars interested in religion, medieval art, interreligious relations, and history as well as for general readers with an interest in Jewish mysticism." -- David A. Wacks, University of Oregon, *Speculum*

"Haskell's revelation of arguments against Christian claims throughout the Zohar transforms our understanding of this central work of medieval Jewish mysticism and illuminates Jewish resistance to a persecuting society. This original and provocative book persuasively demonstrates that coerced sermons and disputes, attacks on Jewish books and beliefs, and the triumphalist religious art and architecture of thirteenth-century Spain fomented an anti-Christian polemic, hidden in plain sight in the Zohar's pages."-Judith R. Baskin, Philip H. Knight Professor of Humanities and Associate Dean for Humanities in the College of Arts and Sciences, University of Oregon

"An innovative contribution to the study of the Zohar and the construction of religious otherness in medieval Europe. Haskell ranges deftly through a varied landscape of sources and methodological lenses-from careful readings of zoharic sources to a cultural history of Jewish-Christian polemics and the aesthetics of medieval Christian architecture and sculpture. This approach presents a fresh and compelling contribution, studying the Zohar through the lens of resistance literature-the dynamic

interplay of power, powerlessness, and creativity in religious culture. Haskell makes strong use of theoretical literature related to the 'hidden transcripts' of reaction and resistance to political subordination, examining this phenomenon through the Zohar's use of coded phrases and myths."-- Eitan P. Fishbane, Associate Professor of Jewish Thought, The Jewish Theological Seminary

"This concise volume illustrates with help of a good selection of texts from the *Zohar* how Jewish mysticism was engaged in the theological-political 'discourse' of its time...Haskell s clear use of primary sources and pertinent references to essential secondary literature both from Jewish studies and other academic fields such as philosophy, gender studies, and art history makes this volume an efficient introduction to a number of relevant topics in Jewish mysticism and surely is a commendable basis for further studies."--*H-Net Reviews*

"[T]his monograph adds to our knowledge of the role played by the kabbalists and brings new methodological perspectives to bear in the area of medieval Jewish-Christian relations."--*Reading Religion*

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Excerpt: The late-thirteenth-century Jewish mystical classic *Sefer ha-Zohar* (The Book of Splendor) took shape against the backdrop of rising anti-Judaism in medieval Spain. This study argues that the Kabbalists who composed this collaborative work actively encountered Christian theological concepts, Christian literature, Christian art on the outside of churches, and conflicts between Christians and Jews. In response, the mystics crafted subversive narratives that bolstered Jewish identity by countering Christian claims. Interpreting the Zohar in this manner reveals not merely a theological masterpiece, but a rich hidden transcript of Jewish resistance to Christian power.

Why read this mystical text as a minority's comment on its majority environment? The Zohar's authors developed their theology at the epicenter of increased religious intolerance in Europe. The growth of Christianity's missionizing orders, the 1215 Fourth Lateran Council's attempts to define and police Christian society's boundaries, and the Spanish Reconquista's goal of Christianizing the Iberian Peninsula all heightened tensions between Christians and Jews. This was particularly true in northern Spain and southern France, the birthplace of the mystical tradition known as Kabbalah, where Christian friars implemented innovative missionizing strategies. Their new tactics included enforced Jewish attendance at public religious disputations and the seizure, trial, and censorship of Jewish books. As Christians gained knowledge of Jewish literature, they began to craft polemic

works that used Jewish texts to "prove" Christian claims. Likewise, Jews developed greater knowledge of Christianity and produced their own responses. The Zohar exemplifies this process.

Scholars have long suggested the Zohar's potential as a resource for understanding Jewish responses to an Iberian context. As early as the nineteenth century, William Bacher observed that the Zohar contained anti-Christian material, while in the mid-twentieth century Yitzhak Baer wrote that the Zohar's pages "abound in cultural allusions which can be satisfactorily explained by referring them to the reigns of Alfonso X and Sancho IV."1 Baer believed that the Zohar's pseudepigraphic veil was woven deliberately thin to communicate timely messages to medieval readers. Elliot Wolfson, Daniel Matt, and Hartley Lachter have connected the Zohar to medieval power and polemics, while Arthur Green, Peter Schäfer, Yehudah Liebes, Daniel Abrams, and Gershom Scholem have investigated religious influence between Kabbalah and Christianity. Political theorist Javier Roiz has suggested that the medieval Kabbalists' writings "imply an anthropological criticism of Western power."4 For the most part, however, these scholars have focused on the theology of the Zohar, the history of its revision, its intellectual milieu, and the degree to which it was influenced by Christian ideas. This project builds upon their work by revealing the strategies and specific arguments that the Zohar's authors used to contest Christian power.

The Zohar's Art of Resistance

James C. Scott has written, "Until quite recently, much of the active political life of subordinate groups has been ignored because it takes place at a level we rarely recognize as political."5 He explains, "Every subordinate group creates, out of its ordeal, a 'hidden transcript' that represents a critique of power spoken behind the back of the dominant."6 This transcript, produced by a dissident subculture, is "the portion of an acrimonious dialogue that domination has driven off the immediate stage." In every aspect, the Zohar embodies such a hidden transcript. As such its very composition constitutes an act of resistance and rebellion.

Sefer ha-Zohar was composed mainly during the last quarter of the thirteenth century in Castile, then disseminated as a pseudepigraphic text attributed to the second-century sage Shimon bar Yoḥai, a character who appears in the work as the leader of a mystical brotherhood of rabbinic sages. It was written in a distinctive style of Aramaic that both reinforced its supposedly ancient character and connected it to other medieval esoteric works. Its character is lengthy, convoluted, and heavily symbolic, encompassing many different genres and literary strata, in part because it is the product of group authorship. Presumably, its authors comprised a brotherhood resembling the rabbinic group described in the Zohar's narrative sections. Scholars do not agree on the authorial group's composition, or even on whether there was more than one such group, though they generally do agree that figures like Moses de León and Joseph ben Abraham Gikatilla contributed to the work.

The Zohar's group authorship, its authors' peripatetic lifestyles, its obscure Aramaic language, its symbolic style, and even its pseudepigraphic attribution to a second-century sage all reflect the characteristics of a dissident subculture's efforts to engage in self-expression beyond majority surveillance. Likewise, the Zohar's many calls for secrecy, its narrative hesitancy to reveal divine mysteries, and its curses of those who reveal its teachings to noninitiates exemplify the self-policing such groups must undertake for their safety. Subversive allusions to Christian sacred narratives also correspond to the characteristics of hidden transcripts. Beyond this, the work's diffuse thirteenth-century organization mimics folk narratives with "multiple existences" that engage changing cultural concerns. Folk narratives, like hidden transcripts, often are instruments for defending minorities' self-understanding from majorities' impositions.16

Of course, reading the Zohar as a hidden transcript is not a straightforward project. The work's mystical narratives and theological expositions are allusive and deliberately obscure. Yet these stylistic features provided the Kabbalists with a forum for making daring assertions not easily accessible to the friars who studied and censored Jewish texts.17 Hiding subversive ideas from Christian authorities was important for the Zoharic Kabbalists, who wished to avoid violent confrontations with the majority group; the Zohar was intended for a Jewish audience.18 Kabbalah's complex, sophisticated imagery supplied fertile ground for Jewish insubordination, allowing the Zohar's authors to express dissatisfaction about the deterioration of previously stable Jewish-Christian relations while ensuring that those not indoctrinated into their system missed such hidden messages. As Scott writes, "The social spaces where the hidden transcript grows are themselves an achievement of resistance; they are won and defended in the teeth of power."19 The Zoharic authors sought and won a space for resistance within the pages of their elaborate text.

What are the Zohar's main techniques for engaging Christianity? Much as in Maimonides' Guide for the Perplexed, where the philosopher protectively disguises esoteric knowledge by dispersing it throughout his masterpiece, the Zohar hides its subversive anti-Christian discourse throughout its many sections.20 While this dispersal may relate to the text's complex redaction history, these citations are also intentionally allusive—they direct through indirection.21 Terms common to many Zoharic passages, such as "Other," "Other God," "Other Side," "Esau," "Edom," and "Alien God," signal to readers that in addition to learning theological insights they should prepare to interpret Kabbalistic material through an anti-Christian lens. Sometimes these terms emerge from scriptural citations. Exodus 34:14, "For you may not bow down to an Other God," for example, appears in many anti-Christian passages. Often, these signaling terms pair with aspects of Christianity that the Kabbalists found problematic. A diatribe against "an Other God" who "is emasculated, and never has desire, and does not make fruits," but who nonetheless might "pollute all the world," in Zohar 1:203a–b, for example, thinly veils a critique of Christian celibacy that also condemns Christian conversion tactics, as shall be seen in chapter 2.

Terms that Jews and Christians held in common but to which they ascribed alternate meanings, such as the "Kingdom of Heaven," alerted readers to appreciate a passage as polemic. For example, the Zohar contests the Kingdom of Heaven's Christian meaning as a salvific future that excludes Jews by reclaiming it as a reference both to accepting Jewish law—"the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven"—and to the Kabbalistic divine presence Shekhinah, also known as "the Kingdom."24 In other cases the Zohar's allusive language requires knowledge of Christian imagery and ritual. When the text mentions "sorcerous divinations of the bird" that involve offering incense at an altar with "abominable bread," contrasted with the ancient biblical showbread of Exodus 25:30 (Zohar 3:192a), it is clear from the context—as shall be seen in chapter 4—that the text refers to the Holy Spirit, which Christians often depicted as a dove, and to the celebration of the eucharist.

Finally, the Zohar repurposes biblical characters to engage Christianity when features of their stories make them suitable candidates to advance the Kabbalists' cause. In such cases, the characters' presentations depart from traditional biblical and rabbinic literature sufficiently to draw readers' attention. For example, Rachel's painful death in childbirth becomes a vehicle for undermining Christian teachings on the Passion of Christ in Zohar 1:174a and beyond, while the gentile prophet Balaam figures as a counterpart to Christ in order to destabilize Christian ascension narratives in Zohar 3:193b–194b. These characters' transformations will be addressed in chapters 1, 3, and 4.

Using such techniques, the Zohar's authors created a hidden space from which they contested Christendom's dominance and its increasingly oppressive rule. Within this space, they produced a great work of theological creativity that challenged the public Christian transcript of Jewish

subordination and upheld their own versions of Jewish identity and self-definition. Both James C. Scott and Leo Strauss, in his defining study of writing under persecution, describe this process as an art—a creative work articulated "between the lines" of text at the intersection of public and private, power and powerlessness, subservience and defiance. Yet it is within this ambiguous space that the Kabbalists upheld their hope for a better future, reassuring themselves that "the Other Kingdom of Idolatry" may have "rulership in this world, but he has nothing at all in the world that is coming" (Zohar 1:204b).

The Zoharic writers' models for resistance were the very Talmudic rabbis whose names they adopted in their narratives. As Jonathan and Daniel Boyarin have observed, teaching Torah under Roman rule required its own hidden transcript. They write, "rabbinic culture has always been a diasporized and dominated culture, one that subsisted within political and social conditions in which another culture was dominant and hegemonic." Like Jewish literary production in medieval Spain's censorship regime, teaching Torah under Roman rule involved "doing what we do without getting into trouble and using evasiveness to keep doing it." Indeed, both the ancient rabbis and the Zoharic Kabbalists understood themselves in opposition to Rome, whether configured as the Temple-destroying Empire or as Western Christendom, whose Pope issued edicts from that ancient city.

Jews and Christians in Thirteenth-Century Spain

While the following chapters contain further detailed references to the Zohar's historical environment, it is helpful to review briefly the main challenges that the thirteenth-century Spanish Kabbalists faced. I recount these facts not to revisit the old lachrymose view of Jewish history that envisioned Jews in perpetual conflict with Christians, but rather to identify the Zohar as an unusual response to unusual events.

During the thirteenth century the Fourth Lateran Council attempted to regulate Christian society, and the missionizing Dominican and Franciscan orders grew. Jews living among their Christian neighbors found themselves serving as conveniently located Others against whom the Christian community could define itself. Public religious disputations, enforced attendance at Christian sermons, and trials and censorship of Jewish religious texts became new means by which the Church consolidated its identity as a community of the faithful. Some of the most notable incidents in these new Christian efforts took place in northern Spain and southern France, where Kabbalah developed.

Forcibly proselytizing Jews became an important activity. King James I of Aragon enacted laws compelling Jews to attend mendicant sermons in 1242 and 1263. After the 1263 Barcelona disputation between the Kabbalist Naḥmanides and the Dominican friar and convert from Judaism Paulus Christiani (Friar Paulus), this same King James appointed a panel of Dominicans to seize Jewish books, check them for blasphemy, and censor them. Jews who refused to give up their texts could be fined and their books burned. James also empowered Friar Paulus to continue missionizing Spanish Jews after the disputation ended. By an edict of 1278, Pope Nicholas III assigned Dominican and Franciscan friars the official duty of working to convert the Jewish community. As part of this project, King James II of Aragon granted Ramon Llull permission to preach in Jewish synagogues on the Sabbath in 1299. Royal law compelled Jewish attendance at these sermons, and Llull extended his license into a call for debate in Jewish homes. Both Jews and Christians discussed these events and similar occurrences in polemic literature.

In addition to these missionizing innovations, new strategies for argumentation and debate also emerged in the thirteenth century. The most significant tactical development was using rabbinic literature to support Christian claims. This strategic appropriation of Jewish texts began as early as the twelfth century with Alan of Lille and received elaboration throughout the thirteenth century in Spain by such famous figures as Raymond de Peñafort (ca. 1175–1275), who established Dominican

schools that taught Hebrew as a tool for religious disputation; Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada, archbishop of Toledo from 1209 to 1247 and author of the polemic text Dialogue on the Book of Life; Paulus Christiani, who famously debated and persecuted Jews in the mid- and late thirteenth century; and Raymond Martini (ca. 1215–1285), author of the influential anti-Jewish treatise Pugio fidei (The Dagger of Faith) and supervisor of the Dominican Hebrew-language school in Barcelona.

The thirteenth century also saw Christian repression of Jewish texts. The Maimonidean controversy, a vast conflict regarding Moses ben Maimon's application of philosophical ideas to Judaism, erupted in 1232 and was accompanied by pro-Maimonidean accusations that mendicant friars had burned Jewish books at anti-Maimonidean prompting. A 1239 papal bull from Gregory IX ordered Jewish books confiscated and was accompanied by a threat from King Louis IX of France that Jews who refused to give up their books would be killed.4 The 1240 Parisian Talmud trial resulted in the burning of more than ten thousand Talmudic volumes in 1242. The years 1244 and 1255 witnessed further Talmud confiscation and burning.4 In the Barcelona disputation's aftermath between 1263 and 1268, Dominicans headed a campaign to seize and censor Jewish books, including condemning Naḥmanides' account of the disputation to the flames. These persecutions had worldly royal incentives as well. In 1273 King James raised money by charging Jews for individual "blasphemies" found in appropriated texts. Sometimes not just books, but living Jews also were burned, as in 1278 when Pope Nicholas III condemned to the stake forcibly converted French Jews for the crime of reversion to Judaism.

Christian Actions, Jewish Perceptions

Scholars disagree about the motivations behind such anti-Jewish developments. Some understand them as part of a strategic attempt either to convert Jews or to expel and eradicate them from the Christian West; others see thirteenth-century missionizing as an internally directed activity staged for Jewish witnesses but ultimately encouraging Christians to participate in their own continuous conversions, in which they turned and returned to Christ throughout their lives. Similarly, some understand what appear to be Christian proselytizing campaigns as attempts to control Christian interactions with non-Christians and defend the faith. Still others link these shifts to the twelfth-century Christianization of reason and knowledge, or suggest that the thirteenth-century Christian world embraced a hegemonic public philosophy focused on a new concept of a protonational territorial homeland that brought Christians into conflict with Jews.

Perhaps the most helpful way to understand the thirteenth century's coercive debates and sermons is as powerful rituals of subordination designed to reinforce the public transcript of Christian dominance and Jewish subservience. Such rituals' messages were intended for and easily read by both groups. This approach assimilates the various scholarly explanations, since it affirms that Christians' missionizing activities had both internal and external goals. Scott explains that such rituals are "a means of demonstrating that, like it or not, a given system of subordination is stable, effective, and here to stay" and that these displays "may achieve a kind of dramatization of power relations." Regardless of what Christians told themselves about these events, violently coercing Jews to listen to sermons and legislating friars' access to conversion dialogues in Jewish homes were clear displays of Christian power and Jewish subordination that reinforced the majority's desired status quo.

The Kabbalists themselves believed that they were the targets of powerful conversion pressures. When Zohar 1:204a–b warns its readers that, "when this side [i.e., Christendom] rules in the world, it is necessary for a person that he not be seen in the street," it addresses a real threat of violence in a time of persecution. Jews forced by armed soldiers to attend anti-Jewish sermons in their own synagogues likely failed to appreciate Christian notions of ongoing self-conversion. Though the underlying causes of such activities were complex, their victims understood themselves to be under

attack. Whether or not modern scholars find that thirteenth-century Spain embodied a "persecuting society," the Zohar's authors clearly believed that it did.

Castile and "Current" Events

Since the most dramatic thirteenth-century anti-Jewish activities happened in Aragon and adjacent areas of southern France, it is reasonable to ask what Castilian Jews knew about such events and whether they found them alarming. Aragon's extensive royal archives provide better documentation than those of Castile. Yet King Alfonso X of Castile (1221–1284) engaged in and supported similar activities to those of his Aragonese and French brethren; Castilian persecutions did happen during the Zoharic authors' time. In 1279, during a financial dispute between Alfonso X and the Infante Sancho, a Jewish tax-farmer was dragged to death in Seville and another was hanged. From 1280 to 1281, Alfonso X ordered Castilian Jews arrested and held hostage until they paid ransom to the Crown; several prominent Jews were tortured, pressed toward conversion, and even killed.56 Toledo's Jewish community shrank dramatically, and its aged leader Todros ben Joseph Abulafia—the very person upon whom the Zohar's Rabbi Shimon may have been based—pleaded for the prisoners' release.5Since much of the Zohar's composition occurred between 1280 and 1286, its authors would have known about these events.

Disputes from the Maimonidean controversy and records of Kabbalah's emergence demonstrate that the Jews of Castile, Aragon, and southern France communicated extensively. During the phase of the Maimonidean controversy that began in 1232, both pro- and anti-Maimonidean Jews sent messengers and letters to Spain seeking support. The influential Naḥmanides tried to enlist Jewish leaders of Aragon and Castile as anti-Maimonideans. David Qimḥi traveled from Narbonne to the Castilian city of Ávila, sending messages from there to Toledo to evoke pro-Maimonidean sympathy; Judah and Abraham ibn Ḥasdai of Barcelona sent letters to Castilian and Aragonese Jews for a similar purpose. The controversy's next phase in the early 1300s also involved communication between France and Spain.

Kabbalists communicated over long distances as well. The Castilian mystic Isaac ben Jacob ha-Kohen, who wrote Kabbalah's first comprehensive treatise on evil, claimed to have studied in Arles with a master from Damascus. Isaac the Blind famously sent a letter from Provence to Girona rebuking his former pupil Ezra for exposing Kabbalistic secrets in his Commentary on the Song of Songs. Isaac of Acre traveled to both Aragon and Castile, where he reportedly encountered the Zoharic author Moses de León in Ávila shortly before his death. Naḥmanides' response to the Barcelona disputation sought to alert Jews of Paulus Christiani's work in Aragon, Provence, and beyond.66 Such regional travels and communication networks demonstrate that not only were thirteenth-century Jews in southern France and northern Spain aware of current events, they also sought to affect each other's opinions from afar. The elaborate roadways that developed to service pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries made such travel and communication practical endeavors.

The Kabbalists' Knowledge of Christianity

The Zohar's authors knew a great deal about Christianity. Their subversive reinventions of Christian stories required extensive knowledge of the majority religion. During the thirteenth century, Spain's Jewish community became familiar with Christian theology through public and private debate, polemic literature, and visual media such as sculpture and painting on the outside of churches. Of course, this was not the first time that Jews had become familiar with Christian doctrine and lore. The traditional rabbinic literature that thirteenth-century Jews read was also deeply familiar with the New Testament and early Christian theology. The ancient rabbis whose works comprise the Oral Torah were especially knowledgeable about the gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John.

Medieval Jewish writers engaged in a tradition of anti-Christian polemic that emerged in southern France as early as the first half of the twelfth century. The mid-thirteenth-century Spanish Kabbalists Ezra and Azriel of Girona were familiar with this literature. The Dominican Raymond Martini's Pugio fidei preserves similar Jewish polemic traditions, and the Zohar's authors may have known Martini's text as well. Jewish polemic literature from twelfth- and thirteenth-century Europe often discussed Christian theology and New Testament narratives, containing numerous quotes and translated passages from the gospels themselves. For example, the Provençal work Milḥamot ha-Shem (Wars of the Lord) (ca. 1170) by Jacob ben Reuven contained a groundbreaking Hebrew translation of the gospel of Matthew derived from the Latin. Jacob apologized for including the Christian work, but believed it was important for Jewish self-defense.

Sefer Nestor ha-Komer (The Book of Nestor the Priest), a work widely read by medieval Spanish Jews, contained allusions, paraphrases, and quotations from all four canonical gospels, as well as Christian apocryphal traditions popular in the early Middle Ages. This polemic, derived from an earlier Judeo-Arabic treatise, was reworked for a Reconquista audience and became a popular and important source for new anti-Christian compositions by the twelfth century. The compilation Nitzaḥon Vetus (The Old Book of Polemic) also brought together several Jewish sources from the Kabbalists' milieu; it appeared as an anonymous work in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century, possibly in Germany.

These last two texts corroborate evidence for the Kabbalists' familiarity with Christian doctrine. Both works were broadly known, and they frame the core Zoharic material's composition chronologically with Sefer Nestor ha-Komer at one end and Nitzaḥon Vetus at the other. When both texts discuss an aspect of Christian theology, then it is likely that the Zohar's authors were aware of that theology as well. Beyond this, scholars have shown that the Kabbalists who wrote the Zohar possessed an intimate knowledge of the gospels of John and Luke and the book of Acts, as well as broader aspects of Christian thought.

Chapters and Topics

The following chapters present several different Zoharic responses to Christianity, dealing with topics as diverse as disputations, conversion, sacred narratives, and public art. Chapter 1 demonstrates how the Zohar's reinvention of the matriarch Rachel intervenes in topics from Jewish-Christian disputations. It introduces a Zoharic interpretation of Rachel's death that invokes Christ's Passion to refute Christian claims of Jesus' divine and messianic status, reclaim authority for the twelve tribes of Israel from the twelve apostles, reassert Jewish law's continuing validity, and redefine Christianity's Kingdom of Heaven as a signifier of Jewish identity. Each Zoharic argument hinges on the Kingdom of Heaven, a term important to both Jews and Christians since antiquity. The chapter also discusses how correlating the feminine Rachel with the masculine Christ complicates modern assumptions regarding gendered symbols. Modern scholars have sought symbolic correspondence between figures of the same gender, but medievals privileged typological likeness instead.

Chapter 2 discloses the sense of threat that permeated Spanish Jews' lives, inspiring the Zohar's dramatic abnegations of Christian sacred stories. It explains how the Zohar deploys its rhetoric of the Other Side's evil powers to defame Christians and those who associate with them, using demonic terminology to reflect on what happens when Jews become Others. Indeed, the terms "Other," "Other Side," "Other God," and "Kingdom of Idolatry" permeate the Zohar's anticonversion teachings. Not coincidentally, they are also key terms in the Zohar's discourse of resistance to Christian power. Using these coded words, the Zohar condemns Christian dominion, gives advice regarding Jewish behavior under Christian oppression, and imagines a future when

Christendom's rule will give way to Jewish empowerment. This rhetoric responds to Christian missionizing, the threat of religious conversion, and the damage to Jewish communities associated with a group of prominent converts who traumatized the Jews of Spain and France during the thirteenth century. The chapter also discusses anticonversion teachings that critique Christian celibacy, which the Zohar explains as a divine strategy for Christian containment.

Chapters 3 and 4 examine how the Zohar reinterprets the biblical gentile prophet Balaam as a Christ figure to challenge Christian claims regarding Jesus' death and ascension, as well as to critique Christian ritual practices such as the relic cult and the celebration of the eucharist. Attacking Christ's ascension was critical to Judaism's defense against Christian religious domination since, for Jews and Christians alike, the ascension represented physically the claim of Jesus' divinity. The Zohar addresses these claims by crafting a new version of Jesus' ascension and death that reverses Christian tropes.

Chapter 3 shows how the Zoharic authors adapt Balaam traditions from ancient and medieval Jewish sources, in which Balaam does not represent Jesus but does highlight Jewish concerns regarding gentiles to construct a character that is neither fully Christ nor fully Balaam, but a Balaam reinvented to intersect with Christianity. It identifies two texts known in Spain during the Zohar's composition, the medieval midrash Numbers Rabbah and the anti-Christian folk narrative Toledot Yeshu (The Generations of Jesus), as the Zoharic Balaam's main sources. The theme that ties these works together is a villain who flies and falls—the perfect vehicle for critiquing Christian ascension theology.

Chapter 4 presents the Zohar's version of Balaam's death, which the Kabbalists reinvented to contest Christian narrative and ritual practice. In the Zohar, the gentile prophet deceives his followers by claiming to be more than he is, flies into the air to escape Jewish authority, is brought down and killed by righteous Jews, and goes unburied until his bones become magical serpents. Much as in chapter 1's Rachel narratives, the Zoharic Balaam uses comparisons with Christ to critique and negate Christian claims. Interactions between the Zoharic story and Christian teachings emerge from subversive allusions to New Testament narratives, such as the Stilling of the Storm.

Chapter 5 demonstrates that the Church's monumental public sculpture that arose in Spain in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was an important source for the Jewish mystics' knowledge of Christianity as well as a tool of Christian oppression. It argues that, as with other forms of Christian discourse, the Kabbalists who composed the Zohar actively "read" Christian public art and responded to these visual "texts" by crafting narratives that subversively commented upon their sources to bolster Jewish faith and undermine Christian claims. Thirteenth-century Spain was home to overlapping sacred geographies in which Jewish literary production, Christian pilgrimage routes, and Christian artistic development converged. In this environment, both explicitly and implicitly anti-Jewish artworks comprised an important public transcript of domination that was legible to all members of society who viewed them. The invasion of increasingly grandiose messages of Christian dominion into the visual space in which medieval Jews conducted their daily lives prompted response from the Zohar's authors, who strove to create a space for Jewish solidarity and resistance.

This chapter also focuses on Church tympana that existed or were created during the Zohar's composition, tying them to its Kabbalistic commentary. It examines both the mystics' reactions to Christian art's prevalence and how the Kabbalists incorporated Christian artistic motifs into their subversive stories. Themes from previous chapters reappear, including claims of the Israelite tribal ancestors' replacement by the twelve Christian apostles, controversies surrounding the ascension story, and contentions regarding the fate of Jesus' body after his death. The book concludes by reconsidering the Zohar's implications for understanding Jewish resistance to Christian domination.

A Note on Terminology

When referring to Christianity's central figure, contemporary Jews often prefer the name Jesus to Christ. This is understandable, since Christ means messiah and is therefore a name, a title, and a theological claim at once. In the following pages, I use the term Christ not to assert the Christian understanding, but instead to emphasize the Zohar's own creative theology. Historically, many Jewish texts defined Jesus as a human, heretical Jew, rather than as Christ, the messiah and divine person of the Trinity. Both the Babylonian Talmud and the anti-gospel Toledot Yeshu adopted this strategy. The Zohar deploys a different tactic by divorcing Jesus from Judaism and associating him with an Other God altogether—that is, when it is not arguing that divinity and humanity cannot coexist in the same being.

Claiming that Christians worship an Other God may seem to grant Christian theology unexpected legitimacy, but it also allowed the Kabbalists to stress their struggle's escalated stakes. The Zohar's authors believed that they were locked in conflict with powerful cosmic forces—not with the human Jesus and misguided Jews, but with an alien supernatural being and its followers. Rather than explaining Christianity as a perplexing offshoot from Judaism, they portrayed it as a different, competing religion, with a different, competing god. Often, that religion called its god Christ. So does this book. <>

SUFFERING TIME: PHILOSOPHICAL, KABBALISTIC, AND ḤASIDIC REFLECTIONS ON TEMPORALITY by Elliot R. Wolfson [Supplements to The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy, Brill, 789004449336]

No one theory of time is pursued in these essays, but a major theme that threads them together is Wolfson's signature idea of the timeswerve as a linear circularity or a circular linearity, expressions that are meant to avoid the conventional split between the two temporal modalities of the line and the circle. The conception of time elicited by Wolfson from a host of philosophical and mystical sources—both Jewish and non-Jewish—buttresses the contention that it is precisely structural invariability that engenders interpretive variation. This hermeneutical axiom is justified, in turn, by the presumption regarding the cadence of time as the constant return of what has always been what is yet to be. The telling of time wells forth from the time of telling. One cannot speak of the being of time, consequently, except from the standpoint of the time of being, nor of the time of being except from the standpoint of the being of time. Professors and graduate studies in the areas of Jewish philosophy, Jewish mysticism, as well as scholars of continental philosophy, and others interested in theories of time.

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For many living through the covid-19 pandemic, the normal patterns of spatial orientation have been disrupted by the mandate for social distancing and lockdowns forcing us to stay at home. Additionally, our normal patterns of temporal acclimation have been interrupted. Upon waking it is often difficult to recall the day of the week as minutes blend into minutes, hours into hours, days into days, and weeks into weeks. Perhaps even more telling is a strange sensation whereby time moves both rapidly and sluggishly, not at succeeding intervals but concomitantly. More troubling than this confluence is the lack of a clear sense of a future as the uncertainty of the moment has left many with a crippling inability to chart the way forward. If it is the case, to paraphrase Velimir Khlebnikov, the Russian Futurist poet and playwright, that the homeland of creation is the future, then it is understandable that in the absence of futurity, summoning the creative muses has been particularly challenging.

In March 2020, as I was confined to my home, I decided to gather together several of my scholarly essays on the nature of time as a way of dealing with the temporal displacement. In addition to revising the older studies, I have written a new chapter that serves as an introduction to the collection. The decision to republish some of my studies has afforded me the opportunity to correct the previously published versions. Discovering mistakes in these publications has been a humbling experience and only demonstrates that despite the sage and eminently practical advice offered by Leonard Cohen, "Forget your perfect offering / There is a crack in everything," one still desires and hopes that one's offering will be perfect. Alas, this yearning for perfection may be my greatest imperfection. But beyond the opportunity to correct my errors, the rewriting of my studies performs one of the key ideas that has informed my understanding of the curvature of time: we approach the future in the present by reverting to the past where we have never been.

Having been exposed to rabbinic patterns of thinking since early childhood, long before any academic crossed my path, I was deeply impacted by the principle that repetition facilitates novelty and that multivocality is a species of uniformity. These truisms were as natural to the environment in which I was raised as the oxygen that I breathed to sustain my physical wellbeing. As I advanced on my own philosophical journey, I came to appreciate that the hermeneutic underlying these claims is emmeshed with understanding time as the perpetual retrieval of what has never been, the saying again of what is always left unsaid in what is spoken. In several of the studies included in this compilation as well as other publications, I have emphasized that the temporal assumption to which rabbinic sages and later kabbalists were beholden is that the old may be envisioned as new to the extent that the new may be envisioned as old. The chain of tradition is constituted by limitlessly distended moments, which should not be envisaged mathematically as spatially discrete points strung together and unified by an internal time consciousness, but rather as the mythopoeic instantiations of an infinitely protracted torrent that implements the eternal recurrence of the same, which is to say, the indefatigable duplication of difference. To capture this sense of the timeswerve, I have coined the expressions *linear circularity* or *circular linearity* to avoid the conventional split between the two temporal modalities of the line and the circle. The attempt to criticize my work by reductively

labeling it monolithic, monochromatic, essentialist, and lacking historical contextualization, is a colossal failure to grasp my contention that it is precisely structural invariability that engenders interpretive variation. This hermeneutical axiom, which has informed my scholarship, is justified, in turn, by the presumption regarding the cadence of time as the constant return of what has always been what is yet to be.

I trust by bringing these pieces together I will have created an original orchard of speculation to which future readers are invited to enter and to drink of the waters of wisdom streaming from the philosophical and the mystical sources cited and discussed therein. I do not know if this will be my last monograph, but these arresting words of Fernando Pessoa hover over me at this unusual moment in time as I reflect on the sacrifices and choices I have made in the service of my life's vocation, "I pick the petals off lost glories in the gardens of inner pomp and, past dreamed box hedges, I clatter down dreamed paths leading to the Obscure" (*Desfolho apoteoses nos jardins das pompas interiores e entre buxos de sonho piso, com uma sonoridade dura, as áleas que conduzem a Confuso*). I conclude by sharing the poem "corona apocalypse," that I wrote several months ago. I trust it captures something of the uniqueness of the global contagion we have each experienced together but alone:

> if all
>
> were
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> angels
>
> crowned
>
> as mortals
>
> and mortals
>
> crowned
>
> as beasts
>
> and heaven
>
> like smoke
>
> evaporated
>
> and earth
>
> like garment
>
> eviscerated
>
> who would
>
> take hold
>
> of time
>
> dissipating
>
> in palm
>
> of imagination

doubling

the nothing

nothing cannot

not be nothing

longing for love

dissimulating as death

lived in balance

betwixt shadow of light

and light of shadow

21 March 2020 <>

Hegel on Tragedy and Comedy: New Essays
edited by Mark Alznauer [SUNY, 9781438483375]

Explores the full extent of Hegel's interest in tragedy and comedy throughout his works and extends from more literary and dramatic issues to questions about the role these genres play in the history of society and religion.

No philosopher has treated the subject of tragedy and comedy in as original and searching a manner as G. W. F. Hegel. His concern with these genres runs throughout both his early and late works and extends from aesthetic issues to questions in the history of society and religion. **Hegel on Tragedy and Comedy** is the first book to explore the full extent of Hegel's interest in tragedy and comedy. The contributors analyze his treatment of both ancient and modern drama, including major essays on Sophocles, Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Goethe, and the German comedic tradition, and examine the relation of these genres to political, religious, and philosophical issues. In addition, the volume includes several essays on the role tragedy and comedy play in Hegel's philosophy of history. This book will not only be valuable to those who wish for a general overview of Hegel's treatment of tragedy and comedy but also to those who want to understand how his treatment of these genres is connected to the rest of his thought.

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Introduction
Mark Alznauer

Excerpt: The famous English literary critic A. C. Bradley once remarked that, in the time since Aristotle first delineated the main features of the subject of tragedy in Ancient Greece, no philosopher had treated the subject in as original and searching a manner as Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831). Similar praise could be given of Hegel's treatment of comedy—though here Hegel worked without as much guidance from Aristotle, whose own discussion of comedy is incomplete in the text of the Poetics that has come down to us. Certainly, Hegel's concern with the genres of tragedy and comedy was no passing one; it is evident in his early theological writings, it plays an important role in his Jena masterwork, the Phenomenology of Spirit, and it recurs throughout the writings and lectures of his mature period, most prominently in his lectures on aesthetics, which were given repeatedly in the last decade of his life. The scholarly literature on tragedy and comedy has grown exponentially since Bradley's comments, but the sheer extensiveness of Hegel's treatment of these genres still stands unsurpassed among philosophical treatments.

In one important respect, however, the comparison of Hegel with Aristotle is misleading, for it underestimates the striking differences between their different ways of understanding drama. Prior to the period in which Hegel wrote, most studies of tragedy and comedy followed Aristotle in restricting themselves to discussions of poetic form, that is, to the description of the formal properties of successful drama: its constituent parts and structure. But although Hegel provides his own account of the elements of poetic form, his interest extends well beyond narrowly aesthetic issues. For Hegel, drama plays an essential role in the historical transformation of political society

and the deepening of human subjectivity; it embodies religious worldviews and experience, sometimes leading to their dissolution and reformulation; and it serves as a way of unveiling fundamental metaphysical truths. By allowing drama to raise these political, religious, and metaphysical issues, Hegel treats tragedy and comedy as full participants in the human conversation about what we are and what our place in the world is and ought to be. Although he did not think drama was ultimately equal to philosophy as a medium for such self-reflection, he saw it as sharing the same end or purpose, which is to express the deepest truths of human life.

Hegel was not the first thinker to see the potential for this kind of philosophical engagement with drama, and his influence would help ensure that he was not the last. His specific interest in the philosophical significance of tragedy was anticipated by several of the leading figures of German romanticism, like the poet Friedrich Holderlin and the philosopher Karl Solger, and he was undoubtedly influenced by pioneering work on the subject by his initially more illustrious friend, F. W. J. von Schelling. His analysis of comedy follows in the wake of philosophical treatments of comedy by August Schlegel and the by comic novelist Jean Paul Richter (whom Hegel nominated for an honorary doctorate after a night of carousing in 1817). But although Hegel might have been comparatively late to try his hand at this, he had unequaled follow-through; he was the only one among his contemporaries who developed this new intuition about the philosophical significance of art into a truly comprehensive theory of tragedy and comedy. His philosophy not only places tragedy and comedy within a systematic hierarchy of the arts, it also includes a comprehensive treatment of their most influential historical forms and integrates them into a philosophy of human activity as a whole. Although theories of this kind of art would continue to attract powerful proponents throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—one thinks of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Adorno as among the most notable figures in this tradition—none of Hegel's major philosophical successors would treat both tragedy and comedy with as much systematic thoroughness or historical detail.

Despite the prominence of these genres in Hegel's thought, this is the first volume to explore the full extent of Hegel's interest in tragedy and comedy. The thirteen new essays included here range from Hegel's early works on theology and politics to his later philosophy of fine art. They cover his treatments of both ancient and modern writers and pursue his reflections of these genres beyond his aesthetics into his political, religious, and historical writings. Although there are still omissions to make up for in the future, this volume provides the reader with a better idea of the scope and breadth of Hegel's reflections on these genres than any other existing book or collection of essays.

Hegel's lectures on aesthetics offer a useful vantage point from which we can see why tragedy and comedy are so important to his philosophy in general and why it is useful to consider them together.' In those lectures, Hegel argues that poetry is the most perfect of the fine arts and that drama is the highest form of poetry. These claims entail that tragedy and comedy—the two primary forms of drama on his account—are to be placed at the very pinnacle of the fine arts.' Given Hegel's long history of engaging with these genres throughout his writings, it is perhaps unsurprising that they end up in this exalted position. But it is worth asking why they occupy this important place in his final thoughts on art.

Hegel's argument for the supremacy of drama over other forms of art and poetry is impossible to fully extricate from the rest of his system, but it is easy to state the basic standard he uses to arrive at his judgment, for he is very explicit that every artwork and every genre is to be evaluated in terms of its capacity to reveal the deepest and most comprehensive truths. "Art has no other mission [keinen anderen Beruf]," he says, "but to bring before sensuous contemplation the truth as it in the spirit."' So when he claims that tragedy and comedy are the highest forms of art this is because he

thinks they are forms that best realize this end, forms that are most capable of revealing the deepest truths of spirit.

We can get some idea of the kind of truth he is concerned with through an understanding of why he thinks drama is so well suited to convey it. The feature of drama that he singles out in this context is its capacity to render the inner lives of human beings, particularly their aims and passions, fully visible in external actions and events. For Hegel, nonlinguistic arts inevitably fail to express the full depths of human spiritual life, and other literary genres fail because they overemphasize either the internal and subjective side of life (as in lyric poetry) or the external and objective side (as in epic poetry). The fine balance between the inner and outer experience that is characteristic of drama is crucial for Hegel because it allows tragedy and comedy to fully represent the process through which the collisions and conflicts that occur between individuals with different aims and passions reach their ultimate resolution.

Tragedy and comedy are superior to any other form of art, then, precisely because they are best at depicting the way human strife and conflict necessarily point toward a final resolution. They give us a vision of complete reconciliation (Versohnung) between spirit and the natural and social world in which it finds itself. Hegel's emphasis on reconciliation already raises many difficult questions about whether reconciliation is the right standard to use in judging artworks, whether it is true that the contradictions and conflicts of spirit and nature are ultimately reconciled, and whether drama in fact reveals this truth. But there is, further, a more obvious problem, which is that even on Hegel's own account, tragedy and comedy seem to present us with whit he himself calls "completely opposed" ideas as to what the reconciliation of spirit and nature might amount to.

For tragedy, reconciliation occurs in the social world itself. This is easiest to illustrate with Hegel's famous reading of Sophocles's Antigone. For Hegel, the tragic conflict between Antigone and Creon over whether Antigone's brother should receive funeral rites embodies a collision in the social order between independently justified ethical spheres or powers: here, the family and the state. The resolution of this conflict, even when it leads to the destructionion of the individual or his or her interests—as it does with Antigone and Creon, respectively—vindicates the eternal justice of the social order itself, which requires these independent but equally necessary powers in order to realize itself in the world. In tragedy, the eternal substance of the ethical order thus emerges as victorious. The experience of tragedy is an experienice of the divine not as the object of religious contemplation but as a lower that manifests itself in the world of human action.

But in comedy, reconciliation takes a very different form. It does not occur in the social world at all but rather within the individual subject who proves him or herself to be superior to the objective world in its entirety.

conflicts between striving individuals in comedy are ultimately misunderstandings, or they are trivial or absurd. They are self-dissolving or can be resolved merely by coming to our senses or by coming to know ourselves better. In these contexts, it is not the eternal justice of the social order that emerges as victorious but rather the individual subject who shows her superiority to all conflict, to be the "overlord of whatever happens in the real world.' Comedy thus provides us with an experience of infinite lightheartedness and gives us the confidence to bear even the frustration of our aims and achievements without misery." For Hegel, all drama is a depiction of the divine as it manifests itself in human activity, but here the divine is encountered not as a power in the world that reestablishes the ethical order but as a power of transcending the world of finite human aims; the experience of comedy is thus very close to one of world-dissolving religious ecstasy.

Although this contrast might risk exaggerating the difference between tragedy and comedy in Hegel's overall account, it helps explain some of the characteristic associations that he makes with each genre. Tragedy is more closely aligned to the political realm, to the ancient world, and to objectivity more generally. Comedy is more closely connected with religious experience, to the prosaic modern world, and to human subjectivity. The problem is that these two genres appear to point us in different directions to find reconciliation with life—one points outward to the political and social world, and the other points inward to a new spiritual disposition. The obvious question this opposition raises is whether we should accept Hegel's way of understanding it. Does one of these genres better explain the ultimate truth of human life than the other, or (as one might expect with Hegel) are they both aspects of some higher truth? Since reconciliation is arguably the central aim of Hegel's philosophy, this is a question that goes to the heart of Hegel's project. To answer it, we need to deepen our understanding of the philosophical significance of tragedy and comedy. The following essays will address this issue.

This volume is grouped into three major sections: one on tragedy, one on comedy, and one on history.

The first two essays in the first section address the complicated relationship between Hegel and the greatest living writer of his time, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Goethe was more than a decade older than Hegel and had already established himself as a literary celebrity while Hegel was still in gymnasium, but they would come to know each other as Hegel's star rose in the academy. These essays approach the relationship between these great figures of the Goethezeit from opposite directions: Douglas Finn from the point of view of Hegel's early reception of Goethean tragedy and Eric v. d. Luft from the point of view of Goethe's late reception of Hegel's mature theory of tragedy.

Douglas Finn's essay examines the influence of Goethe's drama on Hegel's early theological writings. He carefully considers Walter Kaufmann's provocative claim that Goethe's Iphigenie auf Tauris (a reworking of the famous Euripidean play) first alerted Hegel to the possibility that Greek ethical life might show us how to overcome divisions and dichotomies in modern life. For Kaufman. Goethe's Iphignie was the hidden model of Hegel's Jesus in The Spirit of Christianity and Its Fate and thus the original source of Hegel's critique of Kantian morality. Finn shows, however, that although both figures share many features—most importantly, they are both what would have been called at the time "beautiful souls"—they respond very differently to the impasses of the circumstances in which they find themselves. Jesus withdraws from society into inwardness, whereas Iphigenia offers forgiveness and the promise of political reconciliation. Over the course of Hegel's philosophical development, the insufficiencies of the former model of the "beautiful soul" become increasingly prominent, and the ideal of forgiveness comes to take on a more central role in his thinking. Finn thus argues that although Goethe's great drama certainly influenced Hegel's early writings, as Kaufmann suggested, it also anticipates insights into the danger of spiritual withdrawal that Hegel himself would not fully understand or express until his later period.

Eric v. d. Luft looks at this same relationship from the other direction: from the point of view of Goethe. Luft shows that Goethe's understanding of Hegel's theory of tragedy was not firsthand but was mediated through the work of Hermann Friedrich Wilhelm Hinrichs, who studied with Hegel at Heidelberg and who might count as Hegel's first major convert. Hinrichs wrote a deeply Hegelian treatise on Sophoclean tragedy, one that Goethe and Johann Peter Eckermann discussed extensively in 1827 (as recounted in Eckermann's famous Gesprache mit Goethe). Luft offers an extensive comparison of Hinrichs's interpretation of tragedy and Goethe's own conception. He explores the grounds of Goethe's summary judgment that the Hegelian interpretation of tragedy reduces the conflicts of Greek drama to a mere expression of ideas and is guilty of excessive moralizing. But Luft also shows that Hegel's theory (as interpreted by Hinrichs) offers something that Goethe's own

more purely dramaturgical approach lacks: an attention to the subtle philosophical issues raised by Greek tragedy.

The next three essays show exactly what kind of philosophical themes Hegel found in Greek tragedies of the classical age.

For Wes Furlotte, Hegel's reading of Eumenides by Aeschylus in his "Natural Law" essay is best understood as inaugurating a kind of critical social theory that Hegel was never able to follow through on. His analysis of the "tragedy of the ethical" enables an innovative dialectical approach to critical social theory that pays attention to the contradictions of modern European social life, but it also ends up short-circuiting the potential of such a theory by heralding the availability of a kind of suprapolitical reconciliation that would obviate the need for political reform or revolution. Furlotte carefully identifies where Hegel's attempt to use tragedy as a means for analyzing historical contradictions is diverted into an attempt to provide a spuriously philosophical or metaphysical resolution of these contradictions, ultimately aestheticizing the political. Furlotte's essay thus attempts to rescue the critical kernel from the reactionary metaphysical shell of Hegel's revolutionary new manner of reading drama.

For Anton Barba-Kay, it is Hegel's famous reading of Sophocles's Antigone that is at issue, and the philosophical theme that is raised concerns the significance of sexual difference—the division of humans into men and women. Barba-Kay points out that a striking feature of the Antigone (as opposed to, say, Oedipus Rex) is that the central conflict of the play is sexualized—the contradiction between the city and the home is made concrete as a difference between men and women. He argues that this feature is essential to Hegel's interest in the play, which Hegel considered the single greatest work of tragedy. This was not because Hegel regarded the conflict between the sexes as of eternal metaphysical significance (as it was sometimes treated by his contemporaries like Schelling and Holderlin) but because he thought that it is only when sexual difference takes on ethical significance that the question of the role of nature in ethical life can be properly raised. Antigone is especially interesting, then, because it documents the very moment in history where human nature became a problem for human culture, something that helps to explain why Hegel's treatment of Antigone occurs at the very beginning of his history of spirit in the Jena Phenomenology.

Allegra de Laurentiis offers a more general account of why Hegel took ancient tragedy as the exemplary form of tragedy itself, one that does not focus on any particular tragedian. She agrees with Furlotte and Barba-Kay that the importance of Greek tragedy for Hegel stems from the insight it gives us into the history of spirit, and like Barba-Kay, she thinks the crucial insight it gives us is into an early and unrepeatable moment in that history, one that she thinks involved for Hegel a transformation of human nature. For de Laurentiis's Hegel, Greek tragedy reenacts the moment that humanity entered into political life; that is, the historical moment when the irreconcilable but seemingly equally justified claims of conflicting individuals in the state of nature were first made commensurable and adjudicable by being subsumed under the rule of law. The perennial importance of these tragedies is that they serve as a reminder of this transformation, which forestalls a relapse into pre-political forms of life and their correspondingly inadequate forms of self-consciousness.

In the final essay in this section, Rachel Falkenstern offers a complementary account of Hegel's theory of modern tragedy—particularly Shakespearean tragedy—one that emphasizes the distinct gains in self-consciousness that modern tragic heroes display but that also points to the limits of their self-consciousness. The puzzle she sets out to resolve has to do with the problem of reconciling Hegel's claim that all tragic heroes must be one-sidedly fixed on their aims and his claim that modern life is characterized precisely by a greater degree of subjective depth and freedom, which seems flatly incompatible with such one-sidedness. What she shows is that Shakespearean

heroes are one-sided in a different way than ancient heroes, a way that is compatible with Hegel's account of the deepening of subjectivity. For example, though we might think of Hamlet as the epitome of vacillation and thus a counterexample to Hegel's claims about the importance of one-sidedness, Hegel emphasized that Hamlet was never doubtful about what he was to do—only how he was to do it. Although figures like Hamlet show a clear advance over the self-consciousness of the ancient tragic hero, this advance is not the end of the story. It is only another stage on the road to true or complete freedom for Hegel (the sort of freedom that is only on display in later tragedies, like those of Schiller).

The next group of essays concerns the comparatively neglected topic of Hegel's theory of comedy. Comedy plays a particularly prominent role in Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit; in the penultimate chapter of that book, comedy (particularly Aristophanic comedy) is cast as the final form of "art religion," the form that follows tragedy and prepares the way for the transition to revealed religion. The first two essays on Hegel's theory of comedy, by Peter Wake and Paul Wilford, respectively, offer contrasting views on what comedy is doing in these sections of the Phenomenology.

For Wake, Greek tragedy and comedy offer different means for contemplating the diminution and flight of the gods at the end of the classical period. Tragedy represents the beginning of this process, for in tragedy the gods show themselves to be subject to fate, an eternal justice that asserts itself through the downfall of any individual who oversteps his or her bounds. But comedy completes the secularization of Greek consciousness: for the laughter and ridicule of comedy liberate us from all authority, even that of fate, thus providing us with an experience of the individual self as the negative power through which the gods themselves vanish. According to Wake, comedy represents the complete triumph and elevation of the human subject over all external limits, thus amounting to a kind of secular self-transcendence. He concludes with a suggestion that comedy's primary defect is that the liberation it offers us is both fleeting and ultimately empty—leaving us with nothing but grief at the death of the God.

Wilford's essay picks up at this very point. According to Wilford, Hegel's presentation of Aristophanic comedy in the Phenomenology of Spirit teaches that Aristophanic comedy is not just irreverent and iconoclastic but ultimately nihilistic. It reveals a form of self-consciousness that exalts itself above any determinate norms, over any sense of something higher than self-dissolving subjectivity. Its propensity to lightness thus leads ultimately to despair, an unhappy consciousness, and a sense that there is nothing worth taking seriously. Wilford argues that the transition from comedy to revealed religion is supposed to show that overcoming the nihilistic effects of Aristophanic comedy requires the advent of a form of religion in which the divine is not incompatible with such subjective inwardness but in fact incarnated in a single, self-conscious individual. This is a sense of the divine that is finally adequate to the new depths of subjectivity that comedy has revealed, a "divinity equal to the power of self-consciousness." This, of course, is Christianity.

In the next essay, Martin Donougho offers a general history of Hegel's reflections on comedy, one that returns to the question of the nature of the experience of comedy and provides a new answer as to the kind of truth of spirit that it is supposed to reveal. On Donougho's reading, the experience of the comic is not one of simple negation—the death of God, or nihilism in Wilford's sense—but negation balanced with sympathetic identification with the characters in the comedy. Donougho shows that Hegel's later lectures on aesthetics continue to view Aristophanes both as the very paradigm of comedy and as the end of the classical ideal of art, but he offers a more complex picture of his accomplishment than we get in the Phenomenology—one where Aristophanes's critical, satirical edge is counterbalanced with seriousness and true patriotism. And even though Hegel never

retracted his admiration for Aristophanes, Donougho points to moments in his lectures where Hegel entertained a more positive view of modern comedy, one alive to its own specific virtues. For example, Hegel showed an unusual and surprising enthusiasm for Lustspiel, a form of contemporary light comedy, writing a long review of a now obscure comedy by Ernst Raupach. And he showed great admiration for the stories of T. G. H Appel. These examples, Donoguho argues, suggest that Hegel appreciated the capacity of modern comic art, alongside other seemingly minor artistic genres, to spiritualize the ordinary and quotidian and that he considered these virtues to be specific to modern comedy.

Jeffrey Church shows that Hegel's remarks on comedy are not limited to his aesthetic and religious contexts. Church's essay offers a provocative and original meditation on Hegel's theory of public opinion as involving important comic elements. It is well known that Hegel had deeply ambivalent feelings about the prominence of public opinion in modern societies, claiming that public opinion deserves to both be respected (as to its being the public's opinion) and despised (as to its content). Hegel hoped that the poor judgment of the public would be improved to some degree by the public's exposure to the arguments offered in the Estates Assembly. Church shows how the relationship between these bodies can be usefully modeled on the relationship between an audience and a performed drama. One might imagine that the drama in question is a tragedy in the Hegelian sense—a conflict between two equally justified but one-sided arguments—but he argues that Hegel himself treats it as comedic in nature, as a collision that comes to nothing. By seeing how poorly the public's own complaints fare against the educated insights expressed in the Assembly, the people learn that their own objections to the government are self-dissolving and self-undermining. They are not so much educated to better opinions as they are brought to take their own opinions less seriously. Church concludes with some interesting reflections on the role of comic cheerfulness in our own more democratic political condition.

Although all of the previous essays touch on the historical dimension of Hegel's theory of tragedy and comedy, the third and final section of the volume looks at the tragic and comic dimensions of Hegel's theory of history.

Fiacha Heneghan's essay considers whether Hegel's philosophy of world history can be defended against the common accusation that it is too optimistic by emphasizing its tragic aspects. Heneghan argues that Hegel's treatment of history explicitly incorporates two features from his treatment of tragedy. The first of these is Hegel's claim that the tragic hero's one-sided dedication to her ethical principle leads her into an experience of conflict with something that appears alien to her but that is in reality a part of the hero, a fact that she is able to recognize only in her self-destruction (if then). The second feature is the structural logic of tragic situations, which involves not the conflict between right and wrong but conflict between two ethical spheres that, in history, takes the form of the conflict between states embodying lower and higher principles of freedom. Though both of these elements go some distance in addressing worries that Hegel's philosophy of history is excessively optimistic or theodicean, Heneghan concludes that they do not go far enough; Hegel's theory of history is, despite these elements, still indefensibly optimistic.

Jason M. Yonover's essay focuses on the tragedy of the world-historical individual. We have already seen that Hegel claims that tragedy in the world involves not a conflict between right and wrong but between two rights. Since, as Yonover emphasizes, world-historical individuals take part in just such tragic conflicts, it is natural to ask whether such individuals—individuals who collide with existing ethical orders and who represent new and higher principles—are ultimately justified in contravening what their contemporaries take as right and just. Yonover argues that Hegel's view on this is quite complex—Hegel does not think such individuals are simply in the wrong, nor are they simply in the

right. Yonover argues that, on Hegel's account, world-historical individuals have an absolute right that in the final analysis outdoes any wrong they may do, though this is only properly understood after the fact. Yonover holds that Hegel's retrospective justification of such figures is crucial to his vindication of the legitimacy of revolutionary action and so of great importance to any contemporary appropriation of Hegel's ethical thought.

In the final essay in this volume, Allen Speight turns to comic dimensions of history. He draws attention to a striking claim in Hegel's Lectures on Fine Art, a claim that the same principle that gives us the basis of our distinction between tragedy and comedy also provides the basis for the distinction between the ancient and the modern. This suggests the somewhat paradoxical claim that Hegel's treatment of Aristophanes (Hegel's paradigm of the comic art form) might offer us a key to understanding his theory of modernity. Speight points to three possible ways in which this might be so. First, Aristophanes anticipates the theatricality of modern life. Second, Aristophanic comedy represents the very endpoint of all artistic practice: the triumph of the subjective. And, finally, his comedies show us how art can reflect on its own role in life, dissolving not into nihilism or an unambiguous affirmation of life but into a genuinely philosophic meditation on the conditions of human existence. <>

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PHILOSOPHY BY OTHER MEANS: THE ARTS IN PHILOSOPHY AND PHILOSOPHY IN THE ARTS by Robert B. Pippin [University of Chicago Press, 9780226770772]

Throughout his career, Robert B. Pippin has examined the relationship between philosophy and the arts. With his writings on film, literature, and visual modernism, he has shown that there are aesthetic objects that cannot be properly understood unless we acknowledge and reflect on the

philosophical concerns that are integral to their meaning. His latest book, **PHILOSOPHY BY OTHER MEANS**, extends this trajectory, offering a collection of essays that present profound considerations of philosophical issues in aesthetics alongside close readings of novels by Henry James, Marcel Proust, and J. M. Coetzee.

The arts hold a range of values and ambitions, offering beauty, playfulness, and craftsmanship while deepening our mythologies and enriching the human experience. Some works take on philosophical ambitions, contributing to philosophy in ways that transcend the discipline's traditional analytic and discursive forms. Pippin's claim is twofold: criticism properly understood often requires a form of philosophical reflection, and philosophy is impoverished if it is not informed by critical attention to aesthetic objects. In the first part of the book, he examines how philosophers like Kant, Hegel, and Adorno have considered the relationship between art and philosophy. The second part of the book offers an exploration of how individual artworks might be considered forms of philosophical reflection. Pippin demonstrates the importance of practicing philosophical criticism and shows how the arts can provide key insights that are out of reach for philosophy, at least as traditionally understood.

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Part One: The Arts in Philosophy

Part Two: Philosophy in the Arts

Reviews

Derek Attridge, University of York: "This collection of essays addresses the perennial question of the relation between philosophy and aesthetic criticism with cogency and originality. It's hard to think of anyone better qualified to explore this question, as Pippin has made major contributions both to the study of modern German philosophy and to philosophical approaches to aesthetic objects, notably painting, literary fiction, and film."

Michael Wood, Princeton University: "When seeking to bring together two distinct practices or disciplines it is all too easy to confuse them or lose sight of what is most interesting about each. Pippin avoids this fate with remarkable grace and precision. His philosophical questions illuminate literature and art, and his interpretations of particular works invite a philosophical connection without depending on it. A wonderful, infinitely interesting project."

David Bromwich, Yale University: "These essays display the enormous range of Pippin's intelligence as a commentator on philosophy and literature. Whether as an expounder of Hegel's aesthetics or an interpreter of self-knowledge in *What Maisie Knew*, he offers discoveries that always reward the attention he demands."

Excerpt: A Continuation

What follows is an attempt to develop an approach to understanding aesthetic objects. The approach is a form of criticism that I want to call philosophical, a contribution to philosophy, even if not in the analytic and discursive form traditionally characteristic of academic philosophy. The claim is twofold: that criticism properly understood often requires a form of philosophic reflection, and that philosophy is impoverished if it is not informed by critical attention to aesthetic objects. Misunderstandings are inevitable in this context. A philosophical illumination of artworks and a philosophy illuminated by attention to artworks are not offered as a delimitation of the only or main value of the arts. The arts are valuable for all sorts of reasons: enjoyment, play, beauty, or simply as an enrichment of the human experience of the human. Different works have different ambitions, some closer to the ambition of craftsmanship, some closer to the ambitions of mythology. This notion of philosophical illumination applies where it does and doesn't apply where it doesn't.' I'll begin by trying to contextualize the project.

This volume is a continuation of attempts made in other work, in four books on film— **HOLLYWOOD WESTERNS AND AMERICAN MYTH** (2010), **FATALISM IN AMERICAN FILM NOIR** (2012), **THE PHILOSOPHICAL HITCHCOCK** (2017), and **FILMED THOUGHT** (2019)— in an earlier work on literature, **HENRY JAMES AND MODERN MORAL LIFE** (2000), and in a volume on the philosophical dimensions of visual modernism, **AFTER THE BEAUTIFUL** (2013). In the discussion of various aesthetic objects in these books, whether of filmed or fictional narratives, or visual objects suffused with intelligence and purpose, the claim was that we could not fully understand the works, or understand them at all, without somehow dealing with the fact that integral to their meaning was some clearly philosophical issue, raised in a way that invites and guides reflection.

In the case of Henry James, the attempt was to show what moral experience in later modernity had become: an emerging form of life in which conventional reliance on an assumed hierarchy of values, role-defined obligations, religion, or a shared sense of moral rules had collapsed, but in which some sense of the inappropriateness of mere self-seeking had survived. The value of James's phenomenology of this new moral experience is that he does not suggest through his characters' reflections and actions that some new moral consensus and general principle has emerged. It is the absence of any such consensus that allows James to portray contingent forms of social interaction and dependence that force characters with some good faith to find their way to what we can now be said to owe each other in various cases difficult to compare with each other and so difficult to generalize from. I can imagine that economic or social research and analysis could also help with this sort of exploration, but I find it hard to imagine how either empirical research or a philosophic insistence on some new principle or law could illuminate such an unprecedented situation, our situation. That situation seems to me much more accessible to philosophically minded literary critics like Lionel Trilling: "Now and then it is possible to observe the moral life in process of revising itself, perhaps by reducing the emphasis it formerly placed upon one or another of its elements, perhaps by inventing and adding to itself a new element, some mode of conduct or of feeling which hitherto it had not regarded as essential to virtue. This ready recognition of change in the moral life is implicitin our modern way of thinking about literature" (Trilling 1982,1).

In the case of Hollywood westerns, in following the stories of the transition from a prelegal to a bourgeois rule of law, no intelligent viewer could avoid reflecting on the nature of the political allegiance necessary for that transition, on how there could arise the bond that unites subjects to one another in a collective submission to political order and the rule of law. It is highly unlikely that this acceptance has much to do with an appreciation of the quality of the argument strategies for exiting the state of nature or counterfactual state of original contracting. Some appreciation of the psychological dynamics of political life is necessary, especially American political life in the aftermath of the Civil War (the shadow of which still looms over our political life today). This political psychology is not well captured by the unavoidable abstractions and conceptual distinctions in traditional philosophical terms and is not accessible by any empirical research program.

In the case of the best film noir, the problem was whether we adequately understand common assumptions about intentional action, an issue that requires an exploration of the nature of self-knowledge and its relation to knowledge of others. Those assumptions are that ex ante reflection leads to the formation of intentions to act, which intentions explain and possibly justify the action (in some accounts, cause the action). If some narrative could show credible cases where characters have no idea what they are doing or why, and where their ability to understand the possible implications of what they do is undermined by an ever more corrupt and chaotic social and political world, the sources of whose corruption are maddeningly hidden and unaccountable, then a number of these common assumptions cannot hold. Not only do these films pose as problems issues like "what it is like" to live in a world like this, and how that illumination might bear on any reflection about agency, responsibility, and individuality, as if such issues were just provocations for reflection, but the narrative itself offers us a distinct form of reflection. (The "results" of such reflection are not comforting.)

With Hitchcock, the interpretive question is why his films, especially the most ambitious ones, concentrate so often on how bad we are at understanding each other, why the wrong person is often so confidently blamed for something he or she is innocent of. The general default position in Hitchcock is "unknowingness," not complete ignorance as in a thoroughgoing other minds skepticism, but a depiction of our fragile (if also ultimately correctable) grasp of what others mean to do or say and why; who they are, who I am. This all reaches a kind of cinematic and philosophical culmination in Vertigo, the subject of a scene-by-scene analysis in **The Philosophical Hitchcock**. The important contribution made by his films about this condition of unknowingness is showing us not merely that it exists, at a far deeper and more frequent and consequential level than we appreciate, but also how we might begin to think about how to live with this condition, honestly, without self-deceit or wishful thinking. It is not that he reaches any "conclusion" about this; it is not as if there is any reachable conclusion (as is so often the case and sometimes confidently denied in philosophy). The experiences involved are too variegated, not suitable for any generalization. But any reflection on the issue can certainly be informed, both negatively and positively, by what those films show us.

The collection **Filmed Thought** attempts to show that such an approach does not require the contrast and choice between "immanentist" and "contextualist" approaches to aesthetic objects. Many of the films discussed in the volume can easily be shown to have a bearing on both sorts of questions. One of the main arguments in After the Beautiful is not only that there is no tension between these approaches, but that they are complementary and indeed mutually required. The main continuous task in the book is to show how the films at issue involve a demand for philosophical reflection as part of the attempt to understand them, that we could not understand the point of showing us what they do, as they do, without such reflection. Films and aesthetic objects generally are said to embody implicitly a self-reflective sense of their own form, and so a conatus

toward the realization of that form, the point or purpose of making the object. Often this sense of purpose is minimal and unambitious, but in the cases under consideration, that is not so, and this more ambitious purpose cannot be described as anything other than philosophical. And the attempt was to show that this is true not only of films that might be identified as art films, like those by the Dardenne brothers or Malick or Almodovar, but also in commercial Hollywood cinema: Hitchcock, Nicholas Ray, Polanski, and Douglas Sirk.

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Philosophy and Interpretation

What we now call criticism in the arts descended from so-called high or source criticism of the Bible. In the modern age, roughly from the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century, the tasks of aesthetic criticism—literary, art, and music—came to be primarily interpretive and evaluative. Critics, both academic and journalistic, are supposed to help us understand a work and appreciate its quality and value. The object of attempts at understanding is said to be "meaning": why the work has the appearance and texture it has, how the parts fit into a whole, what the purpose of the work is, how some otherwise obscure element in the work makes the sense it does, how the symbolic and allegorical dimensions should be understood, as well as biographical and contextual details about its place in the author's oeuvre, its relation to her personal history, the work's historical period and audience, and so forth, all on the assumption that this should help us in that task of understanding the art. This list is only the beginning of several more characterizations of "meaning," and that already indicates that the term is so polysemous that it might not get us very far in any general account of criticism. But we can say that criticism, understood in this general way, should not be taken to be the exclusive domain of specialists, trained in a distinct "science' In this very general sense criticism is simply an extension and deepening of any intelligent encounter between a work and a reader, viewer, or listener, an extension and deepening because some readers and viewers are presumed to have had more experience in these attempts and a broader range of objects to call to mind in pursuing a critical understanding. But any responder to a work has to "follow" the plot, say, its events and characters, understand the intentions and reactions of characters, how the past might bear on a present, whether a claim is self-deceived or hypocritical, whether a character is lying and if so why, why a line in a poem follows another line with which it seems to have no connection, what relation to the beholder a painting seems to assume, whether a revelation is credible or misleading, and any reader or viewer might also be moved to ask about formal characteristics of the work, the point of a narrative or prose style, or an author's intentions in,

say, quoting something from a foreign language in a poem. Each of these interpretive questions implicitly appeals to some philosophical understanding of the questions themselves, and any philosophical position is, or can be with the right attentiveness, distinctively informed by the imagined presentation: What is it to understand another's intentions? Can we? How does a person's past bear on the present? Is there such a thing as self-deceit? Can there be? How is it distinguished from hypocrisy? What is the nature of the wrong done another by lying? What is a poem that its sequence of lines can be difficult to follow, or that allusions can be made to other languages? How can a painting be said to assume or construct a relation to a beholder?' Are there different assumptions in different periods? Why? How are they to be discovered? "Interpretation" in this sense is always implicitly philosophical, and many philosophical claims always already assume that a case under consideration is a case relevant to, potentially clarifying for, the philosophical problem.

This does not mean that any serious critic must constantly be working out these philosophical problems as she attempts to understand the work, at least not in the language of traditional

philosophy. The issues can be engaged with, clarified, misleading directions excluded, all in the language of criticism itself, as the examples of Frye, Girard, Trilling, and Cavell cited in this chapter, and the two chapters on Fried in what follows, demonstrate. Moreover, critics who have written on the issue of whether literature can be a form of knowledge often cite the difference between "understanding" a text and possessing "knowledge." But if this claim about the inevitable role of philosophical reflection (in its own critical modality) is correct, that difference cannot be right. This raises the question of the nature of philosophical knowledge, and that is a weighty topic in itself, but we might do well to remember that long ago when Aristotle distinguished understanding and knowledge, the former was a superior form of knowledge, metaphysics.

In this sense, interpretation is simply identical to fully experiencing a work as a work of art; everybody does it, must do it. It has nothing to do with merely "translating" the work into another version of content or finding something hidden. If there is something to understand, something that raises a question, demands something of us beyond what a first experience reveals, it is "right there." It simply needs to be understood. A second or third or fourth reading or viewing is not boring deeper until something hidden is found; it is appreciating better and better what is simply "present." The fact that we feel the need for rereading or re-viewing is interesting in itself. It means that we sense that the novel, say, "knows something," and that by having read the novel, we now know something we did not, but we cannot yet say what it is and we know that another look or viewing or reading is necessary. That deeply felt and often deeply gratifying moment of insight when it becomes clear what it is we know but could not say is not something we can offer to another simply by formulating and saying it. We have to help another see it, feel that moment as well in the experience of the work. This insight is not subject to the kind of proof one could marshal for a scientific claim; it is not a philosophical argument so that denying it would be contradictory; but it has its own kind of standing. Denying its possibility would come at the cost of denying an enormous amount in human life, from seeing that someone is lying to realizing that an expression of love is sincere but self-deceived. Such interpretation is the most important task of teaching, although it can also provoke defensiveness and a kind of sullen resistance by some students, resentful that they are being told there was something important they "missed." But the injunction that we should "stop interpreting" a work and just "experience" it is like demanding that we just look at the words on a page and not ask what they mean.

The object of the second task of criticism is the work's quality, an assessment of its aesthetic merits in comparison with other works and in itself. Traditionally, an enterprise like this was thought to rely on a critic's taste, and the assumption was that wide exposure to a variety of works could sharpen sensibilities and produce authoritative arbiters of taste. This notion of assessment has fallen out of favor, subject to understandable skepticism about cultural, class, and gender biases. But a different sort of assessment of a work's significance or importance is still understood as a task of criticism. Nonaesthetic factors are also sometimes invoked: whether the work exposes an injustice or corruption or gives voice to voiceless people. A work's importance could be tied to what it tells us about the audience that appreciates or consumes it, or even whether it is a good thing that the work exists at all, whether its inevitable effects on readers are morally suspect.

In some accounts, a work's value or significance is assessed in a very different way. Value is said to reside in whether the work can be said to reveal a kind of truth, for example, a way for a historical community to come to know itself otherwise inaccessible and perhaps inconsistent with its avowed view of its own values and principles, or whether the work can reveal some aspect of the human psychological, social, or even ontological world. This is the task of "philosophical criticism," and it has emerged in various ways since Hegel and the German romantic movement introduced its possibility. One prominent school of thought developed out of Hegel's social theory and his approach to works

like Sophocles's **ANTIGONE**, Diderot's **RAMEAU'S NEPHEW**, and his account of the historicity of art in his Lectures. This approach—the arts as a form of historical self-knowledge—extended through the Marxist tradition, Lukács, Adorno, Lowenthal, Raymond Williams, and in a different way, Walter Benjamin.' The idea was not what is sometimes casually assumed, that the task of criticism is to show how the arts support and perpetuate a class ideology, or to show that the arts were produced to do this, but that the arts could help us understand what was happening to us in a historical period, could reveal the tensions and even "contradictions," in general the irrationality or the unbearable pressures created in the way a society organized and regulated itself. One especially interesting aspect of this approach has been a claim to demonstrate the inseparability of various historically distinctive moral psychological issues in an individual from the social dynamics of a time.' And should it not be a function of philosophy to be able to say that some notion or norm is no longer available to us, has gone dead, that only a very different way of thinking is available to us, and all of that because of what we can be taught by the arts? Consider Trilling again, and his account of Rameau's Nephew and Hegel's view of the text: "In refusing its obedient service to the state power and to wealth it [Hegelian "spirit"] has lost its wholeness; its selfhood is disintegrated'; the self is 'alienated' from itself. But because it has detached itself from imposed conditions, Hegel says that it has made a step in progress. He puts it that the existence of the self on its own account is, strictly speaking, the loss of itself. The statement can also be made the other way round: 'Alienation of self is really self-preservation" (Trilling 1982, 38).

Or consider the more radical claim put by Hugo von Hofmannsthal in the words of "Lord Chandos" in his famous Letter:

> But all that is ended. The word-mirror is broken, irreparably, it seems . . . The words on the page will no longer stand up and be counted, each proclaiming, "I mean what I mean!" . . . There used to be a time, we believe, when we could say who we were. Now we are just performers speaking our parts. The bottom has dropped out. We could think of this as a tragic turn of events were it not that it is hard to have respect for whatever was the bottom that dropped out—it looks to us like an illusion now. (Hofmannsthal 2005, 19)

The only philosophers attempting to give this thought philosophical expression at around the same time were Nietzsche and Heidegger. It is the same thought in this literary case, but it is indispensable for philosophy that Chandos is seen "living it out," that we see how he might have come to this thought and what it does to him to think it. Otherwise, we would not have understood the thought.

Another approach, associated with Schelling, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Heidegger, saw the arts as aiming at a "disclosure" of the real, of being as such, not empirical or social reality, but "what there truly is," beyond the appearances, the traditional task of metaphysics in philosophy. (There is an unusual confluence here with Lionel Trilling's quite philosophical Sincerity and Authenticity, in which he makes use of literature to show not only that there has been a sea change in the availability of concepts but also that that we now seem to need literature and the arts to be able to have any genuine or even vicarious sense of our own being.) All of this involves treating the arts as forms of reflective thought, sometimes historically and socially indexed in various ways, sometimes not, aiming at a kind of truth. This view is of course not the same as various philosophies ("theories") of the arts, or the impossibility of the arts, and in some ways at odds with such approaches, but I don't take up that issue in what follows. (The more radical view here, which is sometimes suggested by the philosophers just cited, is that philosophy is no longer possible except as art and aesthetic criticism, perhaps one art in particular, as in Girard's (1965) claim: "If the novel is the source of the greatest existential and social truth in the nineteenth century, it is because only the novel has turned its

attention to the regions of existence where spiritual energy has taken refuge" [111]. Schelling's early lectures on all the arts make this point even more insistently.)

But even if we don't go that far, still, why "indispensable"? An aspect of Hegel's answer emerges in something he says about poetry: "The subject matter of poetry is not the universal as it is abstracted in philosophy. What it has to represent is reason individualized" (Hegel 1975, 977). This says at once that there is a "universal" dimension to a lyric poet's expression, so that a poem is not merely a psychological record of some reaction or inspiration. It should be regarded as "reason individualized:' This is to be contrasted with the level of abstraction necessary for discursive philosophy to do its work, which can certainly be valuable for lots of reasons, but which also can lose touch with the life of the concept as used. The aspiration here for the arts is linked to the claim for an explanatory role for the "ideal types" of Weberians, the "perspicuous representations" of the Wittgensteinians, the "concrete universal" of Hegelians in other contexts, and the unique moments of disclosure in what Heideggerians describe as a "happening" or "event" of truth. Hegel puts it another way in this passage: "In this [beautiful] object the self becomes concrete in itself since it makes explicit the unity of Concept and reality, the unification, in their concreteness, of the aspects hitherto separated, and therefore abstract, in the self and its object" (Hegel 1975, 114). A certain sort of philosophical attentiveness is necessary in interpretation so that both criticism and philosophy avoid "the abstract," and so that any work's "concept" of itself is appreciated in its concreteness, in its "unity" with reality. That must mean: in its distinct mode of truth. But this does not mean that having exercised such attentiveness, one can carry away from the reading some bundle of bits of knowledge, a set of propositions, a "moral" That would be the land of abstraction. For the interpreter not to be able to say what he carries away, even as he carries something substantive away that has something to do with knowledge, is the achievement of the work of the most important art and great criticism together. (There are rough analogies. Someone who asked a man who had been through a war what he had learned from the war, and expected some general moral truth, would have grossly misunderstood what that question could mean about such an experience; likewise, if he were bewildered if the soldier simply recounted an anecdote. The role of parables in the Christian Bible would be another analogy.)

This all must also mean that not only can a reader or a viewer get a text or painting "wrong," can miss ambiguities, ironies, formal patterns, or simply misunderstand the plot, but a text that purports to have some purchase on truth can be "wrong" as well. There were certainly persons who behaved as depicted in Griffith's The Birth of a Nation, but something goes wrong, is disturbingly "off," about the way they are represented. More often, the work can have nothing to do with the human world as it actually is; it deals instead with caricatures, stereotypes, adolescent fantasies, and so is simply irrelevant. The films of Quentin Tarantino seem to me like this, or Marvel comic superhero movies.

Organization

The chapters that follow are divided into two parts. Since Hegel's views on the significance of the arts are at issue in much of the work done above and lie behind the essays that follow, there is an opening section on the pre-Hegelian appearance of the problem of the relation between the arts and philosophy, aspects of Hegel's own understanding of the issue, and the three essays on approaches to modernism in the arts that I want to say are downstream from Hegel's influence.

The discussion in chapter 2 of Kant's skepticism about the philosophical importance or even the moral worth of the tragedies, ancient and modern, is a reminder of what sort of shift in sensibilities was necessary in Hegel and romanticism for a response to Kant and reformulation of the issue to be possible. More important, Kant's hostility to the idea that we might learn something from an experience of tragic poetry, or at least anything positive, opens a door to a much larger issue specific

to tragedy: whether there is a deep incompatibility between the "tragic point of view" (somewhat paradoxically already a kind of philosophical claim) and philosophy itself, at least any philosophy that understands itself as a rational, sense-making enterprise. It might be that the most famous attempts to account for and integrate into some rational order what is implied about the human condition in tragedy are much more attempts to domesticate the challenge raised by tragic drama, and so constitute a strategy of cooption, rather than genuine understanding. The arts, or some of them, might be said to contribute to philosophy by being a challenge to its ambitions. Just so with tragedy; when we encounter what we badly need to know but cannot, know that we cannot, we thereby confront another form of knowledge and must begin exploring another: how, therefore, to live.

The three chapters on Hegel attempt to account for various dimensions of his understanding of the relation between philosophy and the arts, evaluate the status of his use of literature in the philosophical project of the Phenomenology of Spirit, show in what way, and why, Hegel transformed philosophical "aesthetics" into a theory of art, and describe his understanding of the relation between painting and a philosophical understanding of "subjectivity."

There then follow two chapters on the art historian and art critic Michael Fried. I include Fried's understanding of painting, photography and video in that Hegelian downstream I mentioned earlier for several reasons. For one, as the chapter on Hegel on painting already indicates, a major issue in Hegel's understanding of painting is the expression of mindedness, modalities of subjectivity that are not simply represented, as if thematically, but are corporeally present, "enlivened" in a way that arrests the beholder. To do this, the expression must be credible; it must not be experienced as merely offered for the beholder's pleasure, or "theatrically;' but arrest the beholder and hold his or her attention and thereby demand something of such attentiveness. This involves Fried's account of "absorption" (which has a thematic connection to Kant's and Hegel's notion of "enlivening" [*beleben*] as central to the experience of art), the depiction of subjects immersed in their activities, in effect canceling or preventing any acknowledgment of the presence of the beholder, as a strategy in painting in roughly the seventeenth through two-thirds of the nineteenth century, basically beginning, for Fried, with Caravaggio. Fried's account is so rich because, as he notes, this aesthetic exploration of what it is to have a point of view, of "what it is like to be an individual subject" as a possible object of artistic attention, emerges along with the work of Descartes, Shakespeare, Cervantes, and soon thereafter romantic lyric poetry and the novels of individual consciousness. This involves another deep connection between Fried's narrative and two aspects of Hegel's position: for Fried, what accounts for how masterpieces "work," what defines them as substantive achievements in painting (credible, authentic, arresting) must be essentially historically inflected. So, for example, in the course of the nineteenth century, the absorptive strategies begin to fail and new approaches, most dramatically in Manet, turn out to be necessary. Second, and in a deeply related way, the meaning of the painting, if that term can be helpful at all, cannot be said to simply "reside" in the painting, but must lie in the dynamic relation to the beholder. This intersects with Hegel's account of the fine arts in general as modes of communal self-knowledge over time, inseparable from other such development in the other arts, in religion, philosophy, and political life (this goes beyond Fried's aesthetic concerns, but I think it is essential to note the dimension because it undermines the supposed distinction between immanentist and contextualist, or sociopolitical approaches to such meaning). I think the same Hegelian traces are quite visible in Fried's account of the role of intention in photography and video and connect with Hegel's frequent appeal to his theory of agency to account for the role of intentions in artistic meaning.

Finally, I conclude this section with a well-known and explicit anti-Hegelian approach to the same sort of issues, Adorno's in his Aesthetic Theory. The commonality is of course that Adorno also believes that advanced modern art is a major vehicle for understanding late bourgeois social reality,

as well as a distinctive and powerful "negation" of that society. I take issue with some aspects of his account, especially that notion of negation and his understanding of idealism, as a way of showing the value of the Hegelian approach that I don't believe Adorno has appreciated.

Then I turn to five case studies of what I am calling philosophical criticism. I am aware that there is a certain built-in appropriateness for the choice of James, Proust, and Coetzee as such instances. Their works are all intensely and quite consciously philosophically reflective. This might seem to restrict the possible application of philosophical criticism to these sorts of novelists alone, or only to artists in the Western canon. That is certainly not the intention, and if any restriction is implied, it is only to works that make certain demands on the reader or viewer, something just as possible in commercial Hollywood cinema (or Japanese novels or Hindu mythology, etc.) as in high art philosophical novels.

James's risky experimental ambition in *What Maisie Knew* is not only to try to express the often bewildered and pained point of view of a child but also to explore how someone might be said to come to have a "mind of her own" Part of what James shows us in his narrative is how someone can come to regard herself as speaking for herself, convinced that she is "in touch with herself" and is speaking authentically, even while from our point of view, we can see she is at the outset avowing what others who have an interest in her making such avowals desire and have brought about. Genuinely to have a mind of one's own means being able to deal with and in effect fight through such possible skepticism, something very difficult for a girl between the ages of six and twelve. The difficulties of self-knowledge in a situation of even more extreme dependence than usual in modern society (that of a child) requires of any interpreter reflection on how there could be self-knowledge at all in such a situation, what such an achievement would look like; and seeing Maisie heroically achieve it is deeply instructive about all this even if it is not formulable in a "philosophical theory," even if it emerges for us only in the act of "criticism"

The magisterial novel of Marcel Proust poses unique challenges to any philosophical criticism. It should be the easiest case of all: there are philosophical reflections all over the place, offered both by Marcel, the subject of the narration, as he thinks about his experiences of society, art, love, and many other things, and by the narrator, who often interrupts the narration for reflections that appear to be his own. And neither of these voices can be identified as the real author's, Proust's. To make matters even more difficult, it would also be simplistic to deny that any of these views, especially the narrator's, could be Proust's. It some cases, particularly in the later novels, many clearly are. This is itself a philosophical conundrum, a "Nietzschean" one we could call it: how to understand the appeal of various philosophical thoughts to various psychological types, and how or whether one might transcend such psychological dependence. (If we cannot, then all philosophy ought also to be considered the "confessions of the author," as if voiced by a character in a novel, and the task would be to understand why the philosopher needs to believe what she does.) And the case is paradigmatic for literature itself, certainly for any instance of what might appear to be authorial reflections, whether voiced by characters or implicit in what happens. Such reflective content can never be said to be the author's. That is what it means for the work to present a fictional world, even if it is also true (as in the case of Proust) that some of the reflections are the author's. Active, close reading has as its task coming to terms with this complexity, everywhere and at all times. (The problem is quite prominent and complicated in the two Coetzee chapters as well.)

The two issues discussed, subjectivity (what it is like for Marcel to be Marcel; what it is like for us to understand what it is like) and jealousy (why it is so often shown and asserted that love is inseparable from jealousy, why they are two sides of the same coin), are both elements central to

the events of the novel themselves and frequent subjects of reflection in the novel, subject to the conundrum just noted.

The subjectivity issue has three dimensions for Marcel: a skeptical dimension, or how he can know whether anyone else experiences the world as he does; a connected skeptical dimension, or whether some other's subjective life, what it is like to be him, can ever be known, or whether our view of anyone is always a projection connected to what we need to believe; and a final skeptical dimension, whether his own view of his own subjectivity, apparently the most intimate and even incorrigible sense of what it is like to be him, is that, whether the role a fantasy about himself plays in his actual experience is far greater than he suspects. There is no thematic resolution of doubts like these, no answers. But there is a narrative and reflective presentation of what it is like to live with such unavoidable questions and how one might at least be said to come to terms with them, and all of this while the social world of the characters is coming apart on the eve of and then after the First World War.

Jealousy in Proust's novel has an unusual dimension that offers a clue to what we are shown about its nature. Why does it arise? What is the nature of the anxiety at its heart? Is being possessed by it always a sign of some failure of character? Although it is the issue that for Swann and Marcel overwhelmingly dominates their love for, respectively, Odette and Albertine, the experiences narrated seem weirdly epistemological rather than passionate. Lovers are typically enraged by jealousy; they murder because of it. In contrast, in the novel what the characters are obsessed with is the issue of certainty in knowledge. Such certainty is impossible, of course, but that dimension of their anxiety allows Proust to explore not only the reasons for such an obsession and why it has the form it takes in the novel, but also how it is connected to the nature of our knowledge of ourselves and others (such as it is).

In the concluding two chapters on J. M. Coetzee, the philosophic dimension of the imagined characters, scenes, and events, and what those literary elements show us about that dimension, are both quite prominent. The theme identified in his first three novels, **DUSKLANDS**, **IN THE HEART OF THE COUNTRY**, and **WAITING FOR THE BARBARIANS**, amounts to an exploration of "the paradoxes of power" This returns us to recognizable Hegelian ideas, especially the notion prominent in the famous staging of the Master-Slave dialectic in his Phenomenology of Spirit that the exercise of power by the Master, while materially beneficial, is psychologically futile. Some subject demands recognition from another whom he does not recognize, and so the "recognition," status, standing that a subject might achieve is worthless, as worthless as paying someone to be your friend or to tell you how wonderful you are. Hegel's account is linked to a general theory of the relation between independence and dependence in social life, and the experiential depth of what it means to demand recognition from one whom one does not recognize, and for the victim to require recognition from one who does not even recognize him as a potential recognizer—a formulation that already indicates the abstraction of Hegel's treatment—is all transformed in Coetzee's accounts into a fictional treatment that not merely illustrates the issue but contributes to what should count as the fine-grained content of the concepts themselves.

The eight "lessons" Coetzee collected in Elizabeth Costello (which are essentially readings Coetzee began giving instead of lectures) purport to be lectures given by an Australian novelist on a variety of literary and philosophical topics. So the question of the relation between a distinct, individual psychological "voice" and the philosophical commitments of such a person is raised again. There is a kind of back-shadowing orientation at the end of the book for all the lectures that I take as important in understanding the whole project. It is a four-page "Postscript," the last thing we read in the book, a fictional letter from Lord Chandos's wife, he of the famous Hugo von Hofmannsthal

fictional letter cited above. Lady Chandos pleads with Bacon to help; she says that her husband is being destroyed by the burden of his insight ("the wordmirror is broken") and that she is being destroyed by his suffering: "Drowning, we write out of our separate fates. Save us" In the world-historical context set by this orientation, these lessons, I suggest, have to do with how, in such a world, someone could be understood to "justify herself," primarily to herself, but also to others. (Let us say, in the "Lutheran" and not in the "force of the better argument" sense of justification.) Why she refuses to eat animals, why she writes fiction, why she defends the inheritance of Western humanism, why she has lived the life she has. In a Kafkaesque closing lesson, a parable, "At the Gate," Elizabeth addresses and responds to such a demand, both questioning whether she needs to respond and offering the kind of justification anyone should expect from a writer. It is something I would hope is a fitting conclusion to an exploration like this one: not a model to be imitated, not a general thesis to be argued for, but the only kind of response she could give to such a question, of serious philosophical value, even if not expressible in the language of traditional or academic philosophy. <>

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