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SCRIPTABLE

A Bispectral Review of Recent Books

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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.

Contents

THE LIFE OF BREATH IN LITERATURE, CULTURE AND MEDICINE edited by David Fuller, Corinne Saunders and Jane Macnaughton [Palgrave Studies in Literature, Science and Medicine, Palgrave, 9783030744427] Open Access

This open access book studies breath and breathing in literature and culture and provides crucial insights into the history of medicine, health and the emotions, the foundations of beliefs concerning body, spirit and world, the connections between breath and creativity and the phenomenology of breath and breathlessness. Contributions span the classical, medieval, early modern, Romantic, Victorian, modern and contemporary periods, drawing on medical writings, philosophy, theology and the visual arts as well as on literary, historical and cultural studies. The collection illustrates the complex significance and symbolic power of breath and breathlessness across time: breath is written deeply into ideas of nature, spirituality, emotion, creativity and being, and is inextricable from notions of consciousness, spirit, inspiration, voice, feeling, freedom and movement. The volume also demonstrates the long-standing connections between breath and place, politics and aesthetics, illuminating both contrasts and continuities.

Review

"**THE LIFE OF BREATH** was born of a brilliantly varied years-long project in the critical medical humanities which brought together artists, humanists, medical practitioners, scientists and patients to study and perform arts and acts of breathing. This essay collection breaks new ground in establishing the foundational role of respiration in the (inter)subjective workings of desire, the interdependence of interior and exterior environments and 'conspiration'—the often-hidden commonality of breathing. Because we all breathe the same air, 'breath, intimately connected with life, connecting mind and body, opens onto profound—and timeless—ethical questions,' write the editors. Those questions are richly and magisterially addressed in essays that trace histories of living and thinking the breath, and articulate what the editors call 'the potential of the arts to help people live well with breathlessness.' This volume is required reading for anyone, in any discipline, devoted to any of the many arts of living, who recognizes the urgency, today, of returning 'to every living thing—human, plant, and animal—the space and conditions required for its breathing.'" (**Aranye Fradenburg Joy**, Psychoanalyst and Professor Emerita, University of California, Santa Barbara, USA)

"Across centuries and countries, we have one thing in common: we all breathe. But after reading this volume it is not possible to draw breath without a nuanced and awed awareness of what that breath means, how attitudes to it differ and what it means to lack or be denied breath. Ranging from Homeric epic to the twenty-first-century clinic, this mesmerizing collection investigates highly diverse topics, but even more impressive than the variety of essays is their seamless intersection. The ways in which they relate to each other is testament to the ways in which breath and breathing affects every aspect of our body, our environment and our politics. It is easy to say that this is an 'inspiring' collection but such a pun does disservice to the complexity of the topics addressed. Just as it is rare to find a collection of essays of this span so integrated, it is unusual to find a medical humanities topic that is so symbiotically valuable to both medical and humanities communities. From start to finish, this book is a remarkable achievement." (**Laurie Maguire**, Professor of English Language and Literature, University of Oxford, UK)

"An inspired collection of essays on the life, origin, meaning and metaphor of breath over the centuries in the sacred and secular worlds, a wonderful fruition of an interdisciplinary Wellcome research project 'The Life of Breath.' It is timely, as breathing and breathlessness have been brought to the centre of the world's attention in the last year by the devastation and human suffering wrought by the coronavirus. It is rich, bringing to readers' attention the many interpretations of the significance of breath and breathing over millennia. It is definitive—there is no other volume that brings together such depth and breadth on this subject." (**Sara Booth,** Lecturer, University of Cambridge and Honorary Consultant, Cambridge University Hospitals, UK)

"**THE LIFE OF BREATH** is a truly breathtaking panorama of the newly-formed respiratory paradigm of our time, taking in a vast range of philosophical, psychological, religious, medical, artistic and political articulations of the quality of air. Its own rhythm orchestrates the anxious or oppressive constrictions of breath with the many positive ways of producing, unloosing and augmenting it. The volume is truly voluminous in every sense—in the reach of its themes, occasions and instances, and the giant span of its historical focus, from the classical world to the contemporary agonistics of respiration. Breath gives life, but this unbated volume reciprocally imparts new kinds of life to breath." (**Steven Connor**, Director of CRASSH, Grace 2 Professor of English, University of Cambridge, and Fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge, UK)

Excerpt

The Life of Breath: Contexts and Approaches by David Fuller, Jane Macnaughton, and Corinne Saunders

Contexts and Approaches: 'The Age of The Breath'?

'The Age of the Breath': in the view of the philosopher Luce Irigaray, this characterises the late twentieth century and beyond. Irigaray's idea is a variation of the threefold scheme of Christian history of the medieval theologian Joachim da Fiore: the Age of the Father (the Old Testament, the Law), the Age of the Son (the New Testament, freedom from the Law), and the Age of the Spirit (a utopian age of universal love). Like the Age of the Spirit, Irigaray's 'Age of the Breath' potentially transcends major limitations of history, specifically on issues of gender and all that follows from differently conceived relations between men and women. Breath is central to this in her reworking of a major philosophical predecessor, Martin Heidegger. Heidegger is admired: he thought radically, working not only from what had already been thought but attempting to see nakedly from the bases of thinking. Irigaray's critique is not of Heidegger himself, but of Heidegger as representative of even the best in the tradition of Western philosophy, limited by its unrecognised assumption of the thinking subject as male. For Heidegger the primary element is earth—solid, and for Irigaray, masculine. For Irigaray more primary, more utterly essential to Being, is the element of air—fluid, and feminine; the basis of life, the substance of the breath.

One need not accept Irigaray's arguments about gender to see the interest of her claim and the fecundity of its ramifications. Breathing can be recognised (often elicited in retrospective analysis) as a major issue in many areas of twentieth- and twenty-first-century thinking: in philosophy, in feminism, in the arts, in psychoanalysis, in education, in religion, in politics, and in cultural geography, especially ecological issues including the contemporary global problems of air pollution and climate change. As with other conditions of life so axiomatic that attention has often scarcely been paid to them, recent writing in many areas, by bringing breath more into view, opens up a wide variety of new perspectives. In the current context of a global breathing-illness pandemic, COVID-19, with all that has exposed about global health issues and national and international relations, and with myriad

implications as yet far from fully recognised, it can hardly be contested that Irigaray's characterisation of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries has been prescient.

Many areas of thought elicit a related sense of the period, sometimes from quite different starting points. In philosophy, Peter Sloterdijk's Terror from the Air argues that the use of poison gas in World War I was a fundamental reorientation of warfare, attacking not the enemy's body but the enemy's breathing environment. Extended in other terrors of atmospheric violence, from the gas chambers of the extermination camps of World War II to recent attempts to control the weather for military purposes, this has brought the relation of human beings to the atmosphere on which life depends, formerly taken for granted, newly into consciousness. It has also generated a new counter-awareness of the need for atmospheric hygiene and techniques for monitoring and maintaining air quality. The issue of poison gas is only one element in Sloterdijk's argument. He presents the twentieth century as an 'age of explication', meaning that many aspects of existence formerly tacit are brought to more conscious notice and newly explored. As with Irigaray, a central focus is air and breathing, though brought to attention by a quite different route.

Sloterdijk's extension of his argument to include the arts, with Surrealism seen as initiating modes of art as 'atmo-terrorism' designed to attack audiences, has proved less persuasive than his central thesis, and can be detached from his fundamental claim about an age of explication. With the arts Sloterdijk's thesis might more convincingly be extended to the theatre, to the twentieth century's revival of theatrical traditions less verbal, less cerebral, most obviously in the misleadingly named 'theatre of cruelty' of Antonin Artaud, in which the issue is not cruelty in any ordinary sense but the visceral nature of fully theatrical experience. It is a mode of theatre in which text is recognised as only one element, with movement, dance, costume, setting, lighting, but above all the body of the actor in all the viscerality of its emotional experience: the blood, the breath. The total art work with its address to the whole mind–body; but activated not with the familiar defamiliarisation of Brecht, addressing the detached intellect, but with what is permanently unfamiliar to the composed social being: myth, by which, 'using breathing's hieroglyphics', the audience is assaulted, disconcerted, disturbed, as by anxiety, fear, the erotic.6 Artaud's ideal is more truly an aesthetic 'atmo-terrorism' than Sloterdijk's Surrealism.

Sloterdijk's 'age of explication' thesis might more comprehensively be extended not to what the arts are in the twentieth century and beyond but how they are understood, with explication—an ever-increasing sophistication of consciously-applied critical techniques—replacing education through practice (the teaching of rhetoric, drawing, musical performance), with its concomitant address to cultivated intuition. Nevertheless, twentieth-century art has thematised breathing, most famously in Samuel Beckett's textless playlet-cum-happening, Breath, written originally (with Beckettian humour) for Kenneth Tynan's erotic review, Oh! Calcutta! (1969). A recent study has shown the resonance of Beckett's birth-cry to death-rattle encapsulation in a range of creative work before and after Beckett, including ways in which breathing can be presented in new modes of visual art (often with associated new problems for art criticism about the very nature of art), from happenings, performance-art, and anti-art to conceptual art and work in more traditional modes.

Breathing can also be seen as foregrounded in relation to Lacanian psychoanalysis, drawing on Lacan's seminars on anxiety of 1962–1963. The fundamental idea of this series is that the object of anxiety is not known: anxiety is fear without focus. Lacan calls the hidden provocation 'object (petit) a' (autre /other). While the syndrome comes into being through post-Freudian Lacanian norms (primary deprivations of desire) which to the non-believer may sound unpersuasive if not fantastical, the syndrome itself—fear without focus, dependent on desire concealed by displacement—may be recognised outside specifically Lacanian frameworks of origin. Given the obvious relation of anxiety to breathing (constricted breathing, suffocation, as symptom or effect) it is surprising that Lacan

himself has so little to say about breath—little more than a brief serio-comic episode on the conception of Christ by the entry of the breath of the Holy Spirit (spiritus of the Sanctus Spiritus) through the Virgin's ear, in which he relates the (divine) mouth to other orifices and the (divine) breath to other excretions.

In Staying Alive Aranye Fradenburg includes an extended discussion of Lacan on anxiety which suggests what he might have said about breath. A passionately-written anti-utilitarian defence of the arts as fundamental to the possibilities of humane living, the book is also a deeply well-informed critique of the contemporary university as semi-automated learning-factory, in which the aim is not knowledge and understanding but certification as a passport to employment. Exchange between intellectuals (albeit a great deal of what passes for this in universities is a parody of the real thing), real exchange, models a humane community. This is reflected in the organisation of Staying Alive, in which Fradenburg is in dialogue with an interactive counterpoint of related views ('fugues'). It is a mode that conveys a human presence relating felt thought to the subtle, mysterious, even bizarre—those aspects of human experience to which the arts are addressed, which are antithetical to the antiseptic of institutional bureaucracy.

In the chapter specifically concerned with Lacan and breathing, Fradenburg takes the highly interpretable objet a to be a 'conceptualization of the embodied mind's experience of change' (Staying Alive, 164), an index therefore of the crucial presence of the body in intellectual activities, which are often (wrongly) understood as not shaped by their basis in corporeality. As the primary experience of change, respiration, suddenly independent at the trauma of birth (thrust from a protected to a vulnerable condition—to anxiety), helps us to think, she argues, about the psychosomatic nature of rhetorical structures—the not unusual modern argument that writing is from the body, which when (as here) performed as well as affirmed requires an active and sympathetic reader. In Ruth Evans' response objet a, as reconceived by Fradenburg, becomes breath as a catalyst that sets off love: respiratory shapes in literary language (Frank O'Hara, Margery Kempe) brought off the page by real interaction with a responsive reader; breath heard and seen in the work of performanceartists (the duo, Smith/Stewart). Evans exemplifies the claim made from various perspectives by the whole book: the arts (and not the arts alone, but the arts understood in relation to contemporary conceptions of the life sciences as comparably interpretable), the arts are as necessary to living as breath.

One aspect of the fundamental issue Fradenburg addresses—'staying alive' in an academic context—involves escaping norms of academic 'professionalism' which encourage people to act as semi-automata, minds without bodies, not as human beings emotionally as well as intellectually responsive to interpretive complexity. In the liberal arts some traditions of criticism connecting literary study with life values and experience continue to recognise interactions between culturally situated and individually idiosyncratic readers from whom art requires active, engaged responses. In academic contexts, however, these have often been displaced by a pseudo-science of scholarship designed to demonstrate supposed objective presence (in a text, in a context) analogous, as Fradenburg argues, to a superseded notion of 'hard' science. Fradenburg aims to reverse this dehumanising process, which funding difficulties created by the COVID-19 pandemic have now newly intensified in universities worldwide. As institutions seek to fund their activities by moves to online learning that do away with people meeting together physically, with all the interpretable signals of actual life such meetings entail, and replace these with virtual meetings significantly evacuated of human presence—the living, breathing, emotionally-signalling body—the breathing illness potentially contributes several turns of the screw to intellectual-emotional suffocation. But, like properly holistic medicine, teaching in the Arts and Humanities must engage, Fradenburg argues, with the embodied mind.

Philosophy, feminism, the arts, psychoanalysis, structures and practices of higher education: and the editors of a recent collection on air and breathing offer re-orientations in yet more directions. Like Irigaray, they begin from a critique of Western philosophy (tendentiously exemplified by a reading of a famous passage of Descartes), though they also acknowledge predecessors in Western tradition: apart from Irigaray, Gaston Bachelard, Elias Canetti, Merleau-Ponty and Levinas. The collection draws positively too on the place of disciplines of breathing in ancient Chinese philosophy (the Daoist philosopher traditionally known as Chuang Tzu, now Zhuang Zhou), modern Sufism (the Sufi master, Inayat Khan), and (again like Irigaray) in Eastern religious and spiritual traditions. From this they propose a 'respiratory philosophy' based in more conscious attention to and practice of breathing. If their critique of the Western philosophical tradition seems less substantial than Irigaray's this is in part because it is simpler. Whereas Irigaray grapples—tentatively, speculatively—with a profound problem of ontological consciousness in Heidegger, they convict Descartes of straightforward error: his supposed new beginning ignores his breathing. Descartes, one imagines, would have thought this critique readily answered: the observation is correct, but has no bearing on his reorientation of thinking. Descartes' writings began a new phase of Western philosophy not because he, and the most powerful minds of succeeding centuries, failed to identify this supposed omission, but because of his work's genuine and powerful originality. (Irigaray's new beginning is quite different: fundamentally she agrees with Heidegger about the aims and methods of philosophy, but plausibly— like Heidegger himself—looks to a new place for a first ground. The questioning, tentative and often syntactically inconclusive openness of her critique also recognises—as did Heidegger—that a new mode of thinking requires new modes of expression.)

That the critique of Descartes is tendentious does not, however, impugn the renewed and new attention to breathing drawn from it, the validity of which can be best considered in terms of its results. Much of the new reading in the collection is concerned with issues and figures in Western culture examined afresh in relation to theories and practices that variously foreground breathing from a range of Eastern traditions. The stress on practice is recurrent. The new philosophy is a new way of being: not on our lips only but in our lives also. This is exemplified by a discussion of Derrida's exploration of breath in Artaud, background to a new way of performing philosophy: in their different spheres both Artaud and Derrida match new ideas with new modes of expression. Similarly with a phenomenology of breathing illnesses: it requires a new imagination of mind–body integration; a holistic understanding of the subjective experience of illness complementary to objective clinical analysis, treating the whole person in his or her context.

The collection as a whole, like Sloterdijk's Terror from the Air, and much other recent writing on breath, breathing and breathlessness, recognises ramifications that are international and urgently relevant, as indexed by the relatively new focus of the World Health Organisation on air quality (http://www.who.int/airpollution/en/). As well as involving elements of individual choice—the choice to evolve and exercise a 'respiratory philosophy'—there is a larger sense in which 'atmospheres of breathing' affect health issues with the widest social ramifications. Choice can be exercised about these only by international political co-operation, and through negotiations in which the principal sufferers are often those with least political and economic power. Nevertheless, understanding that air pollution is a major cause of poor health—not only of breathing illnesses directly but also of heart disease and strokes—underlies efforts to clean up the polluted cities of developing industrial economies. Along with its consequences in climate change it also underlies the drive for clean air legislation in many parts of the world, with its potentially radical consequences for how we all live.

A comparably international perspective on the twentieth century and beyond as an 'age of the breath' in religion has two prominent and very different strands: Christian Pentecostalism, emphasising direct personal experience of God through baptism by the descent of the Holy Spirit, the breath of God; and the discovery in the West of ancient practices derived from the Sutras of

Patañjali (ca. 400 BCE to 400 CE), texts connected with Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, concerned with disciplines of breathing in relation to spiritual awareness. In the second of these areas Irigaray is again a significant figure, though interest in the Sutras in European culture dates from earlier, one of the most prominent early translators, Charles Johnston, being a member of the late nineteenth century literary and theosophical circle which included the poet W. B. Yeats.

Irigaray's Between East and West presents the issue of learning new practices of breathing as fundamental to a positive redirection of consciousness. Only through this new practice, bringing into being a new relation of the mind to the body, Irigaray argues, is it possible to move beyond what she presents as the destructive elements of Western metaphysics and the spiritually empty (male) struggle to dominate nature: its aim is a new relation between the sexes, new possibilities of community, and the coexistence of diverse communities required by contemporary societies. Irigaray's argument has the strength of her training in Western intellectual traditions and their modes of critique complemented by profound reorientation through her own lived and evolved knowledge of Indian spiritual practices. She writes, that is, from a complementary basis of intellectual analysis and whole-person experience. While Irigaray's specific arguments about gender and community are her own, her fundamental approach is congruent with a general tendency in contemporary Western societies, more than ever conscious of religious diversity and the cultural bases of belief, to value religion less in terms of faith and doctrine and more in terms of spiritual knowledge and practice.

Pentecostalism is quite different—a version of an antithetical strand in contemporary religions, the return to renewed fundamentalisms, Christian, Muslim, and Hindu. The understanding of the Christian God as a triune figure, Father-Son-Spirit, means that breath, and the crucial multivalent terms—Hebrew ruach, Greek pneuma, Latin spiritus—have always been central to Christianity. Disciplines of breathing, though more prominent in Eastern religions, have also been present in many periods of the history of Christian prayer—in the prayers of medieval mystics,19 in the practices of prayer proposed in the widely-distributed Spiritual Exercises (1541) of St Ignatius of Loyola,20 and in the methods recommended for saying the 'Jesus prayer' (sixth-century) from the quite different background of Eastern Orthodoxy. This became widely known in Western Christendom through the nineteenth-century compilation, The Way of the Pilgrim, which, after its translation in the 1930s, became one of the most widely-circulated books about Christian practices of prayer, conveying something of its background in an eighteenth-century collection of fourth- to fifteenth-century texts, the Philokalia, the most significant and authoritative compilation in Orthodoxy after the Bible. Here too psychosomatic techniques of prayer, based on a view of the body as 'an essential aspect of total personhood', emphasise the importance of disciplines of breathing.

Nevertheless, breathing disciplines are less evident in Christian practices of prayer and meditation than in those of Eastern religions. Even the visitation of the Holy Spirit, the breath of God, though important in the scriptural account of the accomplishment of Christ's mission of salvation (Resurrection, Ascension, Descent of the Spirit), became suddenly prominent in a new way in the early twentieth century. Now a worldwide church with an estimated 280 million adherents in Africa, India, the Americas, Europe, and Scandinavia, Pentecostalism takes its origin and much of its character from African American charismatics meeting in Los Angeles in 1906. Central to Pentecostal belief is baptism by the Holy Spirit, the breath of God, characteristic manifestations of which are the mutually-inspired in-and-out-breathings of congregational communities in whooping, shouting, laughing, singing, and speaking in tongues. It is a religion with political implications: unstructured forms of worship in which any member of a congregation can take the lead model non-hierarchical forms of society in the world beyond the church. One recent account of black Pentecostalism sees it as rejecting the whole of Western civilisation as fundamentally white supremacist and hetero-patriarchal, in its intellectual frameworks (philosophy, theology) as well as its

social and political structures; its positive aim as to imagine 'otherwise' modalities and epistemologies, which connect the movement with whatever is broadly non-heteronormative and liberationist.

Stressing embodied thinking, this account, though ostensibly a radical rejection of Western traditions, can, nevertheless, be seen as congruent with other contemporary critiques of dualist mind–body modes of thought. How difficult it is to think embodied experience, however, is strikingly demonstrated by the account's contrast between an experiential narrative of breathing and emotion in episodes from two Pentecostal sermons, incorporating community responses, and a 'scientific' version of the relationship between breathing and emotion. The two approaches are so radically different that the language of the scientific account positively excludes the mode of what is to be conveyed in the Pentecostal experience. The associated critique of major European and Scandinavian theologians of Pneumatology and the Pentecostal-Charismatic (Jürgen Moltmann, Veli-Matti Kärkäinen)—that they exclude black Pentecostalism because they are unable to deal with the physicality of its breathing—may be weakened by overworked invocations of 'otherwise' possibilities; but the book certainly succeeds in avoiding the all too usual intellectual's embarrassment about emotion and in illustrating the difficulties of intellectualising about bodily experience. As with Irigaray on Heidegger, as with Fradenburg on Lacan, as with Derrida's interaction with Artaud, it indicates the need for new modes of intellectual performance to match and engage with more embodied conceptions of intellectual experience.

As with breathing and air pollution, the issue is not only how to think but also how to live. Pentecostal practices of worship imply practices of social organisation, particularly because in its early twentieth-century beginnings the co-breathing of brothers and sisters in sharing the spirit recognised no racial limitations: black and white members of a congregation prayed together, contravening then current segregation laws in the southern states of the USA. Pentecostalism was therefore an early example of political movements in which breathing becomes a metaphor for freedom, constriction of breathing a metaphor for oppression.

'I can't breathe': the last words of Eric Garner, an African American who died as the result of a prohibited chokehold applied during arrest by police in New York in July 2014. 'I can't breathe': also the last words of George Floyd, an African American who died as the result of violent arrest by police in Minneapolis in May 2020. As a result of the death of George Floyd there were demonstrations against police brutality, and more generally against racial oppression, in every state of the USA, and internationally. 'I can't breathe': the words originally associated with protests against the killing of Eric Garner, after the death of George Floyd became the slogan-symbol of an international movement against racism and racial oppression, Black Lives Matter.

Even before the death of George Floyd the wider political implications of the words had been developed by the political theorist, Achille Mbembe. 'Caught in the stranglehold of injustice and inequality, much of humanity is threatened by a great chokehold' (§2): in terms that refer back to the death of Eric Garner but are also prescient of the events that gave rise to Black Lives Matter, Mbembe interprets the international inequalities exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic as quasi-apocalyptic signs. Dehumanising digital communication; oppressive exploitation of postcolonial and developing communities; destructive exploitation of nature, all on an international scale: the political metaphors of oppression and the literal consequences of polluted environments point in the same direction. They are signs of the need to return to every living thing—human, plant, and animal—the space and conditions required for its breathing.

The Life of Breath Project

This book was inspired by the Life of Breath project (https://lifeofbreath. org/), a collaborative interdisciplinary study based at the Universities of Durham and Bristol, UK, and funded by the Wellcome Trust. The project has brought together researchers in arts and humanities, social science and clinical science, healthcare professionals, activists and also 'experts by experience'—those with personal experience of breathing-related diseases. It takes up the complex, mysterious yet crucial aspects of experience connected with breath and breathlessness. It speaks to the present as an 'age of breath'. At the same time it addresses the relative invisibility of breath within the medical community, the silences surrounding breathlessness and breathing illnesses, and the continuing need for language and ways of expressing breath and its lack—needs so powerfully evoked by thinkers and writers from the late twentieth century onwards.

The project was founded on the proposition that breathing and breathlessness can only be understood fully through the insights of cultural, historical, and phenomenological sources, and through incorporating perspectives derived from the arts and humanities into the clinical understanding of the physical symptom of breathlessness. By transforming understandings of breath and breathlessness the research aimed to reduce stigma and empower those who live with breathing illnesses. It also aimed to offer new possibilities for therapy and the management of diseases for which breathlessness is the primary symptom.

The integration of cultural and clinical understandings has been central to the Life of Breath as a 'critical medical humanities' project. While medical humanities was for many years associated with broadening the education of clinicians, in particular medical students, it is now recognised that the humanities also have a key role to play in influencing the evidence base for clinical interventions that goes far beyond enhancing the empathy of practitioners. 'Critical' medical humanities is characterised by interdisciplinarity, ensuring that knowledge and methods from arts and humanities as well as social sciences are mobilised to understand and address health problems in ways that are integrated with clinical knowledge. The force of 'critical' asserts the value of the humanities in calling attention to the richness and importance of the contexts in which lives are lived and illness experienced. The arts serve both to reflect and to illuminate experience: they play crucial roles in offering language and other forms of expression to articulate experience and frameworks for understanding.

The Life of Breath project took up the approach and methods of critical medical humanities to explore breath and breathlessness from an interdisciplinary perspective alongside the insights of those who live with breathlessness. One aim was to use the outcomes of research drawing on medical humanities perspectives to inform and improve clinical practice, expanding the evidence base, addressing the lack of knowledge surrounding the embodied experience of breathing and breathlessness, and exploring how this connects with cultural attitudes and assumptions concerning breath. Research strands spanned varying cultural conceptions of breath, the medical history of breathlessness, the development of a phenomenology of breathing, including through work with trained and aware or 'interesting' breathers (diving, exercising, singing, playing a wind instrument, and even sleeping), and the experience of clinical breathlessness, with a focus on the ways in which the clinical encounter shapes notions of breathlessness and the problems of 'symptom discordance', the mismatch between objective measurements of lung function and patients' experience of breathlessness.

Though common to many diseases, chronic breathlessness is most often caused by the condition known as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), the third most common cause of death globally. In western countries, COPD is frequently caused by smoking, which is highly stigmatised. Physical constraints which are consequences of COPD are often compounded by shame, with the result that breathlessness sufferers hide away from society and may feel undeserving of help.

Conditions causing chronic breathlessness are also typically associated with older age groups and with low socio-economic status. Partly because of this, research into respiratory diseases has had few energetic champions to redress the pressing need for improved funding and political action.

The COVID-19 pandemic has, however, brought breathlessness into sharp relief with peculiar global urgency. The Life of Breath project thus seems eerily prescient. In 2015 when the project began it was on the basis that breathing illnesses were relatively unnoticed and research into them was underfunded. In 2017 when the essays in this volume were commissioned, in 2018 when the contributors met together to hear and engage with each other's work, in 2019 when the essays were completed, that situation had not substantially changed. In 2020, as the editors worked on putting the volume finally together, and in 2021, as the volume goes to press, the pandemic has transformed the world. A virus that literally takes away our breath has caused many thousands of deaths—at the time of writing (late February 2021) in the UK over 120,000 people, in the USA over 510,000, and globally over 2,520,000, with over 110 million cases confirmed worldwide. The illness has devastated the lives of individuals, families, and communities. Its as yet incalculable but evidently huge repercussions are a primary preoccupation of medical research, national governments, and international relations and organisations. Attempts to limit the spread of the virus have driven economies and businesses to ruin, and radically changed how we live, work, and relate to each other. Breath—and its lack—now seem more than ever to signal the ways in which human beings are united: every act of care taken not to spread the virus contributes to the common good, every act of carelessness to the common suffering. It has also shown how we are different. 'We're all in this together' has been a common statement of solidarity by politicians, but COVID-19 has emphasised that some are more vulnerable than others, in Europe and the USA especially Black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities. COVID-19 has underlined the key role of social deprivation in making people more vulnerable to ill health and shown that the poorest communities are often among those that have suffered the most. While 'conspiration', 'breathing together', is a unifying theme of this book, so too is its converse: as the Life of Breath project has also shown, at the individual level obstructed or difficult breath is a profoundly isolating and lonely experience.

When the Life of Breath project group welcomed contributors to this book to Durham in 2018 to reflect on and initiate a critical medical humanities account of breath in Western culture, a world so engaged with breath was unthinkable. In our transformed world, it might seem that the rationale for this book is less urgent. If everyone is now talking about breath, can we still assert its absence in our culture and the need to raise awareness about it? In fact people are still not really talking about breath or breathlessness, except in a specific context. Major restrictions on the lives of people around the world may be in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19, yet the focus of attention is not on the symptom of breathlessness itself but rather on ways of preventing the spread of the virus and ways in which lives have changed. Paradoxically, COVID-19 seems to be deflecting attention from the articulation of what breath means, and how we cope with its lack in less extreme, more everyday contexts. Breath and breathlessness are subjects with powerful contemporary resonance, literal and metaphorical. Nevertheless, we do not have adequate terms and conceptions with which to discuss the actual experience of illnesses of the breath.

This theme of invisibility was a key stimulus to the development of the Life of Breath project. A major aim was to fill a gap in critical writing and awareness of breath and breathlessness in Western thought because the lack of articulation of the meanings and significance of breath can adversely affect those who suffer from breathlessness. Research undertaken by the project emphasised the negative consequences of the difficulty of explaining or expressing breathlessness for those who suffer from it, for societal understanding of it, and for political investment in addressing the growing incidence of lung disease. Findings highlighted the lack of language to express breathlessness, its 'incommunicable' quality,35 its isolating effects on sufferers, who experience an absence of social

connection and a 'shrinking lifeworld'. They revealed too the neglect and underfunding of the condition from a research perspective, with the result that the mortality rate across the last decade has remained static, by contrast to that for heart disease, which has reduced by 15%, reflecting significant material and scientific investment. Research benefited from bringing together analysis of lived experience from empirical field work with philosophical phenomenology and literary insights to show that breathlessness is invisible in a complex range of interconnected ways that need to be addressed not just by clinicians but by changes of attitude in politics and society. This change of attitudes requires enhanced awareness and understanding of deep-rooted, culturally driven ideas and assumptions about breath.

The invisibility of breath, then, may be considered in relation to the self, society, and the sphere of policy, where evidence and political will are needed to make real changes for people whose breath is problematic. Individual experience of breathing, like many important bodily functions, occurs largely in the background and is not usually the object of conscious awareness. The philosopher-physician Drew Leder describes these functions as aspects of the 'recessive body', that is, the body outside our conscious influence.38 However, unlike other 'recessive' functions, such as the cardiac or gastrointestinal systems, we have some control over breathing. And breathing becomes more conscious as it is taxed by high levels of physical exertion. This provides some experience of breathlessness but, as Havi Carel emphasises, it does not replicate the existential fear of pathological breathlessness: 'it is not like running for a bus; it is not like hiking in high altitude; it's more what I imagine dying is like'. Carel, who herself suffers from chronic breathlessness, speaks of it as expressible only through comparisons such as 'like dying' or 'like drowning'. Breathlessness is 'an overwhelming sensation, to which we are deeply sensitive, but it is also behaviourally subtle, and so often invisible to others'.

Breath and breathlessness were brought into focus by the Life of Breath project through co-produced and engaged research activities, externally focussed communications, an exhibition and public events, and hence, the creation of a diverse and unprecedented community, including expertsby-experience, healthcare professionals, artists, and academics from a range of disciplines dedicated to exploring breathing and breathlessness in their own right. A research partnership with British Lung Foundation 'Breathe Easy' support groups for people with respiratory illness both informed the research and led directly into the development of creative writing, singing, and dance programmes which explored the potential of the arts to help people live well with breathlessness. These initiatives led in turn to the creation of online resources for breathlessness sufferers, made freely available on the project website and recommended in national health guidance. Further work addressed the culture of pulmonary rehabilitation, and the barriers presented by clinical settings and language, while collaboration with clinicians built on insights into the cultural formation of experience and the deep connections between breath and embodiment. This generated new hypotheses concerning the sensation of breathlessness, the cultural contexts that shape the experience of breathlessness, and the problem of symptom discordance.

Central to the project's aim of transforming public understanding of breath and breathlessness was the curation of the public exhibition Catch Your Breath. The first exhibition ever to focus on breathing and breathlessness, Catch Your Breath drew on the project's research both to raise public awareness and challenge individuals to think differently about a bodily activity often taken for granted. The exhibition (running from November 2018 to February 2020) was hosted by venues academic, medical, and public: Palace Green University Library, Durham, the Royal College of Physicians, London, Southmead Hospital, Bristol, and Bristol Central Library. A smaller version toured libraries and scientific and medical conferences. Each venue attracted different communities and was accompanied by public events ranging from lectures and poetry readings to interactive activities, writing workshops, and mindfulness breathing classes. The exhibition included literary and

cultural artefacts from medieval manuscripts to contemporary glass sculptures and short films, and newly commissioned interactive displays exploring the embodied experience of breathing. Through the themes of visibility and invisibility, the exhibition traced historical and cultural connections between breath, body, mind, creativity, and spiritual inspiration. Cultural, religious, and literary conceptions of breath and breathlessness from the classical period to the present were set alongside the medical history of breathlessness, its diagnosis and treatments, the histories of tobacco and air pollution, and the narratives of breathers themselves.

Another focal point of the project's exploration of invisibility was a 'Breath Lab', which brought together those with lived experience of breathlessness, their families and carers, clinicians, and policy-makers to explore the 'language of breathlessness'. Discussion revealed the difficulty of describing breathlessness. Whereas a wide range of words existed to convey the 'character' of pain, there were few words to characterize breathlessness. The language of breathlessness seemed to have been usurped by the clinical context: the three 'characters' employed by clinicians, 'air hunger', 'the work of breathing' and 'tightness', left those suffering from breathing illnesses dissatisfied and struggling to find more accurate ways to express their experience. Life of Breath researchers also found that similar linguistic issues render clinical questionnaire tools for assessing the sensory experience of breathlessness confusing and difficult for patients. Clinical language also inhibited those suffering from breathlessness from taking up opportunities for pulmonary rehabilitation. For the participants in the 'Breath Lab', the inability to find words to describe their experience was not only frustrating but also compounded the invisibility to others that defined their experience. Just as the ability to breathe easily facilitates ordinary social life, so breathing illness inhibits normal social interaction. Those with lived experience of breathlessness described stratagems they adopt to avoid being seen to struggle for breath in public, actions also prompted by the stigma they perceive as associated with their condition on account of its negative connections with smoking, age, and social deprivation.

Language and its lack, the Life of Breath project suggested, are at the heart of the problem of the invisibility of those experiencing breathlessness. The lack of language to express what breathing means, how it feels, and especially what it is like not to be able to breathe, renders understanding opaque for people with breathlessness and for those around them. The inadequacies of the abstract, detached language of the clinic removes agency from those who struggle to breathe and be in the world. Jean-Paul Sartre's characterisation of the nexus of language, body, and the Other captures such disengagement:

> Language by revealing to us abstractly the principal structures of our body-for-others ... impels us to place our alleged mission wholly in the hands of the Other. We resign ourselves to seeing ourselves through the Other's eyes; this means that we attempt to learn our being through the revelations of language. Thus there appears a whole system of verbal correspondence by which we cause our body to be designated for us as it is for the Other by utilizing these designations to denote our body as it is for us.

Those experiencing breathlessness found it frustrating and shaming, as well as inaccurate, that their experience was articulated only through clinical terms, or the real or imagined disparagement of others. They were also seeking ways of articulating this experience that made sense to themselves. For one support group, working with a writer-in-residence at the Catch Your Breath exhibition to produce poetry expressing their experience was revelatory. They described their 'gratitude' at being offered, through the skill of the writer, metaphors that enabled them to find ways of explaining what breathlessness meant for them:

> We have the thoughts.
> Mostly hidden.
> But words?

Denied, or rather not asked for
Over the millennia.
(From 'A Chance', by Jill Gladstone).

This book explores the language and conceptions that have been used in relation to breath and breathlessness 'over the millennia' from the classical period to the present, and the richness and power of ideas associated with them. It is one step in the larger project of rendering the invisible visible.

The Life of Breath: From Classical to Contemporary

The imaginative worlds of literature from the classical period onwards demonstrate the complex significance and symbolic power of breath and breathlessness across time, illustrating both cultural shifts and continuities. Breath and breathlessness are flashpoints in a range of discourses, complex terms linked to ideas of health and life and to their converse, illness and death. Breath can signal the most fundamental aspects of human existence—and the most ephemeral.

While breath and breathing have never been such resonant and urgent subjects as they are now, they have not been the subject of systematic cultural or literary study. Studies have focused on particular topics related to breathing—allergy, asthma, the air and pollution, smoking. This collection, the first of its kind, adopts a wider perspective, tracing the origins and development of ideas concerning breath and breathlessness to explore their imaginative power and to demonstrate how literary texts and the cultural discourses that shape them reflect and reflect upon current ideas, understandings, assumptions, and preconceptions.

than the phenomenon and says, "there are only facts", I would say: no, facts are precisely what there are not, only interpretations. We can establish no fact "in itself". The issue with critical medical humanities is where and how to look for interpretations. Its typical terms for method have anti-methodological implications of unpredictability: entanglement, entwining, imbrication (where the usage has left behind the word's origin in geometric patterning [tiling] to imply interactions of a more free-wheeling kind). Its 'weaving' voices may be on different wavelengths. Its 'dialogic' voices may be speaking at a tangent to each other. In its 'polyphony' dissonances can be passing or unresolved (Palestrina or Ligeti). In its 'heteroglossia' multiple languages may understand each other and communicate, or speak in terms that profoundly complicate if not defy translation and harmonisation (Pentecost or Babel). Binary oppositions are more than superseded: they are extended to a dissolution of boundaries: interdisciplinary becomes 'post-disciplinary'. The interaction of a range of disciplines—arts and humanities and social science with biomedical science and medical practice—often involves experiments in interpretation, taking the view that nothing has meaning in and of itself but only within some context or mode of understanding which more or less inflects its meanings. While in some modern philosophies of science this is seen as apparent within science itself (Michael Polanyi, Paul Feyerabend, Thomas Kuhn), the kinds of contextual and cultural interpretations offered by arts and humanities and social science disciplines are characteristically of a different kind. In this collection they are seen, for example, in complexities of history and usage of multivalent words, the complexities of how contexts that inflect interpretation may be assumed, or implied, or change over time, and how meanings arise not only from the reconstructed past and the actual present but also from the accreted history of meanings. As the Romantic-period polymath Friedrich Schlegel puts it, 'every great work, of whatever kind, knows more than it says': in new contexts works may acquire new meanings, ideas may acquire new applications that were not visible to their author, originator, or earlier interpretive communities.

The volume takes as its starting point classical literature, philosophy, and medical theory from Homer to Galen, which lay the foundations for much later thought, through the Middle Ages and beyond. Anthony Long demonstrates the long roots of the connections between breath, mind, and

body and the startling contemporaneity of ancient ideas concerning breath. Breath and breathing are essential concepts in Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy: breath is a fundamental principle of both individual life and the universe. Stoic philosophers took up the notion of pneuma or vital spirit, air and fire, the active generative principle of the universe, which was connected by Galen with the individual physiology of breath and breathing. Late classical philosophy also developed radical ideas of 'conspiration', the subject of Phillip Horky's essay. This notion of the reciprocal breathing of human and divine came to be central not only to classical cosmology but also to early Christian thought. As Thomas Hunt shows, Christian theology drew on both classical concepts of pneuma, the life-giving spirit, and Hebrew notions of ruach, the breath of God, to develop and debate conceptions of the Holy Spirit—conceptions that had political resonances, relating to ideas of order and mastery. From the start, concepts of air, life, spirit, psyche and soul, external and internal pneuma, interweave: blurring into each other, they provoke dynamic responses embedded in changing notions of vitality, consciousness, and power, while the idea of co-breathing resonates with later notions of the interdependence of human and natural worlds.

Medieval medical theory was deeply rooted in classical thought and its Arabic reworkings, invoking the notion of the vital spirits to explain the physiology of the emotions and the intersection of thought with feeling. Corinne Saunders explores how the interrelated ideas of breath and vital spirits underpin and shape representations of affective experience in medieval imaginative texts, from popular romances to the medically alert fictions of Chaucer, arguing that representations that may seem to modern readers purely conventional are rooted in the medieval physiology of the breath. A similar understanding of the apparently conventional as physiological can also be seen, she argues, in devotional and visionary works, in which the concepts of vital spirits and the Holy Spirit intersect, giving breath a peculiar force. The Book of Margery Kempe offers an extended narrative of these intersections of physical and spiritual in Kempe's deeply embodied piety. Medieval physiological models provide a context and framework for Kempe's experience allowing the reader to place it not simply as performative or conventional but as rooted in learned ideas that were passing into general currency. The play of breath in tears, sighs, and swoons writes feeling on the body, creating a living tapestry of emotional experience from romantic love to mystical vision. Denis Renevey explores the possibility that medieval mystical experience was in part rooted in 'volitional breathing' resulting in changes to consciousness, drawing, in the absence of evidence in mystical texts themselves, on the insights of professional brass-players, eastern spiritual practices and the breathing techniques of 'new age' therapies. The repetition of prayers such as that on the Name of Jesus, he suggests, may have allowed for the conscious manipulation of the deep connection between breath and consciousness. At the same time, as Carole Rawcliffe shows, consciousness of the dangers of breathing infected air manifested itself in actions designed to improve air quality in medieval cities in a period repeatedly threatened by plague and epidemic. Being in the world depended not only on the movement of the bodily spirits but also on the purity of the air breathed in to form the vital spirits and influence the health of mind and body.

In turning from the medieval period to the early modern, the collection explores how, over the following centuries, these notions endured but took on new forms as understandings of physiology, disease, and the spiritual changed and developed. Katherine Craik and Stephen Chapman offer a novel perspective on present-day breathlessness by considering this within the unfamiliar context of early modern literature and culture. They argue that cross-disciplinary study can work not only by applying disciplines of interpretation from the arts and humanities to medicine but also in the other direction: medical science can shed new light on Shakespeare. As they demonstrate in relation to King Lear, early modern writing took up traditions of thought in which there was no simple separation between physiology and metaphysics. Breath—and its loss—define individual identity, but also human relationality, presaging the ways that breathlessness shapes not only its sufferers but also

those who 'con-spire' with and care for them. Breath, fundamental to life, connecting mind and body, opens onto profound—and timeless—ethical questions. The early modern period retained the connection of breath with devotion and spiritual inspiration, enacted and sought after in highly physical affective encounters; it also extended physiological and psychological theories concerning the emotions. Naya Tsentourou revisits treatises on the passions to elucidate the place of breath within the early modern history of emotion, with a particular focus on the sigh, a response signalling overwhelming emotion that deregulates and disrupts. Science and art, thinking and feeling, form and meaning, intersect and clash as writers engage with the disruptive emotional valences of breath. Intertextual references to emotional breathing blur the distinction between patient and physician: bodies and texts become spaces where the detached witness conspires with the lovesick subject, and in turn, with the reader. Early Christian debate concerning the relations between breath, soul, and the Holy Spirit was reanimated in the political context of questions of the divine right of kings, exploited, as Patrick Gray shows, by John Donne in his sermon on a text from the Lamentations of Jeremiah, 'the breath of our nostrils'. Here, through Donne's complex play with Hebrew terms signifying life, spirit, and soul, breath becomes deeply ambiguous, its valences dependent on both political and religious interpretation.

Eighteenth-century medical and scientific discoveries complicated long-standing ideas of the connection between interior and exterior, individual and environment through new understandings of the nature of air and debates surrounding its potential role in disease. Rina Knoeff probes the medical, cultural, and imaginative effects of these, which were taken up in theories of pathology and environment, leading to new emphases on the importance of exercise, clean air, and landscape, both interior and exterior, and shaping artistic consumption. Ideas connecting breath with well-being were closely allied to understandings of embodied emotional experience. Gillian Skinner explores the formative role of breath and breathlessness in eighteenth-century notions of sensibility, in particular feminine sensibility, and in the literary genre of sentimental fiction these inspired. Again, images of sudden loss of breath—fainting and swooning—recur, brought out with peculiar force in Frances Burney's epistolary novel Evelina where the writing of emotion on the body and on the page intersect. Attention to the breath reveals a proto-feminist heroine, actively involved in scenarios that both challenge her capacity for moral conduct and demonstrate her power to act. At the same time, there were threats related to breathlessness, including, as Andrew Russell shows, through the introduction of a new and powerful material agent, tobacco, a primary cause of breathing illnesses worldwide, with profound and enduring effects on health and medicine. Adding smoke to breath instituted a culture fuelled by the perceived intellectual and creative possibilities of tobacco. Russell argues that the arrival in Europe of tobacco, with its ability to change processes of cognition, influenced literary developments, including the 'poetry of attention', with its interest in minute detail, and the distinctive 'it'-narratives of the period, which emphasise the division between self and other. In tobacco, with its apparent offer of inspiration from heightened experience, promise and danger combined.

Cultural and literary conceptions of breath were similarly dualistic—on the one hand, opening onto the sublime, and on the other, signalling human frailty. The concept of divine, life-giving breath retained its connections with Christianity, as in the familiar Victorian hymn, 'Breathe on me, breath of God', but was also extended. Romantic writers developed a theory of inspired composition rooted in nature rather than the supernatural, with the metaphor of a 'correspondent breeze', a quasi-divine breath whose power operates through the poet. As Clark Lawlor shows, such notions of inspiration were both shadowed and enhanced by the threat of the loss of breath and the fading out of vitality through illness, in particular, the Romantic disease of tuberculosis, more commonly known as 'consumption' owing to its effects on the body. Consumption was 'fashionable', a disease that in the popular imagination illuminated the spirit as the body wasted, and which became a

powerful artistic and literary topos, while in reality mortality was marked all too acutely on the consumptive breath. In Romantic constructions of consumption, ancient connections of breath with death, life, spirit and genius take on new force, heightened by the experience of breathlessness.

Nineteenth-century writers sustained such images of consumption, with their complex interweaving of respiratory difficulty with intensity of life. The industrial revolution also brought a new interest in the possibility that disease could be carried by air and inhaled, and in new subjects connected with breath and illness: emphysema and other diseases caused by, for example, cotton processing and mining. Victorian engagement with breath in relation to industrial shifts was marked by duality. Progress could seem to signal movement towards immortality, as Francis O'Gorman demonstrates in relation to the invention of the mechanically powered pipe organ—an instrument with seemingly endless breath, which inspired new literary engagements with the eternal. Yet the contrast with limited human breath also signalled the frailty of human life, the limits of possibility and the inevitability of death. A similar duality characterised the ways that the nineteenth century engaged with the effects of industrialisation on the natural environment, which had severe negative consequences for breathing, most marked in the phenomenon of London fog. Christine Corton explores how, in literature and culture, this densely polluted air came to be represented as food, a soup that was inhaled and ingested—a metaphor that paradoxically appeared to celebrate this aspect of London, perhaps delaying legislation for clean air, even as fog's breath-damaging qualities were acutely recognised by Victorian medicine, as contemporary records and reports connecting high mortality rates with dense fogs demonstrate. The intersection of ideas of poison and nutrition offered rich and enduring creative possibilities for both writers and artists. Alongside this emphasis on the relation between air and illness, at the fin de siècle, as Fraser Riddell shows, new sexological discourses placed the breathing body centre stage. In both aesthetic theory and poetry, the ideas of consumptive wasting, lung disease, and air that kills came together to shape queer notions of embodiment that highlighted forbidden but all-consuming and inspiring experiences of materiality, loss, and desire. Breath and breathlessness animated treatments of the homosexual subject.

Modernism acted as a crucible for ideas of breath and breathlessness. Within a context of dramatic scientific, intellectual, cultural, and aesthetic shifts, new forms of writing emerged to which breath was central in radically different ways. The notion of divine, life-giving breath was questioned and complicated in a world where religious faith was profoundly challenged. New developments in medicine and psychoanalysis extended and altered understandings of body, mind, and affect, and their connections. As Arthur Rose and Oriana Walker argue, breath played a complex role in psychoanalysis from the late nineteenth century to the 1930s, as a potential signifier of psychic experience, and as a psycho-physical variable in its own right for the theorists who followed and challenged the founders of the discipline. Breath becomes an 'uncanny object' and a key to the unconscious: it also continues as a focus for debates concerning vitality, materiality, spirit, and consciousness. Breath and its politics illuminate in new ways the histories of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy. At the same time, changes in relation to the lived environment led to new ideas of breathing in the world. Abbie Garrington explores the encounter of science, culture, and art in modernist attitudes to mountaineering, an activity that tested the limits and possibilities of breath, engaging with deeply ingrained ideals of masculinity and bodily endurance. New developments in the oxygen rig, like the Victorian invention of the mechanical organ, promised more enduring breath, yet also pointed to man's limits on the mountains, challenging ideas of heroism. Such possibilities and paradoxes contributed to the new poetic breath of modernism, as did new questions concerning the relation of mind and body. Taking up William James's idea of 'consciousness-as-breath', Marco Bernini probes Samuel Beckett's interweaving of physiology and psychology in representations across his oeuvre of breath as intimately bound up with mind, revealing the workings and textures of consciousness and prefiguring more recent ideas of embodied cognition. The long-standing

connection between breath and inspiration was newly rewritten not only in European thought but also by American poets from Walt Whitman to the Black Mountain School, who located the formal and rhetorical structures of poetry in the rhythms of breathing. David Fuller takes up the subject of breath in poetry and aesthetic theory in America with a particular focus on Charles Olson's concept of the breath-line and the related experiments with poetic form of William Carlos Williams, setting these experiments alongside those of the German poet Paul Celan, whose poetry and poetics of difficulty enact a 'breathturn', a profound change of direction, a new beginning, in response to the chilling questions for art raised by the cataclysm of World War II. The poetry of breath is necessarily embodied, intimately connected with the voice, a topic Fuller also addresses through consideration of the implications of and need for reading poetry aloud. Twenty-first-century poetics, as Stefanie Heine shows, has returned to the 'pneumatic turn' of the 1950s and 1960s. The contemporary African American writer M. NourbeSe Philip develops from Olson her own ideas of respirational poetics, beginning from the ethically positive idea of pre-natal 'conspiration', a mother breathing for her unborn child. Heine elaborates Philip's exemplification of a poetics of fragmentation in her anti-narrative narrative poem, Zang!, which engages with and radically remakes Olson's interests in the syllable and in word-materials taken over from a problematic 'mother-text', a case report related to a massacre of African captives thrown overboard from a slave-trading ship in the late eighteenth century in order to collect insurance on the 'cargo'. Philip's 'conspiration' is also a deconstruction of language, speaking to the violent silencing of the voices which Zang! evokes and to conspiration/conspiracy against black lives.

Modern technology has yielded new possibilities of realising breath in art. The contemporary visual artist Jayne Wilton has drawn on the possibilities offered by modern technology to examine the relationship between breather and spectator, individual and environment. Her work translates breathing into art, rendering the unseen visible—an extraordinary moment in the long history of the art of breath and breathlessness, which reaches back to primitive art and is refigured across cultural epochs. Wilton's work engages directly with sufferers from breathlessness, a refiguring of conspiration that challenges comfortable assumptions but also shows the potential of the arts to articulate embodied experience. The potential unease and violence of conspiration are presented in a radical new light by the contemporary English poet Michael Symmons Roberts, whose novel Breath (2006) explores a lung transplant that also becomes a deeply political act within a context of civil war. Breath opens onto questions of the intersection of mind and body, identity and consciousness, spirit and voice. These issues emerge across Symmons Roberts' writing, which is also concerned with how the poet, poem, and reader may realise structures of breathing implied by the printed page. In the arts of breath, frailty and resilience meet.

As Peter Adey shows in his Afterword, across the book themes and issues interweave: the body and pathology, vitality and emotion, soul and spirit, inspiration and creation, conspiration and community, politics and environment, nature and technology, voice and silence, and, above all, identity and consciousness. He also returns to the contexts in which the book was completed of an international breathing illness pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement. As he suggests, the movements, meanings, vocalisations, and violences of breath are among the defining moments of our time. Lives, beings, and imaginings are inextricably bound up—for better or worse—with breathing in the world. From the ancient world to the present, philosophy, literature, and the cultures they reflect and shape write the life of breath. <>

THINK LEAST OF DEATH: SPINOZA ON HOW TO LIVE AND HOW TO DIE by Steven Nadler [Princeton University Press, 9780691183848]

From Pulitzer Prize-finalist Steven Nadler, an engaging guide to what Spinoza can teach us about life's big questions

In 1656, after being excommunicated from Amsterdam's Portuguese-Jewish community for "abominable heresies" and "monstrous deeds," the young Baruch Spinoza abandoned his family's import business to dedicate his life to philosophy. He quickly became notorious across Europe for his views on God, the Bible, and miracles, as well as for his uncompromising defense of free thought. Yet the radicalism of Spinoza's views has long obscured that his primary reason for turning to philosophy was to answer one of humanity's most urgent questions: How can we lead a good life and enjoy happiness in a world without a providential God? In **THINK LEAST OF DEATH**, Pulitzer Prize–finalist Steven Nadler connects Spinoza's ideas with his life and times to offer a compelling account of how the philosopher can provide a guide to living one's best life.

In the *Ethics*, Spinoza presents his vision of the ideal human being, the "free person" who, motivated by reason, lives a life of joy devoted to what is most important—improving oneself and others. Untroubled by passions such as hate, greed, and envy, free people treat others with benevolence, justice, and charity. Focusing on the rewards of goodness, they enjoy the pleasures of this world, but in moderation. "The free person thinks least of all of death," Spinoza writes, "and his wisdom is a meditation not on death but on life."

An unmatched introduction to Spinoza's moral philosophy, **THINK LEAST OF DEATH** shows how his ideas still provide valuable insights about how to live today.

Reviews

"Aiming to extract life lessons from the philosophy of Spinoza, this vibrant study focusses on the concept of 'homo liber,' or the free person, a supremely rational figure continually striving for power and virtue. . . . Spinoza's work serves as a hopeful, timely statement of what the truth-seeking individual can accomplish."—*New Yorker*

"As an accessible introduction to the complex thought of Spinoza, it is a success."—Jeffrey Collins, *Wall Street Journal*

"If you want to become a better person, you ought to study the philosophy of Baruch Spinoza. That at least is the message of Steven Nadler's delightful new book."—Jonathan Rée, *Literary Review*

"A helpful explication of [Spinoza's] ideas about ethics, the afterlife, and human nature."—*Kirkus Reviews*

"If you want the clearest and most sympathetic introduction as exists to Spinoza's ideas . . . then Nadler's your man. This, his latest book, is a must-read for our present, troubled times."—David Conway, *Jewish Chronicle*

"Spinoza always has more to teach us, and Steven Nadler is among the best in laying out the riches of Spinoza's thought in ways both accessible and inspiring."—Rebecca Newberger Goldstein, author of *Plato at the Googleplex: Why Philosophy Won't Go Away*

"*Think Least of Death* is a lively, engaging, and enjoyable introduction to Spinoza's moral philosophy. Steven Nadler, a gifted writer, has produced a stimulating account of Spinoza's answer to the

question of what makes a good human life."—Clare Carlisle, author of *Philosopher of the Heart: The Restless Life of Søren Kierkegaard*

"Steven Nadler sheds new light on Spinoza by taking him seriously as a moral philosopher. Particularly impressive is the way Nadler highlights Spinoza's surprising and often overlooked contributions to traditional ethical subjects, such as death and suicide."—Matthew J. Kisner, author of *Spinoza on Human Freedom*

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Spinoza's guide to life and death

How should we face our mortality? Whether death is—as we all hope—a far off eventuality or, through age or illness, imminent, what is the proper attitude to take? Should we fear death? The ancient Epicureans felt that this was something of a category mistake: you should fear only those things that can harm you, and if you are dead then nothing can harm you. As Epicurus so elegantly put it, "Death, the most awful of evils, is nothing to us, seeing that, when we are, death is not come, and when death is come, we are not."

But if not fear, then should the prospect of one's own demise at least be a source of anxiety? dread? regret? Or, as some religiously minded people might insist, should the end of this life be looked upon with hope, in the expectation that something better awaits in a world-to-come?

Spinoza's views in moral philosophy—what he has to say about virtue, the good life, and happiness—were clearly influenced by the wisdom of the ancient Stoics. He was well read in Seneca, Epictetus and others. However, on the topic of death, Spinoza goes his own separate way; in fact, he heads in the completely opposite direction.

The Stoic sage meditates upon death constantly. Epictetus advised, as part of his therapeutic strategy for peace of mind, that one should "keep before your eyes day by day death and exile, and everything that seems terrible, but most of all death." Seneca, too, recommends thinking often about

one's own mortality as essential to overcoming both fear of one's own death and grief at the death of others. "Rehearse this thought [about death, that it is the evil that puts an end to all evils] every day, that you may be able to depart from life contentedly. For many men clutch and cling to life, even as those who are carried down a rushing stream clutch and cling to briars and sharp rocks."

By contrast, Spinoza's "free person"—the ideal individual all of whose thoughts and actions are under the guidance of reason, not passion—rarely, if ever, thinks about death. In one of the more striking propositions of his philosophical masterpiece, the *Ethics*, Spinoza notes that "the free person thinks least of all of death." This is because the free person knows that there is nothing to think about. They understand that there is no afterlife, no post-mortem realm of reward and punishment, no world-to-come. When a person dies, there is, for that person, nothing. In this respect, Spinoza's view is closer to that of Epicurus.

For Spinoza, there is no immortal soul or self that persists beyond this life. When you are dead, you are dead. The denial of immortality seems, in fact, to have been a constant in Spinoza's thinking, going back even to around the time of his *herem* or excommunication from the Amsterdam Portuguese-Jewish community at the age of 23, when he was reportedly telling people that among the reasons for his expulsion from the Sephardic community was his proclaiming that "the soul dies with the body." But if there is no such thing as immortality, then there is nothing to be afraid of after death—nor, for that matter, anything to hope for. This ancient lesson is something that the free person understands well.

What the free person *does* think about, constantly, is the joy of living. This does not mean that s/he is obsessed with carnal pleasures and the hedonistic delights that come through sense experience. While Spinoza's "sage" does not go to the other extreme and lead an austere life of deprivation, s/he does know that the mundane pleasures of food, companionship and art that make life interesting and pleasant are to be pursued only in moderation. The true joy of living, however, comes from the increase in the human "power of striving" that accompanies the acquisition of knowledge, especially knowledge of oneself and of one's place in nature. This self-understanding is a kind of wisdom, and it fills the free person with self-esteem—not, however, the self-esteem or pride that depends on the opinion of others, but the true estimation of one's achievement and self-worth. It also liberates the free person from such harmful emotions as hate, envy, and jealousy, and moves him/her to improve the lives of others and treat them with benevolence. In all of this, the free person sees how such attitudes and behaviors are in their own best interest.

I am often asked why, of all the great, dead philosophers, I spend so much time studying and writing about Spinoza. It is because, as I see it, Spinoza basically got it right: about human nature, religion, reason, politics and a good life. He, more than any of the other philosophers I enjoy working on, really is still relevant in the twenty-first century—especially in this era in which science is all too often denigrated and the life of the mind undervalued. For lessons on how to live well, how to lead an examined life, a life that reaches our highest potential as rational being—and, just as important, lessons on how to die—there can be no better guide. <>

Reformation, Revolution, Renovation: The Roots and Reception of the Rosicrucian Call for General Reform by Lyke de Vries [Series: Universal Reform, Brill, 9789004250222] Open Access

At the centre of the Rosicrucian manifestos was a call for 'general reformation'. In Reformation, Revolution, Renovation, the first book-length study of this topic, Lyke de Vries demonstrates the unique position of the Rosicrucian call for reform in the transformative context of the early

seventeenth century. The manifestos, commonly interpreted as either Lutheran or esoteric, are here portrayed as revolutionary mission statements which broke dramatically with Luther's reform ideals. Their call for reform instead resembles a variety of late medieval and early modern dissenting traditions as well as the heterodox movement of Paracelsianism. Emphasising the universal character of the Rosicrucian proposal for change, this new genealogy of the core idea sheds fresh light on the vexed question of the manifestos' authorship and helps explain their tumultuous reception by both those who welcomed and those who deplored them.

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> Whence it is right that deceit, darkness, and slavery withdraw, which, by the gradually advancing instability of the great globe, crept into the sciences, actions, and human governments, by which these have been for the better part obscured […]. When finally all of this will be removed, as we trust, we shall see it instead substituted with a similar rule that will perpetually remain equal to itself. — Confessio Fraternitatis

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, three mysterious texts stirred up much debate in the intellectual world: The *Fama Fraternitatis* (Fame of the Fraternity, 1614), the *Confessio Fraternitatis* (Confession of the Fraternity, 1615), and, different from but related to both, the *Chymische Hochzeit: Christiani Rosencreutz* (Chemical Wedding of Christian Rosencreutz, 1616). While the *Chemical Wedding* presents a fictional autobiographical narrative, the first two texts are manifestos, mission statements. Their authors remained anonymous, but claimed to be members of a secret fraternity founded by a Christian Rosencreutz in the early fifteenth century. Written during the third generation of the Reformation, in the midst of early modern scientific transformations, and on the eve of the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), these two provocative manifestos called for a general reformation of religious, scientific, and political life and announced the coming of a new era.

No sooner had the manifestos been published than their call received responses from all quarters of Europe. In the years immediately after their publication, hundreds of letters, pamphlets, and books were written by enthusiasts who wished to come into contact with this elusive brotherhood, and all over Northern Europe authors claimed to be members of that enigmatic fraternity. They penned their support and admiration for these revolutionary texts and hailed the harbingers of a new time of prosperity. In response, academic authors, shocked and outraged by these subversive writings, wrote harsh letters and tracts fulminating against the Rosicrucian brethren, their paradoxical mission statements, and the followers that wrote in their wake. The Rosicrucian manifestos stirred up so much controversy that for over a decade they were the focus of a large international and

intellectually pervasive dispute. By 1625, the Rosicrucian controversy had been discussed in over four hundred texts.

The Rosicrucian response had begun in a somewhat clandestine manner already several years before the first manifesto, the *Fama*, was published in 1614. The German Paracelsian theosopher and first commentator on the manifestos, Adam Haslmayr (ca. 1562–ca. 1631), gained access to this mysterious material as early as 1610, and soon wrote an *Answer* to the *Fama*. Printed in 1612, two years before that manifesto itself would appear in print, he claimed in his audacious reply that he awaited with anticipation the emergence of the brethren from their hiding place. 1610 was also the year that his friend, the German alchemist and editor Benedictus Figulus (real name Benedict Töpfer, 1567-after 1619), acquired a copy of the *Fama*, presumably thanks to Haslmayr, and ensured its wider distribution. Such was the allure of this manifesto that before long the German ruling elite became involved. In 1611, Prince August von Anhalt-Plötzkau (1575–1653) expressed an interest in the *Fama*. In a letter dated that year, he asked both Haslmayr and the collector of Paracelsian and Weigelian manuscripts, Karl Widemann (1555–1637), to write a public response to the text. Haslmayr's *Answer* was his fulfilment of this request, and was soon printed numerous times, first by an unknown and presumably secret press, but in subsequent years it was often republished together with editions of the *Fama* and the *Confessio*.

Meanwhile to the west of Plötzkau, in Marburg, the Paracelsian physician Johann Hartmann (1558–1631) read the *Fama* in 1611, in a copy apparently given to him by Figulus. Soon the text reached an international readership as Hartmann gave it to the Danish physician and antiquarian Ole Worm (1588–1655). Whereas the former might have taken a favourable view on the text, the latter was quick to dismiss the Rosicrucian message. Not much later a second Dane, Erik Lange (1559–1643), brother-in-law of the famous astronomer Tycho Brahe (1546–1601), received a copy of this manuscript and rushed into writing a sympathetic letter in support, addressed to the "Lords and brothers of the fraternity and brotherhood of the admirable and everlasting Order of the Rose Cross" (1613).

After the publication of the Rosicrucian manifestos in 1614 and 1615, word of these inventive texts spread much more widely across Northern Europe. A large number of responses ensued to the Rosicrucians' call for reform and their appeal to readers "to examine their own arts precisely and keenly […] and reveal to us their thoughts in written form in print." Back in German lands, the anonymous author of the preface to a work entitled *About the Highest, Very Best and Most Expensive Treasures* (*Echo*, 1615), attributed to the alchemist Julius Sperber (ca. 1540–1610?), argued that the manifestos were echoes of Adamic and ancient wisdom recently voiced in the works of Marsilio Ficino, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, and Agrippa von Nettesheim. In the same year, 1615, Rosicrucian texts appeared under the pseudonym Julianus de Campis, while in 1617 and 1618 the famous alchemist Michael Maier (1568–1622) defended the brotherhood against various attacks. In the meantime, the court astronomer and later physician Daniel Mögling (pseudonyms Theophilus Schweighart and Florentinus de Valentia, 1596–1635) discussed, extolled, and defended the manifestos in several of his writings.

Simultaneously in England, the manifestos found an early apologist in the prominent physician and astrologer Robert Fludd (1574–1637), who defended them against fierce attacks by the German physician and putative author of the first chemistry textbook, Andreas Libavius (1555–1616). A few years later Fludd found himself defending Rosicrucianism again, this time against the attacks of the French mathematicians and friends of the famous philosopher René Descartes (1596–1650), Pierre Gassendi (1592–1655) and Marin Mersenne (1588–1648).

Shortly after the written debate between Libavius and Fludd, the tutor and travelling Rosicrucian prophet Philipp Ziegler (ca. 1584-?) came into the picture back on German soil, as he claimed to be a member of the brotherhood. Inspired by the Rosicrucian texts, in March 1619 he announced his arrival in the Bavarian town of Fürth, calling himself "[…] King of Jerusalem, Shiloh, Joseph and David, crowned by the grace of God, foremost brother of the Rosicrucians and invincible Scepter of the King in Sion." Further north, in the town of Giessen just a few years later, in 1623, the physician Heinrich Nolle (Nollius, 1583–1630?) published a work entitled *Mirror of the Philosophical Parergon*, which was inspired by the Rosicrucian *Chemical Wedding* and informed by the brethren's reform plans. Also in 1623, posters appeared on church walls across the Rhine, in Paris, proclaiming that the Rosicrucian brethren had now established a presence in the French capital. This was the year that Descartes had returned to Paris, and the philosopher was somewhat perturbed by false accusations of his being one of the Rosicrucian brethren and of having brought the Rosicrucian furore with him to that city.

The manifestos generated also a great deal of excitement in the Dutch Republic, with followers in Amsterdam, The Hague, and Leiden. The movement was thought to be propagated by the enthusiast Peter Mormius (ca. 1580-after 1632), the painter Johannes Symonsz van der Beek, known as Johannes Torrentius (1589–1644), and the printer Govert Basson (d. 1643), who published many Rosicrucian works and owned even more. Torrentius was arguably the best still-life painter of his age. His paintings puzzled all his colleagues and peers, none of whom could discover how they were made and which materials were used—qualities which combined to add to his allure as a mysterious Rosicrucian.

By 1626, the main Scandinavian advocate for the Rosicrucian cause was the Swedish antiquarian Johannes Bureus (1568–1652), who famously claimed that this new movement was in fact a new manifestation of ancient, divine wisdom. Bureus was in contact with the book collector and publisher Joachim Morsius (pseudonym Anastasius Philaretus Cosmopolita, 1593–1653), who must also have been acquainted with Torrentius, as a portrait of the latter in Morsius' *album amicorum* testifies. Morsius had tried to contact the top-secret brotherhood in a public letter to which, against all odds, he received a reply—a *unicum* since none other elicited a response.

The overwhelming flood of heterodox tracts and pamphlets written in support of the Rosicrucian movement was met by an equally prolific current of authors, like Libavius and Gassendi, who were shocked and outraged by these outlandish texts and condemned their authors and supporters alike. But the reaction to Rosicrucianism was not limited to words alone, and soon authorities took legal action against its supporters. Even as early as 1612, Rosicrucianism was perceived as dangerous: in that year, Haslmayr's support of the Rosicrucians got him sentenced to the galleys. He had sent a letter to Maximilian III (1558–1618), Regent of Tyrol (1602–1612) and later Archduke of Austria (1612–1618), to ask for money to travel to Montpellier in search of the mysterious brethren. In response, Maximilian did send him to travel, not to Montpellier, but to the galleys departing from Genoa instead, to work as a galley slave for four and a half years. On the day he was sent to the galleys, 31 October 1612, the authorities in Tyrol also issued a warrant for the arrest of his friend Figulus, who was subsequently imprisoned until November 1617.

A few years later, self-professed Rosicrucians were investigated and tried by Lutherans and Calvinists alike. In 1619 the German engineer and Rosicrucian follower Johannes Faulhaber (1580–1635) was placed under investigation by the Lutheran university in Tübingen. In the same year, Philipp Homagius and Georg Zimmermann (dates unknown) were condemned by Calvinist prosecutors by the order of Landgrave Moritz von Hesse-Kassel (1572–1632). No sooner had Homagius found refuge in Giessen than he was investigated again, together with Heinrich Nolle, this time by Lutheran investigators of the Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt, Ludwig V (1577–1626).

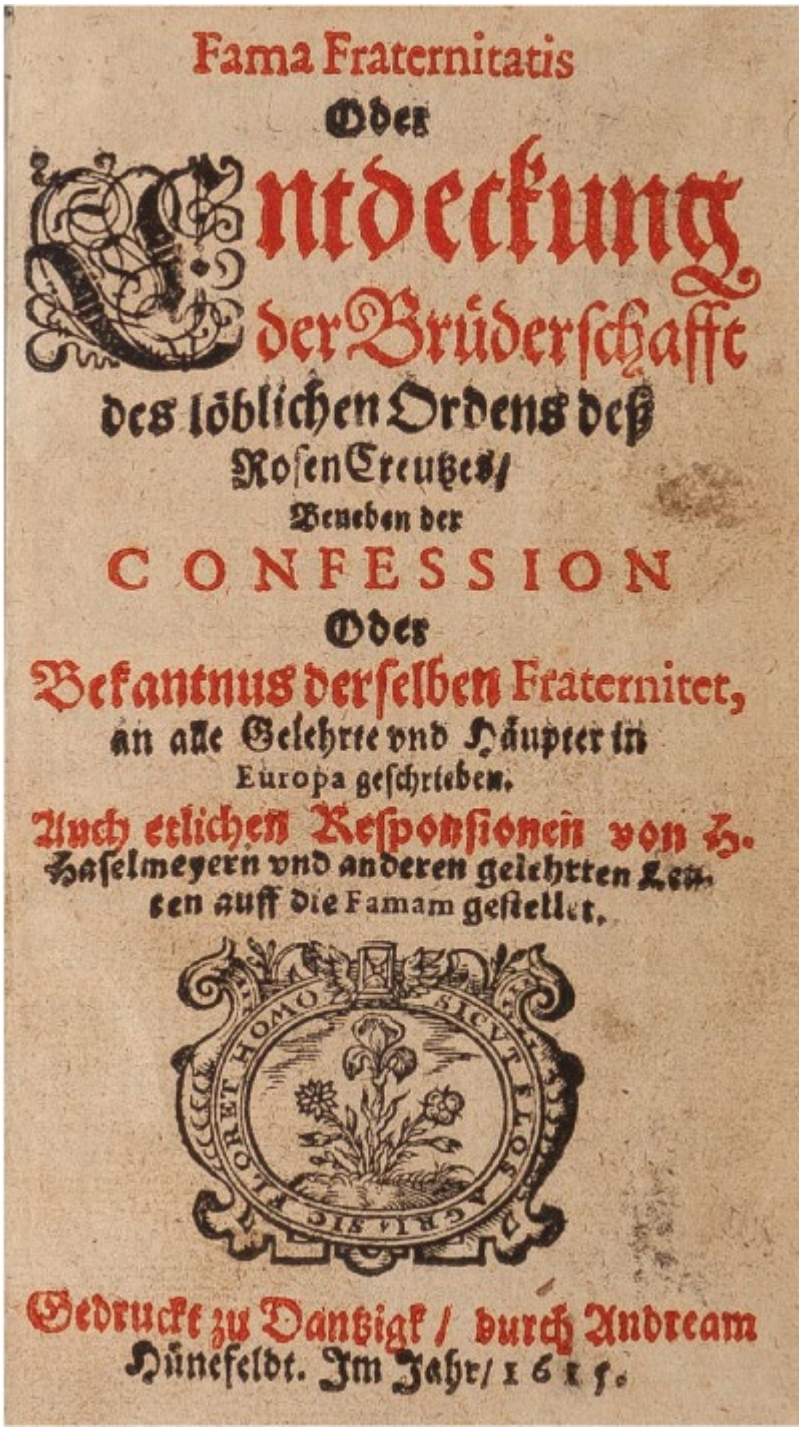
Heterodox thinkers suspected of Rosicrucianism in the Dutch provinces were treated particularly harshly. Such was the fear of subversive views that when the Court of Holland examined the Rosicrucian matter, they made sure that Torrentius was also investigated, whereupon the artist was interrogated and brutally tortured. Shortly before the case against Torrentius, in 1625, Dutch translations of the *Fama* and *Confessio*, the *Echo* attributed to Julius Sperber, and other unnamed books were sent by the Court of Holland to Calvinist professors of Theology in Leiden for investigation of their "Rosicrucian teachings." In their report, the professors concluded that the Rosicrucian "sect" was an

error in doctrine […], possessed, superstitious and magical; in her philosophy she is a fabrication of an erratic mind and a monstrous spirit, vain, useless, and filled with deceit; lastly rebellious towards the state […].

Religiously, politically, and philosophically, the manifestos and their followers provoked the authorities and were to be condemned. For one reason or another, the Rosicrucian case truly became a Europe-wide controversy.

The Rosicrucian manifestos might easily have been overlooked or ignored, but instead their impact on early seventeenth-century Europe was enormous. What was the controversial message of these short texts that triggered such a passionate response? Literature on the Rosicrucian manifestos and the subsequent movement has largely been concerned with questions of authorship, the networks from which these pamphlets arose, and the early furore. While context is obviously important, the first place to look to understand these manifestos and their explosive aftermath are the contents of the manifestos themselves.

This book studies the manifestos' call for a general reformation in its historical context. This call emerged in a period, the early seventeenth century, that witnessed a large variety of calls for, and attempts at, change. Yet, the "key-markers" of change in the scientific and philosophical realms are still Francis Bacon and René Descartes. In the religious world they are most prominently Martin Luther and John Calvin. But any understanding of early modern projects of change which relies on the figures just mentioned would be anachronistic. It would also rule out of consideration concepts of reform beyond the strict boundaries of science and religion, respectively. The Rosicrucian manifestos—as well as other texts and movements that call for change, but that are much less known than the heroes just mentioned—fit much less comfortably in, and often challenge, the strict boundary between science and religion. They require fresh investigation in order to further develop our understanding of early modern concepts of change and projects of reform.


Fama Fraternitatis
Oder
Entdeckung
der Brüderschafft
des löblichen Ordens deß
Rosen Creutzes/
Neneben der
CONFESSION
Oder
Bekantnus derselben Fraternitet,
an alle Gelehrte vnd Häupter in
Europa geschrieben.
Auch etlichen Responsionen von H.
Haselmeyern vnd anderen gelehrten Leu-
ten auff die Famam gestellet.
Gedruckt zu Dantzigk / durch Andream
Hünefeldt. Im Jahr/ 1615.

Fama fraternitatis and *Confessio fraternitatis* (1615), HAB Wolfenbüttel

The Rosicrucian Story

The Rosicrucian manifestos and the related *Chemical Wedding* give an account of the life of the well-travelled and highly-educated Christian Rosencreutz, who is described as the father of the Rosicrucian fraternity. Rosencreutz is said to have been born in 1378 and to have lived for 106 years, until his death in 1484. His message had been kept secret for 120 years until 1604 when, coinciding with the purported discovery of his vault, the Rosicrucian secrets would be revealed.

The *Fama* describes the life of the founder of the fraternity and the foundation of the Rosicrucian brotherhood. In his early years, Christian Rosencreutz travelled to the Arab world where he studied physics, mathematics, languages, magic, and Kabbalah. In the Arab cities Damcar and Fez he learned various secrets of nature and translated into Latin the mysterious "Liber M." After his travels in the East, Rosencreutz had become convinced of the necessity for a general reformation and felt compelled to teach others in Europe what he had learned in distant places. He visited several countries, but was disappointed at being unable to find anyone at the time willing to abandon their own teachings and philosophies, which Rosencreutz considered to be false. When he finally returned to Germany, he gathered around him three men who were to become the first brothers of the Rose Cross. Rosencreutz taught them the secrets of nature and worked with them in private in order to instigate the desired reformation. After four more companions had joined their cause, the eight brothers parted and went their separate ways throughout Europe to improve their knowledge. Once every year, on Rosencreutz's anniversary, they were to return to the house "Sanctus Spiritus," the house of the Holy Spirit, a building constructed by Christian Rosencreutz that was to become the Rosicrucians' sanctuary. They identified themselves as physicians, adapted to the style of dress of the country in which they worked, while each using as their secret mark "R.C." It was agreed that "none should practice any other profession than to cure the sick, without payment." The brethren were supposed to keep the brotherhood secret for 120 years after Rosencreutz's death, and to find a successor each so that the fraternity would continue to exist even after their own deaths.

In 1615, one year after the publication of the *Fama*, another provocative text issued from the printing presses, the *Confessio*. Christian Rosencreutz's hope for a general reformation was further developed in this closely related second manifesto, which had already been announced in the *Fama*. In this text, the authors discussed in more detail the philosophy of their fraternity. The brethren understood the workings of the world according to the hermetic analogy of microcosm and macrocosm, with humans as the microcosm of the universe. The macrocosm—the universe—was full of secrets that were to be revealed, and this revelation, the reader was told, would happen soon. The disclosure of secrets coincided with the dawn of the Rosicrucian philosophy, which was to replace traditional natural philosophy, to provide a new foundation for the sciences, and to form the basis of a broader reformation.

On the reverse side of the brethren's hope for a different future was their negative judgement on contemporary society. In their view, religion and philosophy were deeply rotten, and the contemporary state of affairs needed to be overhauled. At the time when the manifestos were drafted, the old worlds of Roman orthodoxy and of Aristotelian natural philosophy were irreversibly losing their foothold in the Western world. The Lutheran and Calvinist reformations had permanently changed the religious landscape, while the voices of so-called "novatores," challengers of Aristotelian natural philosophy and the medieval university curriculum in general, grew stronger. Religiously and scientifically, the world was undergoing substantial transformations. The authors of the manifestos observed and encouraged these changes, and spread the hopeful prediction of "a general reformation of divine and human things," to which they would eagerly contribute. Soon, so went their message, the world would be thoroughly transformed for the better.

Religiously, the brethren defined themselves in opposition to the Turks and the Roman Church, condemning "the blasphemies against our Jesus of both East and West (that is, Mohammed and the pope)," and claiming that they acknowledge only Christ. The manifestos unmistakably originated from the Protestant world, but argued that still further religious changes were necessary.

Scientifically, the academic institutions and their educational programmes were to be reformed and replaced. University scholars ("Gelehrte") were accused of being guided by "pride and ambition" in their studies, which led them to misinterpret the world, spread lies, and sow destruction. The

brethren's critique included not only Aristotelian (natural) philosophy, but also academic medicine. Their commitment to medicine as their main task, and one that should be practiced without reward, was contrary to the traditional procedure of ordinary Galenic physicians. Most alchemical practice, too, was considered "an offence to the glory of God." Alchemy was not meant for the making of gold, the brethren insisted, but should instead be used for the production of medicine and the acquisition of knowledge.

The Rosicrucian notion of reform was inherently general: All arts were to be reformed, religion was to be sanctified, philosophy to be changed, and medicine and alchemy to be purified. This transformation was to be initiated by the Rosicrucian brotherhood, and the reader of the *Fama* was encouraged to reflect upon the arts himself and was hoped to be "sincere and heartfelt towards us," so as to potentially contribute to their reformation. But this reformation implied changes within the divine realm as well, since God was involving himself in new ways in earthly matters.

While the *Fama* and *Confessio* were overtly optimistic manifestos, designed to inspire hope, they were also highly enigmatic, and without any attempt to provide a clear explanation of the brethren's philosophy or a detailed description of the changes announced. But their general reformation entailed more than an interpretation of the contemporary situation and a call for action. The language of the reform that was about to take place was infused with what might loosely be called millenarian expectations of a new age. The brethren believed themselves to be living in the last days prior to a new era, which was to precede the Last Judgement and the End Times. These days witnessed the first signs of a hopeful future which would soon be made manifest. The brethren believed that they "may soon rejoice in a happy time." The imminent changes were not only an effectuation of Rosicrucian designs, but were also part of God's plan. The central theme in the Rosicrucian manifestos, the general reformation, is intimately related to the expectation that the end of the present age was at hand and that a new, perfected time would soon be upon us.

While these philosophical and apocalyptic aspects are clearly visible in the *Fama* and *Confessio*, the third text, the *Chemical Wedding*, is very different. The *Chemical Wedding* is presented as an autobiographical story from the perspective of Christian Rosencreutz. There are neither references in this text to the manifestos, nor do the manifestos refer to the *Chemical Wedding*, and the central element is no longer a general reformation but a description of a journey culminating in an allegorical alchemical wedding of the King and Queen. The story is divided into seven sections, each covering one day, over which the story plays out.

At the beginning of the story, the protagonist, Christian Rosencreutz, receives from an angel an invitation to the wedding of the King and Queen. He accepts, albeit hesitantly, and he sets out on his arduous journey the following morning. After a long and difficult walk on the second day and having overcome several hurdles, Rosencreutz arrives at the castle, his destination, only just in time. There, (the souls of) the guests will be weighed the next morning on a golden balance to determine whether they are allowed to enter the castle. To his merit, Rosencreutz passes the weighing test with such ease (he could carry eight weights instead of the requisite seven) that he is permitted the opportunity to bring with him into the castle a person of his own choosing. The person he chooses is described as an emperor, "keyser." Together, they are two of the very few worthy ones allowed to attend the wedding of the King and Queen and to receive the Golden Fleece.

Leonhard Thurneysser, *Quinta essentia* (1574), fol. xxxvii

The days which follow are taken up with festivities, dinners, tours in the castle, and, most importantly, preparations for the wedding, during which the select few further demonstrate their worth. They engage in work of an alchemical nature. When six royal persons ("Königliche Personen") present at the castle are executed on the fourth day, as part of the wedding preparations, their heads are used for an alchemical preparation from which ultimately the King and Queen arise, brought to life through fire from heaven. On the fifth day, Rosencreutz secretly observes the sleeping Venus, who was also in the castle but whom he was forbidden to visit. Rosencreutz's spying on Venus is revealed on the final day, and the book ends with his punishment

for having seen her: he is condemned to guard the first portal to the castle until someone else commits the same offence and will have to take his place as guard. The text concludes with the statement that two folios—purportedly dealing with Rosencreutz's return home—are missing, thereby rendering the story incomplete.

Overtly allegorical in character, the *Chemical Wedding* is even more abstruse than the *Fama* and *Confessio*. It does not discuss the brethren's philosophical claims and apocalyptic predictions, and rather than a general reformation it describes an alchemical process that can perhaps be best interpreted as an individual transformation. Unlike the *Fama* and *Confessio*, it is not a manifesto in the sense of a mission statement, and hence it does not discuss the mission of the brotherhood to reform the world. For this reason, this book will make only passing references to the *Chemical Wedding*, while the focus will be on the two manifestos.

The Historiography

The Rosicrucian manifestos provoked much debate in the decades after their publication, and were soon used as founding texts for the many Rosicrucian societies that were established following the purported Rosicrucian fraternity of Christian Rosencreutz. Owing partly to their immense popularity, and partly to their enigmatic contents, the manifestos have been the object of numerous investigations throughout the intervening centuries. As early as 1720, Daniel Colberg included them in *Das Platonisch-Hermetische Christenthum*, while in 1729 Gottfried Arnold discussed the manifestos in his *Unpartheyische Kirche- und Ketzer-Historie*. Many other studies of early Rosicrucianism have followed. Some historiographies offered interpretative accounts of the Rosicrucian mission statements, while other historians embarked on a more serious quest into the early history of Rosicrucianism. The works of Richard Kienast and Will-Erich Peuckert have proven to be important sources, but in the past century the work of Frances Yates has been particularly influential not only within the historiography on the manifestos, but also in other areas of research. These sources have by now become largely outdated, while the scholarship has benefitted enormously from the paramount work of the foremost authority on Rosicrucianism, Carlos Gilly, as well as from such scholars as Donald Dickson, Didier Kahn, and Martin Brecht.

The past historiography is characterised by many different approaches to the Rosicrucian manifestos. The texts themselves and the furore they aroused have both received in-depth analysis and attention. Yet, much of this scholarship remains dominated by the question of authorship. Who wrote these elusive texts? Over the past four centuries, scholars have provided diverse answers to this question, making it a highly contested topic in the historiography.

One way of answering this question is by investigating the context in which the Rosicrucian manifestos came about. Scholars have thoroughly described this context and traced the networks from which these texts may have originated. Brecht, for example, approached the question of authorship by studying the early connections of the possible authors with one another. Gilly has also meticulously examined the early context of Rosicrucianism, including the origin of the manifestos themselves, the printing presses from which they were published, and the circles in which the manuscript versions of the manifestos, particularly the *Fama*, circulated.

A second way of dealing with this question, and the road most travelled, is to examine the contents of the manifestos and to compare these with the views of the presumed authors as expressed in other texts attributed to them. This method has been used both to point to certain possible authors and to eliminate suggestions proposed by others. Nearly a century ago, Peuckert discussed the manifestos in the beautiful prose of his *Die Rosenkreuzer* and concluded that the manifestos must have originated from a "pansophical circle." Having nominated a particular author, the hand of whom

they believe to have been at work in the manifestos, scholars have furthermore often interpreted and explained the contents of the manifestos themselves.

Another thread of scholarship focuses on the contents of the manifestos without the side-tracking involved in questions of authorship. Partly thanks to their cryptic nature and occult elements, historians have sought to explain the three Rosicrucian founding texts in relation to esotericism and Hermeticism (*Fama* and *Confessio*) and to alchemy (*Chemical Wedding*). They have described the occult meaning of Rosencreutz's wanderings, noting the Rosicrucians' indebtedness to hermetic currents, alchemical traditions, and even Kabbalistic views. This has led to a disparate range of interpretations of the texts. For example, Yates links them to Dee's *Monas hieroglyphica*; Roland Edighoffer's *Rose-Croix et société idéale* analyses the manifestos from the perspective of theology, theosophy, and (alchemical) symbolism; Christopher McIntosh's *The Rosicrucians* situates the manifestos in the context of esoteric traditions; and Susanna Åkerman's *Rose Cross Over the Baltic* associates them with esoteric, hermetic, and runic thought. Edighoffer furthermore reads the manifestos through a Paracelsian lens. Volkhard Wels, finally, associates the manifestos with Lutheran views.

In order to understand the subsequent Rosicrucian furore, its diversity, and the hermetic, theosophical, and prophetic elements inherited from the manifestos, some historians have sought to provide an overview of the early response to the manifestos. Hans Schick, for example, besides studying the authorship and interpreting the manifestos, has also analysed the work of proponents and opponents of the Rosicrucians, such as Joachim Morsius and Friedrich Grick. Gilly has provided an overview of numerous Rosicrucian responses in several studies. Other scholars focused on Rosicrucianism in one specific region: Yates analysed Rosicrucianism in the German-speaking lands, France, and England; Åkerman studied the Scandinavian response; Kahn analysed the hoax in Paris; and Govert Snoek traced the Rosicrucian episode in the Dutch regions. Finally, some scholars have narrowed their focus to specific authors involved in the Rosicrucian debate. For example, Gilly devoted an entire book to the early Rosicrucian protagonist Adam Haslmayr; Richard van Dülmen studied another supporter of the Rosicrucians, Daniel Mögling; while Bruce Moran focused on one of their critics, Andreas Libavius.

A Fresh Approach

The present study will take a very different approach from those that have dominated the scholarship, and will provide a fresh analysis of the Rosicrucian manifestos and their early aftermath. The question of authorship will deliberately be postponed, and the contents of the manifestos will not be analysed and interpreted through the lens of authorship. Nor will this book focus on the esoteric elements in the manifestos, or map the Rosicrucian furore. Instead, it will focus directly on the contents of the texts in order to answer the question of their explosive impact: Why were these manifestos so controversial in the decades after their publication? What did some readers find so attractive, and others so dangerous? The best way to answer these questions is to focus on what was most central to the Rosicrucian cause: the notion of a general reformation. This raises the key question to be pursued: Where did the call for a general reformation come from, and how was it interpreted in the early stages of the response?

The key concept contained in the manifestos—the general reformation—has remained virtually *terra incognita*. Its centrality has been acknowledged, and the manifestos have been associated with eschatology and apocalypticism, but an in-depth analysis of the texts in the context of the general reformation and of expectations of a new age has remained a *desideratum*. The call for a reformation, or a renovation, as the texts also phrase it, is not fully explored in the literature on the manifestos, but is more often mentioned either in the context of authorship or understood as part of the manifestos' esoteric inspiration. Conversely, numerous studies have been devoted to Jewish and

Christian apocalyptic and millenarian prophecies, the place and role of eschatology or hopeful expectations within the main confessions, and medieval and early modern thoughts on a (universal) reformation. Yet, most references within these texts to the Rosicrucian appeals for a general reformation are made only *en passant*. Current scholarship does not discuss the set of apocalyptic and prophetic ideas in the manifestos and their connection to previous traditions in any detail, and an in-depth study of the Rosicrucian concept of general reformation, its meaning, its origin, its position within Judeo-Christian eschatology, and its relation to the Lutheran context or more generally to a confessional understanding of history has been missing. The same is true for scholarship on the early responses to the manifestos, in which the notion of reform and its related apocalyptic elements have yet to receive the attention they deserve.

The point of departure for this book is the conviction that we need to meticulously study the call for change, which played such a prominent role in the Rosicrucian manifestos. More specifically, we need to investigate where this call came from, what role it played in the early positive response, and why it aroused so much controversy in the period directly following the publication of the manifestos.

By shedding light on an important body of early seventeenth-century ideas of reformation and reform, we will try to arrive at an understanding of early modern concepts of change as it was promoted and carried out by actors who have not become the heroes of history. In doing so, this study will take into account attempts at reform beyond the strict boundaries of science and religion. It will attempt to escape the confines of disciplinary history through the study of texts that were not themselves restricted to, and cannot be understood through, one specific discipline. The aim is to take a multidisciplinary approach that goes well beyond current disciplinary boundaries and to embrace a range of specialist fields, including the history of alchemy and medicine, the history of science broadly conceived, religious studies, and the history of philosophy.

In the past historiography, scholars have sometimes referred to Luther's Reformation as the first reformation and have regarded Calvinism as a second reformation; but such numeration oversimplifies the constant yearning for reform which started to emerge in the late Middle Ages and continued to develop at least until the second half of the seventeenth century. At the time the manifestos were drafted, there was a widespread but subterranean current of dissenting views and anti-establishment reformative zeal that diverged from orthodoxy, of which the Rosicrucian episode was one example. Some of these currents resulted in religious groups which are commonly categorised by historians under the heading "Radical Reformation." This broad rubric however covers a large number of heterogeneous groups, and even within the main Protestant confessions clusters of Lutherans and Calvinists endorsed a multiplicity of views in acute tension with the mainstream orthodoxies of their own confessions. The Reformation period therefore is increasingly seen not only from the perspective of the winners (Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin), but now includes those who have long been excluded from traditional accounts of "the Reformation." This involves also figures for whom religious reform was inextricably linked with the reform of alchemy, medicine, or spiritualism, for example, as can be observed in the cases of the Paracelsians, Weigelians, and Schwenckfeldians, and which may also be noted in relation to the Rosicrucians' general reformation. By acknowledging such a large range of reform plans, historians have shifted the meaning of the term "Reformation," as it has come to include figures preceding or opposing magisterial reformers as well as notions of academic, natural-philosophical, or political reform.

Notwithstanding this plurality of reformations, there were those who desired a general or all-embracing reformation, a striving that has come to be known as "universal reformation." Universal reformation is by definition all-embracing and encompasses a wide range of activities, including plans to reform, amongst others, religion, politics, philosophy, medicine, and education. Several figures who have been placed in that tradition include Theophrastus Paracelsus (1493/4–1541) and his

successors, the theosopher Valentin Weigel (1533–1588), and the Lutheran theologian Johann Arndt (1555–1621). Additionally, figures as diverse as Nicholas of Cusa (1401–1464), Jan Baptista Van Helmont (1579–1644), and Johann Heinrich Alsted (1588–1638) have recently been put into this context; while also Jan Amos Comenius (1592–1670) and Samuel Hartlib (ca. 1600–1662) and their circle of friends have been studied from the perspective of universal reformation. Historian Howard Hotson especially has contributed extensively to the study of universal reformation.

Like their contemporaries, the authors of the manifestos and their followers appealed for what they called a general reformation, which was highly heterogeneous and not restricted to, or informed by, any one confession. According to Reformation historians, "confessionalization" was a widespread process between 1550 and 1650, linking religion and confession to society and politics through social discipline. The formation of confessions, the transformation of the state, and the use of social discipline are seen as interrelated processes, while early modern religion and confession structured, influenced, and transformed social and political life through indoctrination, education, and rituals. This, in turn, created social groups defined and divided according to their confession. This book aims to show how the Rosicrucian manifestos attempted to circumvent this contemporary process of "confessionalization," and in fact opposed confessional doctrines in their proposal of universal change.

The Rosicrucian reformation and its immediate aftermath should be understood against the background of this enlarged perspective of reformation. In the following chapters, several aspects of the manifestos' call for change—in the form of a reformation, a revolution, or a renovation—will be retraced to medieval and early modern traditions up to the start of the Thirty Years' War. Part One (Chapters One and Two) is devoted to the sources of the manifestos. In order to understand the Rosicrucian call for a general reformation, it is essential to study first the origins of this idea. Medieval and early modern interpretations of, and prophecies about, the course of history will be analysed and compared in order to clarify the theme of a general reformation in the Rosicrucian texts. In the first chapter, the manifestos will be compared with related medieval Catholic and early modern traditions and studied from the perspective of the (radical) Reformation. Chapter Two is devoted to Paracelsian themes. Although the Paracelsian inspiration of several of the manifestos' tenets has been investigated previously, here the Paracelsian impetus will be investigated specifically from the perspective of the notion of a general reformation and related apocalyptic expectations. The aim is to provide a fresh understanding of the Paracelsian influence on the manifestos. Likewise, not only genuine works of Paracelsus need to be reviewed but also early Paracelsian and pseudo-Paracelsian texts, which were published shortly before the manifestos were drafted and which are generally neglected in studies on Rosicrucianism.

Only after the origins of the *contents* of the manifestos have been sufficiently dealt with, is it appropriate to discuss the origins of the texts themselves and to return to the question of authorship. In Part Two (Chapter Three), we will first briefly review the question of authorship of the manifestos and, secondly, analyse the findings of Part One, and the key element of a general reformation in particular, in relation to the views expressed by the authors in other manuscript and printed texts. To what extent can the importance of the general reformation be observed in their other writings and what does this suggest about the manifestos' authorship and purpose?

Part Three (Chapters Four and Five) will in turn concentrate on the response to the manifestos. The aim of this part is not to trace the course of the Rosicrucian furore, but instead to analyse through several case studies specifically how the notion of a general reformation and related themes developed among the early readers of the manifestos. This approach will shed fresh light on the reasons for specific authors' support or dismissal of the Rosicrucian cause. To what extent was this theme appealing to Rosicrucian followers and controversial to those condemning the manifestos?

Chapter Four will specifically concentrate on the early Rosicrucian furore, in order to describe in detail the role of the Rosicrucian call for reform in the early welcoming response. Chapter Five will then study debates between authors vehemently attacking the Rosicrucian movement and authors defending it, in order to examine what was at stake in the views of both proponents and opponents of that movement. These texts will also be compared with formal reactions to Rosicrucianism within universities and courts, in which scholars were sometimes investigated and prosecuted for their Rosicrucian sympathies.

In the Conclusion, the findings of the previous chapters will be reviewed, analysed, and compared, and some thoughts on further research will be provided. <>

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF ATHEISM, 2 VOLUME HARDBACK SET edited by Stephen Bullivant and Michael Ruse Cambridge University Press, 9781108688994]

The two-volume **CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF ATHEISM** offers an authoritative and up to date account of a subject of contemporary interest. Comprised of sixty essays by an international team of scholars, this History is comprehensive in scope. The essays are written from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including religious studies, philosophy, sociology, and classics. Offering a global overview of the subject, from antiquity to the present, the volumes examine the phenomenon of unbelief in the context of Christian, Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu, and Jewish societies. They explore atheism and the early modern Scientific Revolution, as well as the development of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution and its continuing implications. The History also includes general survey essays on the impact of scepticism, agnosticism and atheism, as well as contemporary assessments of thinking. Providing essential information on the nature and history of atheism, The Cambridge History of Atheism will be indispensable for both scholarship and teaching, at all levels.

- Comprised of sixty essays by an international team of scholars
- Written from a variety of disciplinary perspectives including religious studies, philosophy, sociology, and classics
- Indispensable for both scholarship and teaching, at all levels.

Critical Review

This volume shows the deep and broad extent of unbelief and freethought as a perennial theme of human reflection about the world and how we fit into it. The chapters are written with concise focus on the many ways nonbelief manifests in major cultural epochs. Volume 1 offers a historic overview and volume 2 concentrates on contemporary themes in the sciences and humanities. Many of the contributions are written with wry wit and avoids jargon and unnecessary contention.

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Excerpt: Atheism in the early twenty-first century is a much-discussed topic. From New Atheism's explosion onto bestseller lists and bus sides in the mid-years of the "noughties," to ongoing human-rights abuses both of non-believers in some highly religious countries and of religious believers by officially atheistic ones, to a steady stream of surveys showing the rapid rise of non-religiosity in parts of the world, to — well — a great deal else besides, the topic is often in the media, and thus the public eye. This is not, in itself, a new phenomenon. Particular issues, campaigns, movements, philosophies, and people, relating to atheism in various ways, might come and go. But they have been coming and going for an awfully long time, and in a very wide spread of cultures and contexts. Atheism was "a much-discussed topic" in fourth-century BC Athens, second-century AD Asia Minor, eleventh-century France, thirteenth-century India, seventeenth-century England, and nineteenth-century South Africa. These are, moreover, just a few of the times and places whence atheism's much-discussed topicality has been preserved in the documentary record — and thus with accompanying selection bias as to the sorts of people whose discourse gets recorded. The prevalence of the topic in conversation, around campfires, in drawing rooms, on factory floors, or in trenches, necessarily goes undocumented. Certainly, Ivan Karamazov's observation about 1870s "Russian boys" applies very much more widely:

> Take, for instance, some stinking local tavern. They meet there and settle down in a corner ... Well, then, what are they going to argue about, seizing this moment in the tavern? About none other than the universal questions: is there a God, is there immortality? . . . And many, many of the most original Russian boys do nothing but talk about the eternal questions, now, in our time. Isn't it so? (Dostoevsky [1880] 2004, 234)

But why? According to other reference works on the subject, the word "atheism" simply denotes one of two things: "A belief in the non-existence of a God or gods, or (more broadly) an absence of belief in their existence" (Bullivant and Lee 2016; see also Martin 2007; Bullivant and Ruse 2013). Now either of these (partly overlapping) intellectual positions represents an interesting bit of metaphysical speculation, and a worthy thesis for if-so-inclined philosophers to spend their time thinking, writing, and arguing about. But then there are lots of "interesting bits of metaphysical speculation" that would fit that bill. Not many of them have generated so much interest, including utopian enthusiasm and abject horror alike, through the ages. Not many of them, more to the point, have been thought worthy of a two-volume Cambridge History Handbook.

This is not to deny that atheism, atheistic thinking, and various packaged systems of ideas in which one or other form of atheism takes a more-or-less prominent place, are themselves significant purely in terms of intellectual history. For instance, within western medieval philosophy, the sheer idea of atheism first rises to prominence as a kind of way-out thought experiment. What if, St. Anselm of Canterbury wondered in the eleventh century, there was actually someone who didn't already believe that there's a God? How might one convince him that there is? There's no real suggestion that Anselm is thinking here of any real person (other than the proverbial "fool" of Psalms 14 and 53): his unbeliever is purely a "theoretical construct" (Weltecke 2013, 171), like Descartes'

"evil deceiver," Nozick's "utility monster," or Baggini's "pig who wants to be eaten." Two centuries later, Thomas Aquinas could also imagine there being a proponent of the view "that God does not exist" —indeed, he goes further than Anselm in coming up with some arguments to support it (Davies 2013,119-21). But again, Thomas betrays no indication that atheism is in any sense a pressing, contemporary concern. His interest in atheists is purely theoretical, and is no less valid for that. (On a related note, one of us [Bullivant] used to raise a weak smile from his freshman "Moral Philosophy foe students by ending the first lecture by saying "So, the next time you find yourselves in a mine, with a runaway trolley barreling down toward you — we've all been there.")

The truth is, though, this is only a part of atheism's interest and importance. The history of atheism is not only one of ideas, but also of the powerful social, moral, political, and economic influences both of, and upon, those ideas, as well as of the people holding them. To put it rather simply, throughout history atheism both has, and is seen to have, very practical ramifications: it matters (see Ruse 2014). So much so that, even in many times and places where it is a moot point whether there actually were any atheists, atheism was not merely much talked about and fretted over, but often actively legislated against. Within a few centuries of Anselm and Aquinas, for example, European atheism had become an urgent social issue, with atheists widely recognized as a significant, if malign, sector of society. A 1603 petition to King James I of England, asking that Catholics be granted free exercise of their religion, notes that there are four types of Englishmen: Protestants, Puritans, Catholics, and "Atheists [. .] who live on brawls." The French philosopher Mersenne, writing in 1623, estimated that there were as many as 50,00o atheists living in Paris alone (Robichaud 2013, 179). Floods of writings were devoted to the problem and its varied, and horrifying, implications (Spencer 2014; Ryrie 2019). Before long, imputations of atheism were as frequent in scholarly debates as imputations of Nazism are in today's online flamewars. Thus, Alan Charles Kors comments on "the almost ubiquitous desire, in philosophical polemics, to portray one's opponents' arguments as leading inadvertently to atheism" (2013, 197). As it happens, whether there really were (m)any actual atheists in England or France during this sustained period of "moral panic" is difficult to ascertain. Nor was this a wholly novel phenomenon in western history: over a millennium before, Christians and pagans in the Roman Empire routinely accused each other of "atheism" (or rather, of the Greek noun atheotes, which the English word "atheism" was much later coined to translate). Indeed, different camps of Christians sometimes denounced each other as such, hence a fourth-century Arian bishop of Antioch being known to posterity as Aëtius the Atheist (Bullivant 2020).

This pattern of deep and widespread concern about atheism, coupled with an (at most) unclear historical record of there being any atheists, is a pattern that will be encountered in several of these volumes' chapters. This ought not surprise us. In much the same way as one could write (and as several historians indeed have) rich and informative histories "of," say, Atlantis or El Dorado without either place ever having existed, there is much valuable history of atheism to be found in those times and places where "atheism" was widely and hotly discussed, and often enough acted upon (e.g. laws being written, treatises being composed, accusations being made). In such contexts, to paraphrase the question motivating Richard Taruskin's magisterial history of western music, the historian's task is to explore the question "What has [atheism] meant?" (see Taruskin 2011, xi).

All that said, the history of atheism is not primarily a history of windmill-tilting. There are and have been very large numbers of genuine atheists throughout human history — very many more, and in far more diverse settings, than is often assumed. Atheism is not, as many of these volumes' chapters also testify, purely a modern, western, or elite phenomenon. In the current jargon of the social sciences, there might be a lot of "WEIRD" atheists, but atheism itself is very far indeed from being an exclusively WEIRD phenomenon. [The acronym refers to people raised in "Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) societies" (Henrich et al. 2010) and who, far from constituting the social, cultural, and psychological "human norm," are outliers in many deep,

important respects.] In very many cases, historians, sociologists, and anthropologists have only fairly recently begun uncovering and studying them. While there have been a relatively small number of book-length treatments of the "history of atheism" published over the past fifty years, these have typically focused on western atheism(s), whether explicitly or implicitly. They have also tended to follow a somewhat formulaic track, concentrating primarily on intellectual history: typically beginning with the pre-Socratics and tracing a more-or-less linear progression through European history (perhaps with an added "American" chapter covering Paine, Ingersoll, the Scopes Monkey Trial, etc.), and ending at some symbolic point in the twentieth century (Russell, the fall of the Berlin Wall) or, if published in the last decade or so, with New Atheism. We have no desire to deride this enterprise; indeed, we are proud to have overseen an especially fine example of the genre, in the eight chapters comprising The Oxford Handbook of Atheism's "History of (Western) Atheism" section (Bullivant and Ruse 2013, 139-260). But dearly, they are very far from the full story.

Recognizing this problem is, however, only the beginning. Thankfully, over the past decade or two, a growing number of scholars — ranging from gnarled "one last job before retirement" veterans to "hungry kids trying to make a name for themselves"' — have begun to address precisely these lacunae (Alexander, 2019). Critically, as well as individually producing innovative and insightful work, they have organized. A multidisciplinary "Nonreligion and Secularity Research Network" (NSRN) was founded in 20o8, followed by a dedicated "International Society for Historians of Atheism, Secularism, and Humanism" (ISHASH) in 2014. Many contributors to this Cambridge History of Atheism are members of one or both, and we have made liberal and grateful use of both networks' social and intellectual capital in identifying potential authors (with particular thanks here due to Dr. Nathan Alexander, co-founder of ISHASH). These networks have in turn spawned, directly and indirectly, conferences, curricula, research projects, journals (Secularism and Nonreligion, Secular Studies), and book series (NYU Press' "Secular Studies," De Gruyter's "Religion and Its Others," Palgrave Macmillan's "Histories of Sacred and Secular, 1700-2000"). We might well also add here the belated addition of volumes dedicated to "atheism" or "secularism" or "humanism" to leading, blue-ribbon reference series (in addition to those already mentioned: Grayling and Copson 2015; Zuckerman and Shook 207). While academic fads and trends du jour may come and go — there is no shortage of failed (sub)fields — this burgeoning "academic architecture" is a strong indicator that non-religion studies is now firmly established (in more detail, see Bullivant 2020b).

The reasons why studying atheism and related topics seemed so suddenly to emerge as a "hot topic" since the dawn of the new millennium is itself an interesting question, having only rarely been much of one before. Concerning the latter, academic perversity, obscurantism, myopia, and sheer bloody-mindedness cannot, indeed must not ever, be discounted as an explanation here. Yet that does not account for why, in several disciplines (induding both intellectual and social history, as well as sociology, anthropology, psychology) and across many countries, there issued first a steady stream, and now a mighty river, of articles and books, either breaking new ground in wholly new areas, or else fruitfully revisiting relatively well-trodden paths. New Atheism played a role in this, to be sure, including — of particular relevance here — its leading authors' own, often problematic handling of historical evidence and arguments (Painter 2014; Johnstone 2018). But New Atheism was itself, as several of the growing band of atheism researchers have detailed at length, part of much wider and deeper social, cultural, and political currents (Amarasingam 2010; Cimino and Smith 2014; Cotter et al. 2017).

Whatever the ultimate reasons and motivations, readers of these two volumes should and will be very grateful for them. First, and most obviously, this Cambridge History is a much more ambitious affair than anything previously attempted: sixty chapters, spread over two volumes, and authored by a world-leading collection of experts. Second, while covering the standard ground of "western atheism" (and indeed, much more fully and rigorously than attempted in any previous work), very

significant attention is given to the atheism(s) of other contexts, both geographical and sociocultural (e.g. women's, black, and working-class atheisms in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; atheism online; atheistic themes in music, literature, film, and the visual arts), and from a wealth of historiographical perspectives. None of this would have been possible, on anything like this scale, even ten years ago. The recent surge of scholarly interest in atheism and related topics is reflected on almost every page of these two tomes.

Assiduous introduction-readers will be pleased that we are here eschewing the bewilderingly common editorial practice of offering potted synopses of each chapter here: "A bad cover version . . . is not the real thing" (Cocker [2005] 2011, 101). Just go read them. Accordingly, it remains only for us to observe and lament a number of absences. Even a massive undertaking such as this cannot and should not aim to be exhaustive. Some topics we might have included, but decided against due to constraints of space or focus ("to the great detriment of the overall enterprise": There. We've said it, so journal reviewers don't have to.) Most obviously, we have had to be selective in which geographical "case studies" to focus on in the penultimate section. There are also topics which we had hoped to include but could not. We simply could not find someone to do it, or the person we had signed up ended up not being able to, and no suitable replacement could be found in time. Such are the crosses common to all editors in this postlapsarian lacrimarum valle: we bear them as stoically as others. Of a wholly different order, however, is another kind of absence.

The original proposal for this volume, submitted in 2017, contained a "wish list" of planned chapters and dreamed-of contributors. Among them, naturally enough, was Dr. Sonja Luehrmann of Simon Fraser University, whose incisive studies of Soviet-era Russian atheism had placed her very firmly in our minds. Two books in particular, Secularism Soviet Style: Teaching Atheism and Religion in a Volga Republic and Religion in Secular Archives: Soviet Atheism and Historical Knowledge, established her at the vanguard of the new history of atheism. We were, therefore, delighted that she graciously accepted our cold-call invitation to write.

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Reflections by Michael Ruse

One of us, Stephen Bullivant, wrote the Introduction to this collection, so it seemed like a good idea to have the other, Michael Ruse, write a short, de facto Epilogue. Ruse is a philosopher and so what he has to say rather reflects his field of scholarship. In particular, in looking at such a project as this, a large collection of essays on the history of atheism — probably the most exhausting project that either of us will engage in during our whole academic careers, but also one of the most exhilarating and important — Ruse's inclination is to turn to Immanuel Kant for guidance. In his Critique of Practical Reason (1788), the great German philosopher wrote: "Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and more steadily we reflect on them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me." What can I know? — epistemology — What should I do? — ethics.

Epistemological Questions

What can I know? What can I know about atheism? Well, first there is the question of meaning. Philosophers are often ridiculed because of their obsession with language, an impression hardly dispelled when you learn the important twentieth-century, Austro-British philosopher, Ludwig Wittgenstein, said "Philosophical problems arise when language goes on holiday" (1953, §38). Well, as a general statement, that simply isn't true. It's not a language problem about whether a tree makes a sound falling in the forest when no one is around. But Wittgenstein did have a point. A huge amount of time is wasted in arguing about things, when it turns out that people are arguing about things that may have the same name but have entirely different meanings. A fundamentalist Christian

and a postmodern theologian may argue for hours about whether or not God exists, and then it turns out that the fundamentalist is defending someone like the old chap in the clouds in a bedsheet in Michelangelo's "Creation of Adam," whereas the theologian is defending the "ground of our being" or some other incomprehensible entity.

All of this obviously has immediate relevance to the atheism question. Take a paradigmatic atheist: Richard Dawkins. "The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully" (Dawkins 2006, 1). Take a paradigmatic believer, Billy Graham: "True faith is not a blind leap in the dark, with no reason or evidence to support it. Instead, our faith is in the living God, and He has given us all the evidence we'll ever need to show us He is real and worthy of our faith and trust."' Fine and dandy. Now, what about the Dalai Lama? Surely, he is a lot closer — a whole lot closer — to Billy Graham than he is to Richard Dawkins. Or, if you don't much care for evangelicals and/or Americans, what about St. Thomas Aquinas? "The truth of the intelligible things of God is twofold, one to which the inquiry of reason can attain, the other which surpasses the whole range of human reason" (Aquinas 1975 [1259-1265], 7). And yet, the Dalai Lama does not believe in the Creator God, the Designer God, of Christianity (Ruse 2015). He believes in lower orders of Gods, part of the system like humans and lower animals, but there is no one being who thought it all up and kicked it all into being and motion. From that perspective, in any sense of the word, the Dalai Lama is an atheist.

What is the moral to this? What is the bottom line? Obviously, in one sense, you can and should and must use the word "atheist." Richard Dawkins is an atheist. Billy Graham and St. Thomas were not. However, that said, you must be very careful with your use of the word and the inferences you draw from this. It is easy, too easy, to say "Oh, they don't believe in the Christian God. They must be atheists." Not so. They could be Jews, for a start, believing in a Creator/ Designer God, but without some of the frills that Christians ascribe to their God — the Trinity, for instance. Second, they might believe in a God but not a Creator God. This, for instance, seems to be the position of someone like Plato. As he explained in the Timaeus, he believed in a Designer, the Demiurge, but the Designer worked with already-existing materials (Cooper 1997). Did the design come with the material or was the design imposed on the material? Either way, the Designer was not responsible for the existence of the material (Sedley 2008). Plato's position is an early forerunner of what later became known as deism — a god who designed but then did not interfere with the running of the world governed by unbreakable laws. At the time of writing the Origin of Species, this was Charles Darwin's position. "To my mind it accords better with what we know of the laws impressed on matter by the Creator, that the production and extinction of the past and present inhabitants of the world should have been due to secondary causes, like those determining the birth and death of the individual" (Darwin 1859, 488).

Then, third, there are those like the later Darwin, who come under what Darwin's great supporter Thomas Henry Huxley called "agnostic." These are those who simply don't know. Is there a God? Might be. Is there no God? Might be. The present writer falls into this category. It is simple to say that these people are those who don't have the guts to go all the way of their convictions and declare themselves atheists. No doubt there are those who do fit this category. There are, however, those like the present writer who are simply mystified by the whole experience (Ruse 2019; Ruse and Davies 2021). Quantum entanglement, where what happens at one end of the universe is at once reflected in what is happening at the other end of the universe, blows his mind. Despite centuries of agonizing over it, no one really has the slightest idea of the relationship between mind and body (Ruse 2024. And behind all, there is what Heidegger (1959) called the "fundamental problem of metaphysics." Why is there something rather than nothing? The fact that one is a non-

believer doesn't mean that this is not a genuine question, for all that Wittgenstein (1965) pretended otherwise (Ruse 2010). I am with the geneticist J. B. S. Haldane: "My own suspicion is that the Universe is not only queerer than we suppose, but queerer than we can suppose" (Haldane 1927, 286). As Richard Dawkins has said, "Modem physics teaches us that there is more to truth than meets the eye; or than meets the all too limited human mind, evolved as it was to cope with medium-sized objects moving at medium speeds through medium distances in Africa" (Dawkins 2003, 19). Fourth and finally, there are those like the Dalai Lama who, while they may qualify formally as atheists, see the world as bursting with meaning — meaning that very much has humans as central. Meaning with a capital "M."

That's four meanings to "atheist," and the inventive thinker can probably identify more. At once, this discussion about meaning leads straight to questions about existence and proof. Let us agree that there are some claims that are true, whatever the reason, and someone who denies them is either ignorant or irrational. Mathematical claims, such as 2 + 2= 4, fall into this category. Perhaps they are true because of something akin to the Platonic forms.

Perhaps they are true because of relationships between objects, with no further objective referent. They are true nevertheless and the person who claims that 2 + 2 = 5 is wrong. End of argument, or, rather, no argument. Now, there are certainly those who think the same about God's existence. In his Autobiography, Charles Darwin wrote of an experience of his (non-believing) physician parent, Dr. Robert Darwin: "My father used to quote an unanswerable argument, by which an old lady, a Mrs Barlow, who suspected him of unorthodoxy, hoped to convert him: - 'Doctor, I know that sugar is sweet in my mouth, and I know that my Redeemer liveth'" (1958, 96). But generally, I think it true to say, that even the firmest believers sometimes have doubts and even the firmest non-believers also sometimes have doubts.

I am put in mind of the farcical parody of a Church of England vicar's sermon - "Take a pew" - performed by the actor/ writer Alan Bennett in the review "Beyond the fringe":

> Life, you know, is rather like opening a tin of sardines. We are all of us looking for the key. And, I wonder, how many of you here tonight have wasted years of your lives loking behind the kitchen dressers of this life for that key.
>
> Others think they've found the key, don't they? They roll back the lid of the sardine tin of life, they reveal the sardines, the riches of life, therein, and they get them out, they enjoy them. But, you know, there's always a little bit in the corner you can't get out. I wonder - I wonder, is there a little bit in the corner of your life? I know there is in mine.

In arguments about God and His existence or non-existence, there's always a little bit in the corner you can't get out. For some noted believers there is always a great deal more in the corner that you cannot get out. Mother Teresa, for instance, was subject to powerful and frequent dark clouds of doubt and non-belief (Bojaxhiu 2009). The same for non-believers. In a letter written toward the end of his life, Charles Darwin said:

> I may state that my judgment often fluctuates. Moreover, whether a man deserves to be called a theist depends on the definition of the term: which is much too large a subject for a note. In my most extreme fluctuations I have never been an atheist in the sense of denying the existence of a God. - I think that generally (& more and more so as I grow older) but not always, that an agnostic would be the most correct description of my state of mind. (Letter to John Fordyce, 7 May 1879)

One doubts that Richard Dawkins has ever been subject to powerful and frequent dark clouds of anything very much, but even he admits that there might be a very, very, very little bit in the corner that you can't get out.

Logically, it is possible that there may be something to the God business; albeit, highly, highly, highly unlikely.

Ethics

These are issues that have been explored in great detail in the chapters in this collection, so there is no need here to say more on the subject. Rather, to use it as the plank across the chasm leading us from epistemology to ethics. Perhaps the most important finding of all in the atheism debate is the extent to which this is a moral issue and not just a matter of facts. This would not be so were God's existence a matter on a par with the truth that 2 + 2 = 4. You may ignore the fact that 2 + 2 = 4, and it could be immoral for you to do so. But whether 2 + 2 = 4 or not is not a moral issue. But God's existence is, and always has been, a moral issue. Given that there is the possibility of mistake, should you deny the existence of God? Given that there is the possibility of mistake, should you affirm the existence of God?

Plato set the tone for the immorality of denying the existence of God. In the Laws he wrote:

> Who can be calm when he is called upon to prove the existence of the Gods? Who can avoid hating and abhorring the men who are and have been the cause of this argument; I speak of those who will not believe the tales which they have heard as babes and sucklings from their mothers and nurses, repeated by them both in jest and earnest, like charms, who have also heard them in the sacrificial prayers, and seen sights accompanying them —sights and sounds delightful to children — and their parents during the sacrifices showing an intense earnestness on behalf of their children and of themselves, and with eager interest talking to the Gods, and beseeching them, as though they were firmly convinced of their existence; who likewise see and hear the prostration and invocations which are made by Hellenes and barbarians at the rising and setting of the sun and moon, in all the vicissitudes of life, not as if they thought that there were no Gods, but as if there could be no doubt of their existence, and no suspicion of their nonexistence; when men, knowing all these things, despise them on no real grounds, as would be admitted by all who have any particle of intelligence, and when they force us to say what we are now saying, how can any one in gentle terms remonstrate with the like of them, when he has to begin by proving to them the very existence of the Gods? (Cooper 1997, Laws, Book X)

People like this undermine morality and destroy society. This is an argument that has gone in a straight line from the Greeks to the present. Thus, John Locke in his Letter on Toleration:

> Those are not at all to be tolerated who deny the Being of a God. Promises, Covenants, and Oaths, which are the Bonds of Humane Society, can have no hold upon an Atheist. The taking away of God, though but even in thought, dissolves all. Besides also, those that by their Atheism undermine and destroy all Religion, can have no pretence of Religion whereupon to challenge the Privilege of a Toleration. (Locke 1983 [1685])

This is the theme of countless evangelical sermons today:

> The simple reality is that we live in a godless world. Of course, I don't mean that there isn't a God, or that the true and living God is not active in our world. I mean that the natural state of every person is wickedness, godlessness, and evil. It has always been this way, and it always will be this way.

It isn't going to get better:

> At some point, the "lawless one" will come, and he will come in power, with false signs and wonders. He will be so impressive, so powerful, that many unbelievers will be deceived by him. The wickedness promoted and perpetuated by the lawless one will be on a colossal, sickening scale.

Although, fortunately, God will in the end put a stop to it:

> Yeah, it's bad. Yeah, it's gonna get worse. But the gospel will continue to triumph, Jesus will remain on the throne, and Jesus will finally rid the world of wickedness.

Going the other way, the tune is much the same. Believing in the existence of God is going to lead to immoral behavior. The New Atheist Sam Harris is particularly eloquent. It was 9/11 that sparked his outbursts, and the treatment of Islam by him and his co-thinkers is on a par with the thinking of Bull Connor on the Negro Question. As so often, criticism is ecumenical. Warming things up, the Nazis and the Holocaust are given star treatment. That Nazi anti-Semitism is rooted in Christianity is accepted uncritically. "And while the hatred of Jews in Germany [under the Nazis] expressed itself in a predominantly secular way, it was a direct inheritance from medieval Christianity" (Harris 2004, 101). This despite the fact that while Hitler certainly believed in some kind of guiding Providence — something has to explain his overconfident stupidity in invading Russia — he was ever condescendingly critical of Christianity and its adherents (Kershaw 2000). Harris is even-handed in his prejudices. He hates Roman Catholics, from their complicity in getting the Nazi leaders safely off to South America when things started to go wrong, to putting Descartes' Meditations on the index of forbidden books. Protestants are no more loved. Martin Luther's anti-Semitism, as is usual on these occasions, comes into play. Harris (2004, 106) concludes gloomily: "Unfortunately, this catalog of horrors could be elaborated upon indefinitely. Auschwitz, the Cathar heresy, the witch hunts these phrases signify depths of human depravity and human suffering that would surely elude description were a writer to set himself no other task."

Perhaps expectedly from one raised in the bosom of the Church of England, for Richard Dawkins (2006) the Catholic Church is a particular focus of loathing. Obviously, in part, this is a direct function of the ways in which the sexual predators in the clergy have done untold harm to innocent children and the perhaps even-more-culpable behavior of their superiors who denied and concealed the crimes for so long. However, Dawkins thinks even greater harm is done by bringing a child up Catholic in the first place. The gloomy superstition, the sexual repression, the knee bending before false authority — nothing can equal the wrong in making another human being cowed by these. And so on and so forth.

Finis

Enough. In this brief Epilogue I do not seek to cover again territory well explored in the chapters of this collection and elsewhere, including the earlier collection on atheism edited by Stephen Bullivant and Michael Ruse (2013). I seek rather to bring this collection to a dose by emphasizing again the absolutely central importance of the topic or rather topics of this collection, and to congratulate our contributors in their testament to the worth and meaning of our existence here on earth, irrespective of whether there be a hereafter or not. His thoughts on the God question (all too expectedly) got the great seventeenth-century philosopher Baruch Spinoza into hot water with the elders of his synagogue. Today, it is he whom we remember, not them. "The highest activity a human being can attain is learning for understanding, because to understand is to be free" (Spinoza 1985 [1677]). Free of fear in thinking about the God question. <>

THE PASSION OF PERPETUA AND FELICITAS IN LATE ANTIQUITY by L. Stephanie Cobb and Andrew S. Jacobs [University of California Press, 9780520379039]

This volume gathers all available evidence for the martyrdoms of Perpetua and Felicitas, two Christian women who became, in the centuries after their deaths in 203 CE, revered throughout the Roman world. Whereas they are now known primarily through a popular third-century account, numerous lesser known texts attest to the profound place they held in the lives of Christians in late antiquity. This book brings together narratives in their original languages with accompanying English translations, including many related entries from calendars, martyrologies, sacramentaries, and chronicles, as well as artistic representations and inscriptions. As a whole, the collection offers readers a robust view of the veneration of Perpetua and Felicitas over the course of six centuries, examining the diverse ways that a third-century Latin tradition was appreciated, appropriated, and transformed as it circulated throughout the late antique world.

Reviews

"This is one of those books of such obvious importance that it leaves you wondering why no one has ever thought to do this before. Bringing together the many texts and traditions of Perpetua and Felicitas, this volume does a great service to scholarship."—Paul Middleton, author of *The Violence of the Lamb: Martyrs as Agents of Divine Judgement in the Book of Revelation*

"What happened to the reputations of the martyrs Perpetua and Felicitas after their deaths? This fine book provides answers to that question, offering a compilation of sources from the familiar to the obscure, along with introductory analyses of each text that are always helpful and often extraordinarily insightful. It's a must for researchers."—Joyce E. Salisbury, author of *Perpetua's Passion: Death and Memory of a Late Roman Woman*

CONTENTS

Excerpt: In the early third century, the Romans executed the catechumens Perpetua and Felicitas in North Africa in ceremonies to honor Geta's birthday, the younger son of Emperor Septimius Severus. The story of their martyrdoms is told in the Passio Perpetuae et Felicitatis. In addition to these female martyrs, the Passio names Revocatus, Saturninus, and Secundulus as having been arrested with the women. Another Christian, Saturus—perhaps their catechist—turned himself over to the authorities after his fellow Christians were arrested. We learn nothing about the backgrounds of Saturninus or Secundulus, but Revocatus and Felicitas were slaves (conserva), and Felicitas was eight months pregnant. The author gives more information about Perpetua: she was around twenty-

two years old, educated, well-born, properly married, had a father, a mother, and two brothers—one of whom was also a catechumen—and she was nursing a young son. If the narrator correctly identifies her as "Vibia" Perpetua, then she came from a prominent family in North Africa. As the narrative progresses, we also learn that Perpetua had another brother, Dinocrates, who died of cancer.

Despite the text's scant details about these Christians, the Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas is among the best known and most beloved early Christian martyr texts. It is often found in the syllabuses of Great Books courses and Western civilization courses, as well as in specialized courses on women in early Christianity, or martyrdom and persecution. It is also a favorite of scholars of early Christianity, who examine, for example, its gendered language, its claim to be a firsthand account by a female Christian, its possible ties to the New Prophecy movement, its ecclesiology and soteriology, and its reflections on life in Roman North Africa.

The editor of the Passio purports to transmit, unchanged, the writings of two of the martyrs. Perpetua's first-person account of her arrest and imprisonment includes four visions she received while awaiting execution; in addition, she tells about her experiences in prison, her difficult encounters with her father, and her worries about her young son (chs. 3–10). Saturus's first-person account is of a vision he received in which he and Perpetua are taken to paradise (chs. 11–13). The framing chapters (1–2 and 14–21) are the work of an anonymous editor who provides a liturgical preface to the Passio, narrates the martyrs' deaths, and closes with a doxology.

The editor of the Passio does not relate the reason for the catechumens' arrests. Scholars have traditionally attributed it to an edict issued by Emperor Septimius Severus that made conversion to Judaism or Christianity illegal. This theory has the benefit of explaining why the catechumens were arrested, while other members of the church had no fears about visiting them in prison. Unfortunately, though, there is no corroborating evidence of this edict by Severus, which many scholars now see as yet one more piece of unreliable information provided by the Historia Augusta. Thus, as with other early Christian martyr accounts, we do not know what led to the Christians' arrests or on what charges they were condemned to death.

History And Dating Of The Passio

The Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas is the standard modern title for the text, but the manuscript history reveals that the text circulated under a variety of titles After having been lost to history, the Passio came to light again in the early modern period when Lucas Holstenius discovered a manuscript containing the Latin text in the Benedictine Monte Cassino monastery. This text was published posthumously in 1663 under the title Passio sanctarum martyrum Perpetuae et Felicitatis. In 1664 another edition of the Monte Cassino manuscript was published, this time accompanied by an abridged version of the Passio in Latin. This shorter version is now known, following C. J. M. J. van Beek's title, as the Acta brevia sanctarum Perpetuae et Felicitatis. Despite being rediscovered at almost the same time, by 1689 the Acta had been passed over by scholars in favor of the Passio. From late antiquity to the early modern period, however, the tradition about the martyrs may have been best known through the shorter Acta.5 Indeed, it was the Acta that Jacobus de Voragine utilized in writing his account of Perpetua and Felicitas in the Legenda aurea. Manuscript witnesses for the Acta are considerably more numerous than for the Passio: Van Beek lists eighty-nine manuscripts of the Acta (seventy-six of A and thirteen of B), dating from the eighth to seventeenth century. There are ten extant manuscripts of the Passio. The oldest, most numerous, and most widespread sources of the Perpetua tradition, then, are found in the manuscripts of the Acta.

In 1889 Rendel Harris discovered the Greek text of the Passio in the library of the Convent of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. At that time, Harris argued for the priority of the Greek version. Although the relationships among the Latin Passio, the Greek recension, and the Acta have been

disputed, scholars are now in general agreement that the original account was written in Latin, with the Greek translation dating as early as ca. 260 ce, and the Acta being produced in the fourth or fifth century. The Greek text does not appear to have been translated directly from any of our extant Latin texts. Instead, the Latin and Greek texts of the martyr account, along with the Acta, appear to derive from earlier Latin exemplars. The original text of the Passio has not been preserved. All of our manuscripts—nine Latin and one Greek—date to the medieval period (ninth–twelfth century). Most scholars consider MS 1 (Monte Cassino) to be the most reliable witness to the Passio, and, thus, it forms the basis of all modern critical editions.

Although often conflated, the date of the events narrated (i.e., the deaths of the Christians) should be differentiated from the date of the written account (i.e., the Passio). The Latin Passio does not explicitly date the persecution that led to the martyrs' deaths. Nevertheless, scholars use internal evidence to situate the martyrdoms in a specific historical context. According to the Passio, Hilarianus was procurator when the proconsul, Minucius Timinianus, died (6.3; "Timinianus" appears to be a misspelling of "Opimianus"). At that time, Hilarianus assumed the position of acting proconsul. Minucius Opimianus was proconsul in 202/203. Since the Passio dates the arrest, trial, and deaths of the martyrs in the time immediately following Opimianus's death in 203 ce, this would explain why the editor mentions his death and why Hilarianus had been given "capital authority" (6.3). By piecing together corroborating information from later martyrologies and calendars, scholars generally agree that the Christians died between 202 and 204 ce. The year 203 ce is most commonly given for their deaths.

Scholars have also reached general agreement on the day of the martyrs' deaths, although the Latin Passio does not specify it, either. According to the CodexCalendar of 354, Prosper's Chronicon, and other material evidence, the martyrs died on 7 March. It is this date that is most widely cited in modern and ancient references to the martyrdoms. The Greek translation of the Passio, however, specifies a different date: the Christians died "four days before the nones of February" (i.e., 1 February). Unsurprisingly, the different textual traditions—Latin and Greek—influenced the liturgical calendars of the Eastern and Western parts of the empire: the martyrs' dies natalis is commemorated in the West on 7 March and in the East on 1 February.

If the martyrs died around 203 CE, the Passio itself still needs to be dated; that is, the date of the martyrdoms is not necessarily the same as the date of the written account. There is both external and internal evidence to consider when dating the Passio. The earliest reference to the martyrs is Tertullian's De anima, which is typically dated before 210/211 CE. If Tertullian utilized a written account of the martyrdoms, then the Passio should be dated sometime before 210 CE in order for it to have become an established authority to which Tertullian could appeal. It is not clear, however, that Tertullian references a text per se; he may merely allude to an oral tradition about the martyrs. Thus, De anima cannot be used as evidence for dating the Passio. The earliest undisputed reference to the Passio is in Pontius's Life of Cyprian. While Pontius does not mention the martyrs themselves, he does provide a clear allusion to the text's prologue. Pontius composed his Life around 259/260 CE. The Passio, therefore, must have been written and circulated prior to this date.

Internal evidence in the Passio may move the date of writing even closer to the time of the martyrdoms themselves. The Monte Cassino manuscript includes a reference to Geta's birthday (7.9). If this reference is original to the text, then the Passio should be dated before 212 CE, when Caracalla issued the damnatio memoriae of Geta. In this case, 211/212 CE would be the latest date of composition. Moreover, the text refers to Geta as "Geta Caesar," a title he assumed in 198 CE and kept until 209 CE, when he took the title "Augustus." On this basis, we may date the composition of the text to roughly 203–209 CE. Thomas Heffernan suggests that the reference to Geta's birthday gives weight to the earlier date—namely, 203 CE— since records indicate that Septimius Severus and his sons spent the fall of 202 through the early summer of 203 in North

Africa. If Geta's fourteenth birthday was celebrated in North Africa, it would explain Perpetua's comment in the Passio. In the end, however—since this dating is largely reliant on one manuscript—we may be somewhat more certain of the date of the narrative setting than we can be of the final text.

More specific overviews of the texts and material remains will be provided in the introductions that precede each. Four overarching issues, however, deserve attention here, since they have historically sparked the most disagreement among scholars.

Authorship And Authorial Authenticity

The central portion of the Passio is typically described as Perpetua's prison "diary." It is written in the first person and purports to contain her emotional, physical, and visionary experiences in prison. Saturus's vision is also written in the first person. The editor underscores the reliability of these accounts by claiming they are the ipsissima verba of the martyrs. He records Perpetua's own account "as she left behind written in her own hand and from her own experience" (2.3); similarly, he asserts that "Saturus made public this vision of his own, which he himself wrote down" (11.1).

Heffernan, among others, argues that the rhythms and syntax of the portions attributed to Perpetua and Saturus differ from each other and from the editorial frame; thus, he concludes, it is reasonable to accept the authorial attributions as reliable. Absent any conflicting information, that is, the text's claims concerning authorship should be believed. Since the editor explains that Perpetua was well educated, the literary skills reflected in these chapters are attributable to her education. Some scholars, such as Peter Dronke, moreover, have argued for the reliability of Perpetua's diary by claiming that it contains particular "feminine" topics (e.g., breastfeeding) and ways of writing.

Not all scholars, however, accept the authorial claims of the Passio. Those who are skeptical of the authorial attributions of the text argue that it would be difficult to pen such lengthy and moving literary accounts in prison. They also point out that the descriptions in Perpetua's account do not cohere with expectations of Roman women in the third century. Most skeptics, moreover, are unconvinced that the style of writing found in Perpetua's portion of the text is identifiably "feminine."

The acceptance of the authorship claims has often led to unnecessary psychological interpretations of the text; such readings focus more on the interiority of Perpetua's emotional life than historians can reasonably access. Even if Perpetua were the author of the visions that have been transmitted in her name, they cannot reveal to us her inner psychological life. It seems, furthermore, that it is this perceived closeness to the martyr herself that has led scholars to privilege the "original text" and to ignore its later—and perhaps more influential—iterations. It is this problem that I hope to remedy in this volume by placing the Latin text alongside— without undue privilege—all other late ancient memories that have been preserved. Together these texts and traditions tell a larger and more important story of cultural appreciation, transmission, and appropriation than the Latin Passio could ever tell on its own, even if it were written by Perpetua and Saturus themselves.

Arguments surrounding the authorship of the Passio will continue to rage because there is, in the end, no definitive resolution to them. We may never know whether Perpetua and Saturus wrote these accounts or if the Passio preserves a forgery. Indeed, even if the visionary cycles were penned by someone other than the editor, we cannot know who penned them. Attributions of authorship are difficult to make for ancient texts in the best of circumstances—that is, when multiple texts are ascribed to the same person, such as in the Pauline corpus of the New Testament. But when there are no other texts to which to compare a document, we should not make unequivocal claims about its origins and hand.

Even if it is not possible to make a compelling argument for (or against) the authorship of the first-person narratives attributed to Perpetua and Saturus, we can safely discuss the editorial interests of this text. The compiler of the Passio was manifestly interested in setting this account of martyrdom alongside other authoritative Christian texts. He asserts that recent accounts of God's action in the world are no less important or revealing than those that occurred in the past; they illustrate the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit within the Christian community. He reminds his readers that these recent events will also someday be ancient, just as the authoritative traditions are now. The final chapter of the Passio suggests that the editor intended it to be used in liturgical contexts.

Scholars have occasionally attributed the final text to Tertullian. Indeed, J. Armitage Robinson did so in 1891, citing similarities of language between Tertullian's authentic writings and the Passio. There is no reason to assume Tertullian was the editor, though, and the case is seldom made today. Arguments in favor of Tertullian's authorship often rely on circumstantial evidence: he was in North Africa, he also wrote about the continued work of the Holy Spirit—citing the obvious scriptural passages—and he knew traditions about the martyrs. But this description must be true of many Christians in the North African church. Simply because we believe Tertullian lived in Carthage at the time the text was written and that he demonstrates knowledge of the martyrs is not evidence for his hand in editing the text. To borrow Maureen Tilley's words, "Proximity does not guarantee authorship." In fact, one argument often made against Tertullian as author of the Passio is that in De anima he may misattribute Saturus's vision to Perpetua.

Original Language

Although scholars are now in general agreement that the Passio was originally written in Latin, there has been considerable debate on this issue since Harris first argued for the priority of the Greek in his 1890 publication of the Greek text. Harris himself later changed his mind and conceded that Latin was the language of composition. But some scholars—for example, Robin Lane Fox and Glen Bowersock—continue to suggest that the Greek was original.

Arguments for the priority of the Latin Passio are typically mounted on the basis of language and syntax. Robinson argued in 1891 that the Latin text preserved three distinct voices, while the Greek text was homogeneous; thus, the Greek text appears to be the work of one person whose translation has obscured the differences in the Latin prose styles. For example, in Latin, the editor's prose is complex with a tendency toward subordinating clauses, while "Perpetua's" prose is characterized by short, simple sentences. The uniformity of the Greek version suggests that its author flattened out the differences in voice and syntax in the process of translation. The Greek text also appears to be more indebted to doctrinal terminology than is the Latin, and it is more likely to quote passages from scripture, suggesting, perhaps, a later, more theologically oriented author.

Though acknowledging that Latin was the original language of the Passio, Jan Bremmer has argued that the Greek text, in some places, represents an older tradition than the Latin and can be used to supplement and interpret difficult passages in the Latin text. For instance, he argues that the Greek text correctly preserves the location of the catechumens' arrest, Thuburbo Minus, and the identity of the proconsul, Minicius Opimianus, who preceded Hilarianus.

In addition to questions regarding the language of composition of the entire Passio, debates have raged concerning the original language of discrete parts. Some, for instance, have argued that Perpetua wrote in Greek, and, thus, a large part of the Passio was originally in Greek, only subsequently translated into Latin by the editor. Bowersock—and E. R. Dodds before him—makes this claim because, in his view, certain passages of the Greek are more precise and culturally appropriate than the Latin. In addition, Perpetua's brother, Dinocrates, has a Greek name, perhaps suggesting a Greek background for her family. On the other side of the argument, however, Walter Ameling has argued that the Greek aspects of Perpetua's text amount to nothing more than

loanwords. Similarly, there have been claims that Saturus's vision was originally composed in Greek. In his vision, however, Saturus specifies that Perpetua spoke Greek to the feuding clerics (13.4). If the vision were written in Greek, such a notice would be hard to explain: Why would Saturus specify the Greek language if the vision were already in Greek? These arguments concerning the language of the visions have not been adopted by the majority of scholars. Whether or not the original text was composed by a single author or was pieced together from multiple sources by an editor, there is almost universal agreement among scholars today that the Passio as a whole was originally composed in Latin.

Association With The New Prophecy

As with the question about authorship, whether or not the Passio reflects the New Prophecy movement continues to divide scholars. Arguments in favor of the Passio's Montanist leanings go back to the text's modern rediscovery: Henri de Valesius introduced this thesis in the preface to his 1664 edition of the Monte Cassino manuscript. According to some scholars, the Passio in its entirety has been influenced by the New Prophecy; recently, this position has been argued most strenuously by Rex Butler. For others, the editor—but not the martyrs—is responsible for the Montanist aspects of the text. There is an interesting confessional divide among scholars on this issue, as Butler and Christoph Markschies note: Protestant scholars tend to argue in favor of the text's Montanist associations, while Catholic scholars tend to argue against them.

The New Prophecy was attractive to some in Carthage, as Tertullian shows us. Indeed, if Tertullian were the editor of the Passio, that might provide some evidence of its heterodoxy. Scholars who posit the Passio as a Montanist text often do so by citing its interests in supposedly Montanist beliefs: the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit, the leadership of women, visionary experiences, and an elevated eschatology. The problem with this approach, however, is twofold. First, it imports the New Prophecy of Phrygia—that of Montanus, Priscilla, Maximilla, and Quintilla—to North Africa. But the evidence demonstrates that Montanism was practiced differently in areas across the empire. Indeed, it is difficult to establish peculiarly Montanist positions at all, since New Prophecy teachings differed by geographical location. We cannot assume that what obtained in Asia Minor was identical to that which obtained in North Africa or Rome. The second problem with this approach is that many of the so-called defining elements of Montanism were not unique to the schismatic group but, rather, held true for the Catholic Church at large in third-century North Africa (viz. the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit and elevated eschatology). Other aspects are well attested in early Christian literature (viz. visions), and others still were quite clearly not practiced in North Africa (viz. women's leadership).

In the end, the question "Is the Passio a Montanist text?" is anachronistic. As recent scholarship has demonstrated, lines between "orthodox" and "heretical" were fluid in the early centuries of Christian history. In third-century North Africa, in fact, there is no evidence of a split in the church between Catholics and Montanists; the Catholic Church of Carthage accommodated all of these Christians. Although parts of the Passio's prologue may contain sentiments similar to those advanced by the New Prophecy, it is more accurate to assign these to the North African Christian context generally than to a schismatic—much less, heretical—position. At the very least, one should note that the Passio was accepted by the Catholic Church and incorporated into its liturgy without a hint that it originated from or was reflective of a schismatic movement.

Geographical Location

Just as the Latin Passio does not specify the date of the martyrdoms, neither does it give a precise geographical location for the events it narrates. Later traditions place the martyrs' trial and execution in Carthage. Internal evidence in the Passio also suggests Carthage as the location of the narrated events. According to the text, Hilarianus was a procurator and assumed the role of

proconsul upon the death of Minucius Opimianus. While there were up to six procurators in Africa Proconsularis, there were only two in Carthage, the consular seat. It is likely, then, that Hilarianus was one of the procurators in Carthage who then assumed the role of proconsul there. Since the proconsul oversaw capital offenses, we can safely locate the trial in Carthage.

While the location of the trial and execution is uniformly agreed upon, where the Christians lived and where they were arrested remain the subject of some debate. The arguments in favor of Thuburbo Minus as the home of the martyrs are drawn largely from the Greek text, which reads, "In the city of Thuburbo Minus, the young catechumens were arrested" (2.1). In addition, MSS G and E and both Acta preserve Thuburbo as the location of arrest. Other available data—for example, the Monte Cassino manuscript of the Passio, the Codex-Calendar of 354, and Prosper's Chronicon—remain silent on the matter.

William Tabbernee suggests that the original Passio did not specify a location because it did not need to: it was written for the community from which the martyrs came. As time passed and the tradition spread farther, a city was added for historical reference. Such a scenario does not require, of course, that the addition was correct. According to Tabbernee, all internal evidence points to Carthage rather than Thuburbo Minus. Likewise, Heffernan finds it unlikely that the Greek would retain this historically reliable detail when our best Latin text does not. In addition, he argues that there is no evidence of Christians in the village at the beginning of the third century. But, if the martyrs were from Thuburbo Minus, he continues, they would likely have been tried and executed there, since the village had an amphitheater. Heffernan asserts that the Passio assumes a larger cosmopolitan area, like Carthage, and that Thuburbo Minus was added into the manuscript tradition through the fifth-century Acta, which had obtained the information from the Martyrologium Hieronymianum.

Bremmer and Jan den Boeft take the opposite side of the case: while the martyrs were executed in Carthage, they were arrested in Thuburbo Minus. In arriving at this position, they cite the similar traditions found in MSS G and E of the Passio (in civitate Tuburbitanal Tyburtina minore), the Greek manuscript H, and the second edition of the ninth-century martyrology Martyrologium Flori Lugdunensis (in Mauretania, civitate Tuburbitanorum), which drew from the Passio. To this evidence, they add the witnesses of the Acta, which specify that the martyrs were from Thuburbo (I: in civitate Turbitanorum; II: Tuburbita). They propose that just as the Greek text, which, they argue, descends from a superior Latin exemplar, better preserves the name of the proconsul (Minicius Opimianus), and the name of another of the confessors (Jucundus), so also it correctly preserves the name of the city in which the Christians were arrested.

As with much of the preceding discussion, the disagreements concerning the martyrs' relationship to Thuburbo Minus must stay academic. Barring new information, we cannot know more than the fact that the Christians were tried and executed in Carthage, in Africa Proconsularis. The martyrs' historical relationship—or lack thereof—to Thuburbo Minus cannot be ascertained with any reliability on the basis of the extant manuscript traditions.

. . .

The robust textual and material history of the Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas is unparalleled in late antiquity. Because of this rich history, we can trace the transmission of the Passio's traditions from North Africa to Spain to Istria and into Northumbria. This history spans the time when Christianity was susceptible to communal and/or imperial prosecution to the time of Christian dominance. The Carthaginian martyrs, at times, stood for Christian resistance to Rome; at other times, they represented Caecilianists in opposition to Donatists (and Donatists in opposition to Caecilianists); they were used as anchors of orthodoxy in the Arian debates and in the "Three Chapters Controversy" The text served as a model for some martyr texts and was criticized by others. The Latin Passio has been studied, commented upon, and mined since its rediscovery in the seventeenth

century. The afterlife of the text, however, has been neglected, and, thus, the powerful, unique witness of this tradition has, unfortunately, fallen silent.

The lack of scholarly attention to this expansive history is due, at least in part, to inaccessibility. On the one hand, a number of the standard volumes in which these texts are found are out of print and not readily available even at many major research libraries. In addition, the texts and material culture have never been gathered together in a single volume. Further, several of the texts have never been translated into English.

There is another, perhaps more foundational issue that may account for the scholarly lack of interest in these later traditions: they are not original. The Latin Passio, deemed the "original" text, has become almost sacred to many scholars, many of whom cherish it as the earliest extant writing by a Christian woman. It is, of course, a valuable text whether or not one believes the attribution of authorship to be authentic. Yet the value of one text does not make a later, even derivative, text unvaluable. This point is a prime motivator in preparing the current volume: these later traditions were valuable—in some cases more valuable than the Latin Passio—to different audiences at different times for different reasons.

My goal in publishing this volume, therefore, is to bring together in one place the various texts and material objects that illustrate the ways the Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas was used by communities across the empire in late antiquity." My aim is not to prove or disprove the historical accuracy of the account of martyrdom but, rather, to present the history of the tradition's transmission through late antiquity. In this way, I hope the volume will resolve the dual problems of the availability and accessibility of these materials by bringing together all of the extant textual and material evidence for the Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas from the third through the eighth century. The volume allows scholars—for the first time—to put these distinct, though related, traditions in conversation, to see the geographical spread of the cult of the martyrs, and to appreciate the differences in community concerns as witnessed by changes to the accounts. With this collection, we can move from the questions of historicity to the questions of reception: How, where, and to what ends were Perpetua and Felicitas remembered and appropriated in late antiquity?

. . .

The volume is divided into four parts: "The Accounts of Martyrdom," "The Interpretations of Martyrdom," "The Celebrations of the Martyrs," and "The Representations of the Martyrs."" Each part groups together similar kinds of witness to the martyrdom tradition. Within each part, the materials are generally organized chronologically, though in some cases other categories have seemed more useful (e.g., authorship). For each item in this volume, I include a brief introduction that aims to contextualize the ways early Christians adopted and utilized the Passio. These introductions assume some basic familiarity with the account of the martyrdoms and are not, therefore, intended to be exhaustive or to serve as substitutes for detailed studies that may be available. Each introduction, however, includes a selected bibliography to direct readers to more specialized examinations. This volume does not present new critical editions of these texts. Such a task is largely unnecessary, since there is general agreement on the textual witnesses. The sources for all materials are included in the introductions.

The following important studies of the Passio are not repeated in the selected bibliographies in the chapters. In all cases, however, these works should be consulted if further study is desired. <>

CARITAS: NEIGHBOURLY LOVE AND THE EARLY MODERN SELF by Katie Bar Clay [Emotions in History, Oxford University Press, 9780198868132]

Caritas, a form of grace that turned our love for our neighbour into a spiritual practice, was expected of all early modern Christians, and corresponded with a set of ethical rules for living that displayed one's love in the everyday. *Caritas* was not just a willingness to behave morally, to keep the peace, and to uphold social order however, but was expected to be felt as a strong passion, like that of a parent to a child. **CARITAS: NEIGHBOURLY LOVE AND THE EARLY MODERN SELF** explores the importance of *caritas* to early modern communities, introducing the concept of the 'emotional ethic'
to explain how neighbourly love become not only a code for moral living but a part of felt experience. As an emotional ethic, *caritas* was an embodied norm, where physical feeling and bodily practices guided right action, and was practiced in the choices and actions of everyday life. Using a case
study of the Scottish lower orders, this book highlights how *caritas* shaped relationships between men and women, families, and the broader community.

Focusing on marriage, childhood and youth, 'sinful sex', privacy and secrecy, and hospitality towards the itinerant poor, **CARITAS** provides a rich analysis of the emotional lives of the poor and the embodied moral framework that guided their behaviour. Charting the period 1660 to 1830, it highlights
how caritas evolved in response to the growing significance of romantic love, as well as new ideas of social relation between men, such as fraternity and benevolence.

Review

"There are many themes in this book that will be of interest to historians working on marriage, childhood and youth, pregnancy, infanticide and rape. There are also fascinating insights into notions of privacy and secrecy, and the practices of neighbourhood socialising, gossip and drinking. Barclay excels at uncovering the details of the lives of the poor, and these are dispersed throughout the book, through brief examples as well as more extended life stories." -- Elizabeth Foyster, University of Cambridge, Family & Community History

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Helen Guthrie had been married for a couple of years when, in c.1670, her Edinburgh neighbour remarked that her husband was an adulterer, his previous wife still being alive. She dismissed the report, remarking to James Vausie, a local baxter, that this ‘business might have made much griefe [in my marriage] but that praised be God they had continued in as great peace love and content as ever’. A century later, Robert Forbes, a mason in Shetland, chose to drop a defamation suit without taking the £50 compensation he was offered, ‘which ... I did for pure Love’; his neighbours, Alexander Henderson and Ann Thomasdaughter, twenty years later were described as having ‘lived

in terms of amity and friendship, and that both of them were remarkably inoffensive and beloved by him this deponent & the whole family and indeed by the whole neighbourhood and parish'. 'I rely [sic] thought that there was more Charity in your heart till now', Donald Ogg wrote angrily to Dr William Sinclair of Lochend in 1794, after their patronage relationship broke down.3 The language of love—amity, friendship, charity, affection—is strewn across the records that offer glimpses into the lives of ordinary Scots in the eighteenth century. Love was a central emotion that shaped social relationships, found not just in the family but also between neighbours, patrons and benefactors, and even the monarch and the people. It was an affective regime that informed how people thought about themselves, others, and the distribution of power—an emotional ethic for everyday life.

That an emotion might offer a model for ethical relations has been explored by a number of feminist scholars in recent years. An 'ethics of kindness' or even 'love' has been offered as an alternative to a way of living that endorses selfishness, competitiveness, and isolation from community. Some scholars have developed such ethics as an act of resistance to the logic of capitalist or neoliberal systems, where success is measured in individual achievements, rather than group relationships. An 'ethics of kindness' is a commitment by both individuals and society to behave kindly—to remember to 'be kind', to think of others when we act, and to view kindness as a key value that shapes our decisionmaking. If the contemporary world embraces kindness as a cultural value, a historian might describe it as the mentalité of an age, an attitude or mindset that fundamentally underpinned, and so can be used to explain, how individuals engaged with the world around them. But kindness is also an emotion or emotional practice, a set of thoughts and actions that is tied to and operates reciprocally with felt experience. Given this, a widespread social and political commitment to kindness could be described as a form of 'emotional regime', to use William Reddy's term, a dominant norm for emotional life that other emotions and emotional practices are defined against. Yet, in some ways, it exceeds this definition, acting not just as a norm, but also as an ethic or value— an emotional aspiration, as well as a constraint. This book argues that love played such a role within early modern Europe, fundamentally shaping ideas of self, how people interacted with each other in community, and the power relationships that emerged from such engagements.

The nexus between self and society—between the individual and community— has been and remains a critical subject of debate in a broad range of disciplines, from history to economics to sociology and social work. It is a question that has been explored from a variety of angles, whether that is a pragmatic focus on how individuals conceptualize their interests in relation to their neighbour, or a philosophizing of the boundaries between body, soul, and environment. Such debate has been historicized in discussions around whether the 'self', or at least 'the individual', is a product of modernity or something more long lasting.

The 'new' history of emotions has provided an important opportunity to rethink the self through its deliberation of how relations of body, mind, and soul are culturally produced and communicated, and in its destabilizing of the relation between interior and exterior selves.10 Indeed, emotion has offered suggestive possibilities for the imagining of human connection with 'the other', where 'collective emotions', variously imagined as contagious and excessive or simply a shared cultural expectation or education, become the immaterial tie that binds people together.

This book intervenes in this debate by positing caritas (a form of love) as an 'emotional ethic' designed to promote a particular type of community relation in early modern Europe. Caritas, the origin of our modern term charity, was (and is) a form of grace—the working of God in the Christian that ensured their expression of love to others, whether a spouse or a neighbour, was moral and ethical. It can be contrasted with lust, a form of love born from human desire or passion that led people to sin. Caritas was a transformative emotion; it turned good works from a cynical ploy to get into heaven into an act of charity, a marker of the transformed Christian. It held

significant resonance in both Catholic and Protestant contexts. In this book, I describe it as an 'emotional ethic', feelings and embodied actions informed by a set of moral principles. As an emotional ethic, caritas was experienced by the Christian as bodily feeling—love for the other—and was evidenced through a set of normative behaviours that were to underpin community relationships. The latter included avoiding violence, peacemaking, charitable giving, monitoring each other's spiritual progress and morality, as well as fulfilling the obligations of one's role in society. This was love that acted as a form of discipline, of constraint, as well as personal self-expression.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, not everyone managed to successfully practise caritas in its ideal form; however, my argument is that understanding caritas as a key ethical practice sheds light on the 'logic' or mentalité of early modern peoples, which in turn helps us interpret key questions of how they conceptualize self and society, and a social order built to moderate that relation. To make this argument, I use a case study of intimate relationships amongst the Scottish lower orders between 1660 and 1830. Eighteenth-century Scotland provides a key site for the analysis of caritas, as a nation where—like most of Europe—the dominance of small villages and medium-sized urban towns produced close-knit community relations that were only latterly put under pressure at the end of the century through migration and population growth. Yet it was also a place, again not unusually, where high levels of geographic mobility, which challenged community boundaries and scope, required a constant renegotiation of what it meant to practise caritas. I argue here that such mobility acted as a mechanism for moderating some of the more oppressive impacts of this 'emotional ethic'.

Scotland has some distinctive national features. Through placing this case study within a broader European scholarship, this book will speak not only to the specific but also to how those distinctive practices help us consider the operation of this 'emotional ethic' in other early modern contexts. Here I particularly note a broad scholarship of religious belief and experience in early modern Europe and the way that religion shaped broader social, economic, and cultural life. Attending to caritas, I suggest, helps provide insight into the logic that underpinned social relationships in early modern Europe and acknowledges the ways that religious belief offered a moral framework for everyday experience, becoming an embodied cultural practice rather than simply a set of principles or doctrines to be followed. Through exploring this case study across a long eighteenth century, this book contributes not only to debates on the rise of the individual in this period, but also to a discussion of what happens to caritas through the changes of the eighteenth century as new ideas of romantic love gain cultural prominence, and old social structures are challenged by those associated with friendship, fraternity, and a language of pity and benevolence.

The argument for this book is built through an analysis of the Scottish lower orders, including the very poor and vagrants. Scotland is fortunate in its rich archive of legal records, marked by a distinctive collection of depositions from both criminals and the many ordinary people who testified in legal suits. They are significant in providing first-person narratives from people of all walks of life. Composed with the aid of a legal clerk, these sources must be interpreted critically, but they offer insight into the emotional world of a community who have thus far been resistant to such analysis. The conditions of lower-order life placed more demands on ties of community, whether that was because of the necessity of assistance in times of economic precarity, the small houses they shared, or the rules of hospitality towards a significant migratory population. Yet, those connections have been harder to access; indeed, a focus on poor relief records by historians—where the poor emphasize their isolation from such community support to engender charitable relief—has tended towards the opposite impression. This book makes a critical contribution to our understanding of early modern emotion by giving voice to the feelings of the lower orders and using that to interpret how this community conceived of themselves in relation to their neighbour.

Caritas in Early Modern Europe

Caritas had been significant to Europeans since at least the medieval period, as the affective bond that produced community and used that relationship as a mechanism for moving towards the divine. For aspirational medieval theologians, caritas was a universal emotion owed to all mankind, including our enemies as well as our friends. It was a duty to be performed, and through performance enabled the exercise of God's grace. It was thus distinct from friendship or amicitia, originally a purer form of love between God and man before the fall, and later an emotion that bound people with a shared interest, and from agape, a unidirectional love of man towards God. Caritas was a form of love that channelled God's grace outwards, transforming human connections to spiritual ties; it was also expected to be reciprocal in that mankind owed this felt duty to each other. Indeed, for some, caritas was enabled by the other's love—'the Image of God shining in them'.

In a Catholic context, the performance of caritas was informed by the seven corporeal and spiritual acts of mercy that required Christians not only to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, but also to care for the spiritual needs of their neighbours. It was an ethic of love that required people to actively enquire into the morality and behaviour of those around them. Caritas was an emotional duty that survived the Reformation. While Luther rejected salvation by works, he argued for caritas as 'faith active in love'; Calvin thought that neighbourly love was an extension of self-love, redirected through God's grace. Whilst both rejected the performance of the corporeal and spiritual acts of mercy, it was because they did not go far enough in the duty that caritas enjoined upon the Christian, which should extend to every area of life. Importantly for all these thinkers, caritas was not just a set of actions, but was an embodied experience, a feeling. Calvin thought it similar to the love man should feel for his immediate family, 'there being no feeling in our nature of greater strength and vengeance'.

Following an early scholarship of emotion that downplayed the importance of communal emotions in medieval and early modern life, historians have provided a robust response evidencing the significance of ideas of love to family life and increasingly friends and neighbourly relations. The nature of love—romantic, divine, neighbourly—has been shown to evolve across time, shaping people's expectations for their emotional relationships as well as individual feeling.

Neighbourly love has been shown to shape the ethos and relations of medieval religious communities, in enabling power in princely courts, and in moderating friendships—a key framework in the production of 'emotional communities'. As histories of charity have suggested, if neighbourly love remained prominent in moral texts and religious advice, its nature was often more contested in practice.

Caritas may have required love for mankind, but encounters with non-Christian communities and, post-Reformation, other denominations raised questions around how far it should extend. Over time and particularly influenced by natural law theory in the seventeenth century, philosophers and commentators came to ask how neighbourly love might differ from that built on 'natural affection', the 'instinctual' care that led parents to raise their children or families to preference kin. How did neighbourly love compare to that produced by blood, by proximity in the household? How should we feel about those in other nations, wondered Adam Smith by the eighteenth century. Similarly, if early church leaders promoted a caritas whose application was encompassing, its practice could be more fraught, as a large historiography on charitable giving suggests. Social and economic upheavals from the medieval period onwards that placed pressure on resources within communities led people to explore and contest how the practice of charity should be performed. If it was a mercy to feed the hungry, was this required to be in alms; and how should churches discourage claimants who could otherwise earn their upkeep? Who was the deserving poor? Different communities responded

to these questions with more or less generosity at different moments, reflecting their economic and political circumstances and commitment to caritas.

Who should give was increasingly a question as charitable practices moved into institutions from the late medieval period. Many imaginings of caritas required it to be performed by the individual; it was the relationship between the giver and recipient, the practice of care and the appropriate performance of gratitude in return, that enabled the grace of God to operate. For some, an imagining of the 'church' as the body corporate of its members allowed for this organization to perform caritas, leading to greater formalization of church charitable relief. Moreover, in many places, this did not lead to the removal of the community from giving. Confraternities, local collectives that provided charitable services, brought together neighbours to offer alms, prayers, and practical care for the poor and needy in their localities. Similarly, fund-raising and its distribution for many churches was performed by parishioners; this was particularly marked in Protestant congregational sects, where the church leadership was distributed amongst the membership. Rates and taxes, which placed the giver at a step of remove from the recipient, were thus problematic, disabling the spiritual benefits of giving. The significance of neighbourly love to community support continued in secular systems. The 'friendly' and 'benevolent' societies, where individuals made weekly payments as insurance against illness or unemployment, that started to appear in the eighteenth century were often orientated around a loving ethic of community charitable support.

If caritas provided an overarching framework for ethical and emotional neighbourly relations, its practice was associated with, and sometimes complicated by, a range of other social emotions. Compassion, loyalty, pity, benevolence, and trust have been highlighted as critical to the production of early modern affective communities. Compassion has been viewed as a key communal emotion, central to religious devotion, gendered as female in the medieval period, and, through the delimitation of who was entitled to compassion, defining the boundaries between social, and particularly religious, groups in the early modern. Loyalty, an emotion that bound together servants and masters as well as monarchs and subjects, shaped family dynamics and national politics. For many, it was an extension of caritas that supported particular political interests. Histories of pity and benevolence have similarly attended to power, demonstrating how such feeling produced hierarchies between giver and recipient, often those that reinforced wider social, particularly class, distinctions. These were emotions that were significant in the eighteenth century, as the rise of the cult of sensibility promoted pity as key to sympathetic exchanges between the benevolent and the sufferer. Trust was foundational to the credit relationships that underpinned the early modern economy, yet the fact that trust relationships could be 'fractious and uncertain' has been used to question the continuing relevance of neighbourly love for the growing seventeenth-century economy. As this latter example suggests, social emotions—those that appear designed to enable certain types of human cooperation and flourishing—are not always harmonious when practised, nor are they necessarily associated with the equality and reciprocity so critical to justice in the twenty-first century. What they offered were frameworks for ethical feeling within particular communities that acted to shape social life and personal behaviour; if at times such feeling may have conflicted with the aspirational ethics of caritas, the latter held particular moral authority within Christian communities.

Since Reddy's Navigation of Feeling argued for the significance of emotion in shaping normative behaviours and practices, as well as their role in resistance to them, the idea that an emotion like love might have an 'edge', be implicated in social hierarchies, or fail to achieve the aspirational desires of its proponents is increasingly recognized. Emotion, as something performed in everyday life, might not always be fully achieved, and may be practised in part, negotiated, or refused by a recipient. Operating as a larger norm or ethic, an emotion like love may be resisted, and it may incorporate a wide domain of emotional experience, including not only other social emotions, but also anger, jealousy, resentment, and so forth. As such, the fractious relationships of the credit

society may not reflect a failure of neighbourly love but that the fraught changes of the modernizing economy required a renegotiation of the duties and obligations that underpinned caritas.

Similarly, recognizing caritas as practised enables a rethinking of the lengthy debate around charitable motivations or intention in medieval and early modern Europe, particularly in Catholic contexts. That charitable giving could hasten a person's journey through purgatory, or indeed that it may be performed for instrumental ends on earth, has led historians to query the motivations of such activity, and to view neighbourly love with some scepticism. Yet, as a practice, caritas involved not only the inner desires of the actor, but also the outward performance of charitable activity that incorporated the recipient, the community who framed how such events should be interpreted, and the divine who sat in ultimate judgement of the act. Even if an actor had selfish motives in giving, the social and religious value of their charity was given meaning through a framework of love. Caritas, as a social emotion, distributed agency across multiple actors in an emotional-ethical system, where intention only played a single part.

Caritas: Neighbourly Love and the Early Modern Self

Caritas was an emotional ethic that defined the 'neighbour' widely; it was a form of grace that applied to all relations in the Christian community, including those within the household. Chapter 1 introduces the Scottish churches teaching on caritas, offering an overview of what living this emotional ethic should look like as an ideal, before exploring how this was deployed to produce a particular vision of family life. Marriage, and the household based upon it, was a key unit of social order in this period, and so the emotional ethics of the marriage-household were envisioned as a miniature of society at large. Accessing marriage through court records tends to display the fractures of this model, rather than the ideal. Yet, importantly, rather than undermining caritas, these records evidence the ways that marriage becomes a central site for negotiating the performance of love and of the commitment of this community to enabling its practice.

If the ritual of marriage was a key event that transformed the individual into an adult and full member of the community, then young people were often imagined as situated at its edges, challenging strict patriarchal hierarchies through a burgeoning adulthood that sat uneasily alongside their subordination in the household. Chapter 2 explores how young people were socialized into the emotional ethic of their society, exploring their beliefs and behaviours to give insight into how this 'sociable self' was produced. What emerges are the challenges that children—situated in a subordinate role—have when trying to give language to transgression. Instead they are 'confused', or see things too clearly, missing those grey nuances that moderate ethical relations. Chapter 2 thus helps illustrate how collective emotional relations become implicated in a particular form of selfhood, and youth as a critical moment of 'becoming' within these societies.

If caritas was a moral love, then lust was a corrupting passion that led people to sin. Yet Scotland had many accounts of love and not all of them promoted an orderly pathway to family-sanctioned courtship and legal marriage. Indeed, the eighteenth century was marked by a shift from relatively low levels of marital nonconformity and illegitimacy to one of the higher rates in Europe by the mid-nineteenth century. Chapter 3 explores why a people inculcated in the emotional ethic of caritas persisted in behaviours that were both immoral and that fractured their relationship with this community. How do we interpret deviance if the emotional ethic of caritas was not just a set of rules, but a form of embodied selfhood? This chapter also explores how the loving community responded to sinners, especially the pregnant servants that contributed so significantly to illegitimacy rates, and the rituals of separation and reintegration that allowed them to return to ethical relation.

One of the demands of caritas was a concern for a neighbour's soul, a teaching that originated as one of the seven spiritual works of mercy. This was marked across Europe by the nosy neighbours

who reported sin to churches and secular courts, and the willing interference of the community in personal life and domestic relations. For a community to operate smoothly, however, and perhaps especially in a context where some sins were also criminal offences, it could be more effective for the loving neighbour to look away. Chapter 4 explores concepts of privacy and publicity amongst a social group that often lived in one-room houses, shared beds, and where the household had quite porous boundaries. It explores the practice of keeping silent about what was seen and declining to ask questions as a mechanism for managing the emotional ethic of caritas. The refusal of formal acknowledgement of what was known was a common trope in witness testimony, suggestive of how speaking produced the 'social facts' that required a community to enact its 'charitable hatred'. Chapter 4 reflects on a self-formed in an environment where privacy is an act of will, rather than a result of material conditions.

If lower-order Scots often lived on top of each other, they also had a mechanism for producing distance between individuals. Eighteenth-century texts discuss 'loneliness' in three key domains. Places can be lonely, particularly those away from human inhabitants, but also 'cells'—both in cloisters and prisons—where people are alone. Loneliness can also arise from a 'want of company', the definition offered by Samuel Johnson's dictionary. Most frequently, loneliness is a state of unrequited love, and is used in discussions of widows, jilted lovers, or those whose beloved has been separated from them. Loneliness therefore can be understood as a frustration of caritas, whether that of the sociable community or a loving partner. Chapter 5 uses the concept of loneliness to explore the place of vagrants and mobile populations in the loving community. Expectations and rituals of hospitality persisted across the eighteenth century, allowing for relatively poor individuals to find places to stay as they moved across the country. These rituals produced intimacies that brought the outsider into the loving community. It also had checks and balances to stop hospitality being exploited. When not within the loving community, vagrants were often associated with lonely places, a mapping of affective identity onto space. Loneliness was also something actively used by this community to manage social order, where people could be banished both for crime and (as explored in Chapter 3) as part of rituals to promote morality. Using first-hand accounts from vagrants of their lives, as well as those who offered them hospitality, this chapter seeks to explore the role of mobility in enabling the continuation of loving communities.

This book argues that caritas provided an emotional ethic for the early modern world that shaped how people felt, behaved, responded to each other and their environment, and made decisions. As an ethic experienced as bodily feeling and practised through sight, sound, touch, and care for the other, caritas enabled a sociable self that allowed for the effective functioning of a loving society. This promoted certain forms of communally orientated behaviours, from peaceable marriages to hospitality for strangers to effective policing of each other's moral action, all of which were experienced as a form of love. Not everyone found this ethic easy to follow, and there were alternative models of loving that provided opportunities for individuals to renegotiate what the experience of love could be. Many people found living in the loving community challenging, and so this community developed rituals, from strategic ignorance to geographic mobility, to enable it to function. Over the eighteenth century, this story was increasingly complicated by evolving constructions of community relation that moved caritas from a form of grace to a charity informed by concepts of romantic love, friendship, and sociability. In this transformation of collective emotion, the sociable self also evolved, although, for the lower orders at least, this was a process that was still ongoing at the beginning of the nineteenth century. <>

Radical Apophasis: The Internal "Logic" of Plotinian and Dionysian Negation *by* Todd Ohara, Foreword by Cyril O'Regan [Pickwick Publications, 9781725264335]

This book exhibits the richness and sophistication of Plotinian and Dionysian apophatic theologies by explicating their respective internal "logics." It articulates the unique metaphysical status and explanatory role that the One and God, respectively, play in Plotinus's and Dionysius's reflections, showing the way in which apophasis is generated and sustained by the metaphysical-explanatory lines of thought in which the One (Plotinus) and God (Dionysius) function as the ultimate, unconditioned source of everything else. In the context of explanation, negation serves to convey the incomparable reality of the One or of God as beyond being. However, the metaphysical and explanatory lines of thought are themselves situated within the broader context of the soul's ascent to mystical union with the One or with God. From this broader perspective, the discursive practice of negation constitutes the basis of preparing the soul for mystical union. Preparation for mystical union involves the cognitive and trans-cognitive practice of negation, which enables the soul to progress towards and become united with the One or God. This study is motivated by the desire to more deeply understand apophasis as deployed in different philosophical, theological, and religious contexts, including the work of contemporary thinkers such as Jean-Luc Marion.

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This book by Todd Ohara is an unobtrusively brilliant piece of work. While the book seems to be narrowly focused on negative predication in the works of Plotinus and Pseudo-Dionysius, I submit that this is not so for a number of reasons. First, and most obviously, these two figures are not just any two figures; they have played a vitally important role in Western thought when it comes to the problematic of whether and how we can name the ultimate and how this bears on our actual relationship to the "really real" which essentially escapes predication, whether negative or positive. Crucially, these figures articulate decisively different ways in which negative language or the language of unsaying functions. The former is significantly the more "radical" in that the ultimate referred to hyperbolically and intended in negative statement fundamentally transcends the relative order whose existence is the raison d'etre of the talk of ultimate reality in the first case. The latter is decidedly less radical in that negative predication is firmly anchored in affirmations about the divine even as these affirmations are unsaid and relativized. Second, it is not only that we are talking about two

hugely important examples of unsaying in the Western philosophical and theological traditions, we really are talking about figures who provide us with paradigmatic instances of different grammars of unsaying. These grammars Ohara is convinced, are liberally illustrated throughout the later philosophical and theological traditions, and provide us with criteria whereby we can ask the difficult question of whether particular apophatic forms of theology we are interested in are non-radical or radical or, in Ohara's figural way of proceeding, whether they illustrate a Plotinian or a Dionysian grammar of unsaying. The application procedure looks as if it would be especially helpful in sorting out such difficult cases in the Western tradition as Johannes Scotus Eriugena, Meister Eckhart, Marguerite Porete, and Nicholas of Cusa, who seem, at the very least, to stretch the Dionysian (and also Augustinian) grammar of divine naming.

As I see it, in addition to offering illuminating readings of the texts of Plotinus and Pseudo-Dionysius, this book makes three major interventions in contemporary philosophy and theology interested in strategies to chasten expectations with regard to our ability to name the ultimate. First, and most obviously, it introduces a new voice in the ongoing attempt by analytic philosophy to address divine naming. One can think here of Michael Rae's recent Gifford Lectures on the hiddenness of God, but perhaps also earlier attempts by Denys Turner to tease out strategies of unsaying that are necessary in the naming of God by looking at such major historical figures such as Pseudo-Dionysius, Bonaventure, and Meister Eckhart. One way of thinking of Ohara's work is that it represents a third way in analytic philosophy and theology in that while the historical interest is genuine, as is the case in Turner, the analytic tools are sharper and considerably more to the fore. Conversely, however, in contrast to Rea, Ohara does not so much apply ready-made analytic tools to the texts of Plotinus and Pseudo-Dionysius, so much as generate them in his very reading of the texts of these significant historical figures. Ohara's method remains resolutely hermeneutic, even as it is committed to fine-grained conceptual analysis of various forms of negation in both his authors.

Second, and relatedly, Ohara makes a contribution to our understanding of Christian mysticism with respect to which negative naming has been associated and explicitly defended in the tradition of mystical theology. If we are talking about two different paradigms or even grammars of how to operationalize and understand negation, Ohara is anxious to underscore that the purpose of this is participation in the divine that has been freed by means of language of the very constraints language put on the divine and especially on the divine's appearing. Ohara believes that all naming of the divine in the mystical theology tradition, however negative, intends a "transcendental signified." In contrast to Derrida, however, the language of negation in either of its two basic forms relentlessly tends towards a referent that it cannot command, but with which it achieves contact. Here Ohara remains on the essentially realist side of the conversation in mystical theology represented perhaps best by Turner and McGinn. From Ohara's point of view, neither Plotinus nor Pseudo-Dionysius, nor any of their successors in negative theology, confuse apophaticism with agnosticism, or allow skepticism into an unsaying regarded as genuinely ecstatic and fulfilled when in unsaying or silence contact is made with the divine at the deepest and highest of levels. The goal of unsaying is an experience of the divine and participation in the divine, even if this experience has features that will resist being translated into language and concept, and to avail of a trope of Maximus the Confessor to which Ohara does not recur, in the most extraordinary of paradoxes the mystic comes to participate in the "inparticipatable" ground of all physical and spiritual reality.

A third intervention is far more latent. Ohara has deep training in continental philosophy and is particularly adept in contemporary discussions about the nature and limit of phenomenology, and expert in the debate between Marion and Derrida on the radicality of naming. While none of this is to the fore in the present book, behind the screen one sees Ohara agreeing with Derrida concerning the difference between negative theology and deconstruction and with Marion concerning the inadvisability of postmodern forms of thought of moving beyond the stance proper to all negative

theology, whether in its less or more radical forms. In his analysis of the paradigmatic negative theology discourses of Plotinus and Pseudo-Dionysius Ohara effectively admits that they are, indeed, "hyperousiological," not only lexically, but substantively, as Derrida says they are. For Ohara, however, this is a compliment rather than an insult. He sides with Marion in celebrating the hyperboles of the Western philosophical and theological tradition as shattering language against a givenness that cannot be contained, and that it is just this feature of subversion by "too much" that suggests its superiority over the self-referentiality of language and deferral of meaning championed by Derrida and his epigones. Against Marion, however, and more in league with the thought of the revisionist metaphysician William Desmond in his God and the Between (2008) Ohara is not at all shy about the metaphysical register of the language of negative naming, which finds its ground in the provocation in a reality that is superabundant and excessive.

That this book manages in a very subtle way to do all of the above is not to deny that it is primarily an interpretation of Plotinus and Pseudo-Dionysius. At the outset it should be said that this book is not in the strict sense a historical study. Ohara does not track down Plotinus's Platonic, Middle Platonic, and Stoic sources as might be the case with a scholar such as John Rist. Nor does he track down the philosophical sources of Pseudo-Dionysius as Stephen Gersh does so incomparably, nor the theological (Syrian) sources as Alexander Golitzin does so well. His is primarily a conceptual treatment, even when he attempts to define the relation between a later (Pseudo-Dionysius) and an earlier (Proclus) thinker. Convinced with regard to their massive influence, and persuaded that they still have something to say to contemporary philosophers and theologians caught up with the issue of naming the ultimate, Ohara wishes to lay bare the "internal logic" of both, or what I have referred to already as "grammar." Now if the method adopted might in general be called conceptual analysis, I would want to record that the analytic mode falls within that of ordinary language. In my view Ohara operates with as pleasing an analytic philosophical style as can be imagined, and shows what can be delivered when used with subtlety. The method does not bring attention to itself; there is nothing in it that smacks of mere cleverness.

A constitutive part of the excellence of the writing, and perhaps its condition, is its interpretive finesse. By this I mean no more—but also no less—than that Ohara never draws conclusions that do not follow in an obvious way from detailed analyses of the passages cited. Moreover, Ohara never gerrymanders the evidence; he always submits to our attentions passages that seem to go in the opposite direction to his interpretive judgment. Sometimes he shows that read aright the passages are not inconsistent with each other, and indeed favor the kind of interpretation he is offering. Sometimes, however, the passages draw attention to tensions in Plotinus's and Pseudo-Dionysius's thought that appear to be structural rather than accidental. The enactment of scholarly humility pays off big time; since having taken oneself out of the equation means that not only are the conclusions more nuanced, but their validity far more evident.

The achievements of the first part of the book, devoted to Plotinus, are considerable. In a series of probes, and especially in its treatment of negation (apophasis) and denial (aphairesis), over the course of three chapters Ohara unearths the fully radical nature of Plotinus's position in the Enneads. The ground of all subsequent reality, immaterial or material, the socalled "One" or "Good" is strictly speaking unnamable, since the ordinary meaning of these terms cannot be applied to the reality that is referred to. The analytic pair that gives Ohara most interpretive traction throughout his sober but always luminous analyses is that of "non-reciprocal likeness" and "non-reciprocal relation." Ohara suggests that the first concept is sufficient for characterizing the relative inadequacy of all language with respect to the ultimate, since likeness is at the very least seriously qualified by unlikeness. Thus, if not to the same extent, and certainly not in the same way, inadequacy marks negations and denials as well as affirmations. "Non-reciprocal relation," he contends, represents a step that Plotinus does not consistently take throughout the Enneads, but one sufficiently in play to

regard as typical of his position. Essentially what this means is that the relation between the ultimate reality, which finds linguistic placeholders in the "One" and the "Good," and everything else is notional rather than real. The "One" or "Good" can be conceived as defined in no way by the relation to what is ontologically subsequent to it. Ohara does nothing less than isolate and name the conceptual production of an asymmetrical relation that gets insinuated deeply into Western philosophy and theology and which is echoed, for example, by Aquinas in the Summa when he talks of the created world having a real relation to God, but God not having a real relation to the world (Prima Pars Q13; article 7). Although it is not his explicit aim, Ohara helps to contextualize and thereby demystify what Aquinas is saying and why he is saying it. For were ultimate reality to bear a positive relation to that which is subsequent (consequent), then both its transcendence and simplicity would come to be threatened with a kind of compromise that Plotinus finds invidious.

It is important to Ohara, however, that we recognize that "non-reciprocal relation" is Plotinus's particular, even peculiar, position and that it should by no means be identified as the classical Neoplatonic position tout court. For instance, while Ohara does not go into much detail concerning Proclus's metaphysical scheme, in part 2 in his discussion of Pseudo-Dionysius he makes it clear that the triad of procession, remaining, and reversion qualifies divine simplicity in a significant way, and forbids Proclus from pulling the rug from under participation in the way Plotinus does. And it is precisely pulling the rug from underneath participation that defines the "internal logic" or grammar of Plotinian apophasis. Now, it should be noted Ohara does not reduce Plotinus to the aporetics of language regarding the ultimate—although this is constitutive. He both understands and appreciates what might be called the anagogic function of language, especially negative language in Plotinus, which is to unite the seeking mind with the One, which—however contradictorily—is a reality that forbids participation. Ohara by no means denies, therefore, that the Enneads articulates a form of mysticism. He simply wants to affirm that this particular form of mysticism, which both continues and develops the prior Platonic traditions of discourse and proves so generative throughout Western history, is connected with a rich and determinate metaphysics and semantics.

The four chapters on Pseudo-Dionysius, which make up part 2, represent a similar level of achievement. Although Ohara's choice of Pseudo-Dionysius is in part motivated by the mystical theologian's prominence in postmodern appropriations of classical negative theology, the warrant for the kind of meticulous examination undertaken is provided by such important questions as whether the relatively greater adequacy of negation and denial over affirmation is underwritten by the same or similar metaphysical commitments as evinced in Plotinus and whether the express theological commitments, influenced by—if not dictated by—the biblical text essentially ameliorate the radicalism of Plotinus's version of Neoplatonism. To make a long story short, Ohara answers yes to both questions. Under the influence of the Plotinian scheme Pseudo-Dionysius's commitment to divine transcendence is accompanied by an allergy with respect to any differentiation at the level of ultimate reality (the divine thearchy) because of its implication of multiplicity. This has the effect—Pseudo-Dionysius's declaration to the contrary notwithstanding—of introducing a metaphysical distinction between the divine Godhead considered as One and the Godhead considered as Triune. All the better for being a somewhat reluctant conclusion, in a brilliant analysis Ohara makes a contribution to the study of Christian Neoplatonism by disturbing the reigning orthodoxy. The conventional view, propagated by such eminent scholars as Andrew Louth and Bernard McGinn, is that Pseudo-Dionysius is a perfectly orthodox Christian who is given to paradox and hyperbolic language that sometimes results in confusion. Ohara reveals convincingly the tendency in such interpretation to suggest that Pseudo-Dionysius has successfully domesticated the metaphysical scheme on which he hangs his Christian hat. Without arguing the contrary, Ohara shows himself more inclined to side with Pseudo-Dionysius's orthodox critics, for example, Hans Urs von Balthasar on the Catholic side and Vladimir Lossky on the Eastern Orthodox side, who judge that there are

times when Pseudo-Dionysius's philosophical commitments run interference with the theological commitments which he takes up from the Cappadocian Fathers, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzen, and Basil. For example, the metaphysical commitments to unity and simplicity put under pressure the specifically Christian commitment to the triune God as ultimate. At the same time, and in a balancing move, Ohara also shows that Pseudo-Dionysius resists Plotinus. For Pseudo-Dionysius, the "Good," which is interdefinable with "Love," shows a shift in the meaning of procession and participation relative to what one finds in Plotinus. Specifically, procession is no longer regarded as external to the "Good" in quite the same way it is in Plotinus, nor is participation regarded as quite so equivocal.

Ohara judges that the alteration in metaphysical posture, which sees the ultimate more as superdeterminate than indeterminate, is due in quite definite respects to Pseudo-Dionysius's Christianity. At the same time he does not deny that this modification has been prepared at least in part by the system of Proclus, which emends that of Plotinus in crucial ways. This is the topic of chapter 5 (and the appendix). Ohara does not attempt to do the kind of historical-philological work of Gersh when it comes to adjudicating the influence of Proclus on Pseudo-Dionysius. Accepting the consensus historical view that there are Proclean elements in Pseudo-Dionysius's corpus, the mode of analysis is internalist: by means of a close reading of Pseudo-Dionysius Ohara simply wants to ask what tendencies in his account of the ultimate and process of procession and return recall positions and strategies one finds in the Elements of Theology. Here Ohara does not so much compete with Gersh as complement him. It is also extremely interesting how in Ohara's hands the horizon of the question of the relation between Proclus and Pseudo-Dionysius has changed. Usually when the issue of the relation of Pseudo-Dionysius to Proclus is raised, the horizon of the question is whether Pseudo-Dionysius's Christianity is being compromised by a philosophical regime. Thus, there are incentives to deny the relation or downplay it, or if forced by the evidence to accept the reality of Proclus in the Dionysian corpus, one turn elsewhere for a purer form of mystical theology. With Ohara, however, the issue is not whether a biblical (and possibly liturgical) form of Christianity negotiates with (or can negotiate with) with Neoplatonic philosophy, but whether it negotiates with one that at worst does not interfere too much with some of its more basic commitments (e.g., the goodness of creation) and at best helps Christianity articulate its basic beliefs more clearly to itself and others. It is more certainly his judgment that Proclus helps underwrite and develop basic Christian convictions whereas Plotinus hinders their development and ultimately subverts them.

In the final substantive chapter of part 2 Ohara links in a concerted way the strategies of apophatic naming with mystical ascent towards the God who is beyond being. Ohara, of course, did much the same in part 1 when he discussed Plotinus. Here the connection between language of God and participation in God, however, is provided detailed treatment. Even if the realized destination involves an overcoming of language and an entry into silence, naming and especially apophasis will have been constitutive, and the metaphysical backdrop, which makes sense of this naming, essential. Here Ohara in the most gentle way possible seems to take on the purists, both premodern and postmodern, who want their mysticism free from pyrotechnics of apophasis and the weighing down of metaphysics.

While the deftness of analysis and the gradual nature of the unfolding of the "internal logic" of both Plotinus's and Pseudo-Dionysius's naming and un-naming of ultimate reality sometimes makes this a challenging book, the book rewards all the way through. It rewards because of the scrupulous nature of the interpretation of passages, but also because of the larger implications of the reading of two paradigmatic forms of unsaying in the Western tradition. I have drawn attention to a number of these in my opening framing of the book. I will end by making another. I indicated previously that by exposing the "internal logic" of Plotinian and Dionysian forms of unsaying, and by supplying us with conceptual tools to make a real distinction between these grammars, at the very least Ohara allows

us to formulate more perspicuous interrogations of forms of philosophical and theological discourse where prima facie the level of unsaying seems abnormal. I gave as examples Eriugena, Eckhart, Porete, and Cusanus. I neglected to point out, however, that we are not dealing purely with a matter of taxonomy, such that all or any of these discourses laced with negation and teeming with denial are Plotinian or not Dionysian. While, of course, logically any one of the four could represent a pure retrieval of one or the other, it is antecedently more likely we might see that they are influenced to different degrees by both logics or grammars and that we are talking in the end about a dominant-recessive relation. I am convinced that the implications go further and that Ohara's excavation of two contrasting "internal logics" of unsaying also helps us with the more standard cases of unsaying in the Western philosophical and theological traditions. I am thinking here of Albertus Magnus and, of course, Aquinas. There is a copious modern literature on Aquinas and apophasis beginning with Victor Preller and David Burrell, proceeding through Denys Turner, and finding expression in detailed works of Fran O'Rourke and Gregory Rocca. None of these thinkers would deny the force of the Dionysian tradition on Aquinas in the Summa, nor neglect to draw attention to Aquinas's famous commentary on the Divine Names, even if they might not be anxious to play Pseudo-Dionysius against an apophatic Augustine in terms of influence. What Ohara gives us, I submit, is a complexification and a gift of another question. While it might well be true that Aquinas's views of divine naming operate in general within a Dionysian horizon, might it not also be the case that there are moments even in Aquinas where one sees the interference of a different, more Plotinian grammar of unsaying? — Cyril O'Regan <>

Origen: an Introduction to his Life and Thought by Ronald E. Heine [Series: Cascade Companions, Cascade Books, 9781498288972]

The late second and early third century was a turbulent time in the Roman Empire and in the relationship between the empire and the church. Origen was the son of a Christian martyr and was himself imprisoned and tortured in his late life in a persecution that targeted leaders of the church. Deeply pious and a gifted scholar, Origen stands as one of the most influential Christian teachers in church history, and also one of the most controversial.

This introduction to Origen begins by looking at some of the circumstances that were formative influences on his life. It then turns to some key elements in his thought. The approach here differs from that taken by most earlier studies by working from the central position that Scripture had for Origen. Heine argues that Origen's thought, in his later life especially, reflects his continual interaction with the Bible.

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Excerpt: One can only wish or dream that her or his own intellectual work on understanding Scripture or setting forth its theological meaning will endure so long or reach so far as that of Origen of Alexandria. While he was dead by the middle of the third century, Origen's work has continued to stir deep admiration and animosity down to the present time, although much of the animosity has abated since the work of some significant scholars in the twentieth century. His influence has crossed all boundaries in the church from the ancient Greek and Latin speaking East-West boundaries to the modern ones of Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant. Much of his extensive work was lost or destroyed soon after his lifetime, but a large corpus has continued to exist, either in its original Greek or in later Latin translations. In more recent times additional texts have been recovered through fortuitous discoveries, first that of the Tura papyri in Egypt in the mid-twentieth century, which yielded two previously unknown texts: the Dialogue with Heraclides and the Treatise on the Passover, along with portions of texts already possessed, and more recently, in 2012, the discovery of twenty-nine Greek homilies on the Psalms in a twelfth-century codex in the Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek in Munich. New editions and translations of Origen's works continue to be produced in numerous countries and languages. They can be found in series and in individual translations in German, French, Italian, Spanish, and English, and probably in others of which I am unaware.

In the last decade of the twentieth century I was director of a small research institute called the Institute for the Study of Christian Origins sponsored by the Disciples of Christ in Tübingen, Germany. I recently revisited Tübingen to participate in a symposium. In a conversation with one of the participants at the symposium I was asked who was teaching theological subjects at the University when I was working in Tübingen. When I began to list a few of the theologians who were at the University at that time—Martin Hengel, Jürgen Moltmann, Hans Küng—my conversation partner interrupted me and said, "O, you were here when the giants were here!" I had not thought of them in that particular way when I was living and working in Tübingen, but that is a good descriptive term for the collection of notable theological scholars who were clustered at the Eberhard Karls University in Tübingen at that time. And that is a good descriptive term for Origen.

Origen was a giant in the early church. When one thinks beyond the first century and the apostles, there was no one comparable to him until one gets to Augustine in the late fourth century. Origen

moved like a colossus over the intellectual life of the early church, whether one thinks of biblical interpretation, theological insight, doctrinal development, or influence on subsequent leaders of the church. He had a lasting influence on how the church read Scripture, especially the Old Testament, and on how it thought about and formulated its doctrines. His pervasive influence spread through his immediate contact with students and the publication of his numerous writings.

Origen was greatly admired and intensely disliked during his lifetime and afterwards. Both of those reactions were often elicited by the fact that his thought was frequently "outside the box," so to speak. At a time when the majority in the church, including its bishops and presbyters, believed that Scripture must be read and understood in the simple, literal meaning of the words, Origen deftly practiced a non-literal way of understanding Scripture's words that rankled the feelings of many of his readers or listeners. This can often be detected by remarks he makes in his homilies and commentaries. His teachings about the basic Christian doctrines of the creation of the universe, the incarnation of Christ, and the consummation of history also diverged, significantly in many cases, from views held by multitudes in his time. Aspects of these same views, nevertheless, would later become incorporated into the general faith of the church in the West as well as the East. Many of the most important leaders of the western church in the fourth century were strongly influenced by Origen's way of interpreting Scripture and by his theological insights, including Augustine of Hippo, Ambrose of Milan, and Jerome of Bethlehem.

Origen did not develop his thought in an academic context nor did he envision his many treatises serving such an audience. He developed his thought in the context of the church and he produced his treatises to serve the church— to protect it from straying from what he considered to be the truth of the message of Christ and to enable it to understand this message in its diverse Scriptural expressions. In one of his earlier works, written while he was still living in Alexandria, Origen notes that he has undertaken to write books interpreting the Scriptures because numerous such books were being produced by heterodox Christians that threatened to confuse or mislead those faithful to the common understanding of the church. Origen was always concerned about the faith of the church, both in protecting it and in interpreting it to help others grasp its obvious and less obvious meanings. He was a practicing Christian all his life. He commented in one of his homilies that he wanted to be and be called a Christian in his action as well as his thought. In modern jargon one could say that he did not just talk the talk; he walked the walk. He was a man of deep faith and prayer. He often requested the prayers of his listeners to help him in his preaching, and he considered prayer to be the most important element in interpreting Scripture.

This book begins by sketching the more important influences on the formation of Origen's thought, including the circumstances of his life, so far as that is knowable. The sources for depicting Origen's life are scarce. While a large number of his writings have been preserved, he says very little about himself in them. His letters, which would be an important source of information, have largely perished. Eusebius refers to more than a hundred letters that he had seen—letters to an emperor and his wife, to bishops, and to various other persons—and arranged in separate "roll-cases" to preserve them, but they seem to have perished in antiquity. Only two have been preserved in the Greek language in which Origen wrote them; one to a former student named Gregory, and another to a scholar named Africanus. There is also a letter to some friends in Alexandria preserved in a Latin translation of the fourth century by Rufinus of Aquileia. Besides these three letters, we have only occasional sentences from letters quoted in Eusebius' Church History. The Apology for Origen written by Pamphilus—an early fourth-century priest, martyr, and devotee of Origen—would also have been a good source for information about Origen. Pamphilus wrote the Apology in Caesarea, where Origen spent the latter part of his life. Origen's library was there, which would have contained his own works as well as others he had gathered for his work. Pamphilus had a passion for collecting books. He had copied many of Origen's works with his own hand. He was later

imprisoned and while in prison he wrote the five books of his Apology with the help of Eusebius. After Pamphilus' martyrdom, Eusebius added a sixth book. These books too, with the exception of the first, have perished.

There are only a few sources from which we derive our biographical information about Origen, all from the fourth century. Jerome and Rufinus, Latin authors of the Western church, both translated numerous works of Origen from Greek into Latin and in the process provided some information about his life. The first book of the Apology for Origen by Pamphilus is another source of information. The Apology, however, is primarily a defense of Origen's thought and says very little about his life in general. This, too, has been preserved only in a Latin translation by Rufinus in the fourth century. The two main sources from antiquity that provide biographical information about Origen's life are both from the Eastern Greek-speaking church: works of Eusebius of Caesarea and Epiphanius of Salamis. The sixth book of the Church History of Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, is the most important source. Origen was a kind of hero of the faith in Eusebius' eyes. The other source is section sixty-four of the Panarion (Medicine Chest) of Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, for whom Origen was a heretic.

Eusebius, as bishop in Caesarea, had ready access to important resources about Origen's life. Origen had spent the last portion of his life in Caesarea, and Pamphilus, who had studied Origen's works thoroughly, was presbyter there before Eusebius. Furthermore, it is generally recognized that a unique feature of Eusebius' historical works is his wide use and careful quotation of written sources. We do not know, on the other hand, where Epiphanius got his biographical information about Origen. For some of the views he presents he seems to be dependent on impressions he has drawn about Origen from a group of monks who claimed to be Origen's followers. Epiphanius considered these monks to be an heretical sect. He has very little to say about Origen's life in his account. Most of the rather lengthy section on Origen in the Panarion is devoted to refuting some controversial doctrines Epiphanius attributed to Origen. So, while Eusebius may give a rosy tint to his account of Origen's life, on the whole it is better to trust a person's friend for accurate information about him, especially if he has had access to reliable information, than trust an avowed enemy who wants to cast him in the worst possible light. The general approach to Origen's life in this book is structured by the information given by Eusebius.

This book is not an attempt to say everything that can be said about Origen, especially in the chapter on his thought. It is an introduction and as such hopes, beyond simply making him known to those who are unfamiliar with his life and thought, to elicit an interest in reading some of Origen's texts and wrestling with their complexities. I have also tried to allow Origen to speak for himself as much as possible, and in this way to give the reader access to Origen's own words (in English translation, of course). As I indicated at the beginning of this introduction, Origen was one of the most important and influential thinkers in the early church. Throughout his life he worked diligently at the interpretation of Scripture in his commentaries that covered most of the books of the Bible and in the application of Scripture to life in these commentaries as well as in his homilies. The extent of his influence on the church's faith makes an acquaintance with his life and thought essential to anyone who wants to understand the roots of Christian faith. <>

Apophasis and Pseudonymity in Dionysius the Areopagite: "No Longer I" by Charles M. Stang [Oxford University Press, 9780199640423]

ABSTRACT

This book argues that the pseudonym, Dionysius the Areopagite, and the influence of Paul together constitute the best interpretive lens for understanding the Corpus Dionysiacum [CD]. This book demonstrates how Paul in fact animates the entire corpus, that the influence of Paul illuminates such central themes of the CD as hierarchy, theurgy, deification, Christology, affirmation (kataphasis) and negation (apophasis), dissimilar similarities, and unknowing. Most importantly, Paul serves as a fulcrum for the expression of a new theological anthropology, an "apophatic anthropology." Dionysius figures Paul as the premier apostolic witness to this apophatic anthropology, as the ecstatic lover of the divine who confesses to the rupture of his self and the indwelling of the divine in Gal 2:20: "it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." Building on this notion of apophatic anthropology, the book forwards an explanation for why this sixth-century author chose to write under an apostolic pseudonym. It argues that the very practice of pseudonymous writing itself serves as an ecstatic devotional exercise whereby the writer becomes split in two and thereby open to the indwelling of the divine. Pseudonymity is on this interpretation integral and internal to the aims of the wider mystical enterprise. Thus this book aims to question the distinction between "theory" and "practice" by demonstrating that negative theology—often figured as a speculative and rarefied theory regarding the transcendence of God—is in fact best understood as a kind of asceticism, a devotional practice aiming for the total transformation of the Christian subject.

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In early sixth-century Syria there began to circulate a collection of writings allegedly authored by Dionysius the Areopagite, the Athenian judge who, according to Acts 17, converted to Christianity after hearing Paul's speech to the court of the Areopagus. At the climax of the longest of the four treatises, the *Divine Names*, the author says of the apostle: "Paul the Great, when possessed by the Divine Love, and participating in its ecstatic power, says with inspired lips, 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.' As a true lover, and beside himself, as he says, to Almighty God, and not living the life of himself, but the life of the Beloved, as a life excessively esteemed." For ancient readers, for whom these were the authentic words of a first-century Christian convert, Dionysius the Areopagite reveals his teacher Paul to be the exemplary lover of God, whose fervent *erōs* carries him outside himself in ecstasy, and therefore renders him split, doubled, and so open to the indwelling of Christ, as the apostle himself confesses in Gal 2:20. For modern readers, who know that these are the words not of a first-century disciple of Paul but of a sixth-century author writing under the name of the Areopagite, this *Pseudo*-Dionysius is merely clothing his own theological program in apostolic garb.

This book aims to rebut this predominant modern reading by demonstrating that the key to understanding the *Corpus Dionysiacum* [hereafter *CD*] lies in investigating the pseudonym and the corresponding influence of Paul. Why would an early sixth-century author choose to write under the name of a disciple of Paul, and *this* disciple in particular, who was converted from pagan

philosophy by the apostle's famous invocation of the "unknown God" (*agnōstos theos*) in Acts 17:23? The *CD* forwards an elaborate hierarchical account of the universe, a complementary regimen of austere negative theology, and a description of deifying union with the "God beyond being" as "unknowing" (*agnōsia*)—what does all *this* have to do with the apostle Paul? The common answer is "very little indeed." Modern scholars have by and large assumed that the pseudonym was a convenient and mercenary means of securing a wider readership and avoiding persecution in an age of anxious orthodoxies and that the pseudonymous framing could be removed without significant interpretive cost. This is certainly the approach taken by the first wave of Dionysian scholars who, in the wake of the revelation in the late nineteenth century that the *CD* could not be the authentic writings of the first-century Dionysius the Areopagite, were eager to document the nature and extent of the author's obvious debt to late Neoplatonism, especially the fifth-century philosopher Proclus. Unfortunately, the second wave of Dionysian scholars, who in reaction to the first were understandably eager to situate the *CD* firmly in the context of late antique Eastern Christianity, have been—with some notable exceptions—equally comfortable with passing over the significance of the pseudonym.

Over the course of this book, I will demonstrate how Paul in fact animates the entire corpus, that the influence of Paul illuminates such central themes of the *CD* as hierarchy, theurgy, deification, Christology, affirmation and negation, dissimilar similarities, and unknowing. Most importantly, I contend, Paul serves as a fulcrum for the expression of a new theological anthropology, what I am calling (following Bernard McGinn and Denys Turner) the "apophatic anthropology" of Dionysius. Dionysius' entire mystical theology narrates the self's efforts to unite with the "God beyond being" as a perpetual process of affirming (*kataphasis*) and negating (*apophasis*) the divine names, on the conviction that only by contemplating and then "clearing away" (*aphairesis*) all of our concepts and categories can we clear a space for the divine to descend free of idolatrous accretions. What Paul provides Dionysius is the insistence that this ascent to "the unknown God" delivers a self that is, like the divine to which it aspires, cleared away of its own names, unsaid, rendered unknown to itself—in other words, *no longer I*. Thus apophatic theology assumes an apophatic anthropology, and the way of negation becomes a sort of asceticism, an exercise of freeing the self as much as God from the concepts and categories that prevent its deification. Dionysius figures Paul as the premier apostolic witness to this apophatic anthropology, as the ecstatic lover of the divine who confesses to the rupture of his self and the indwelling of the divine in Gal 2:20: "it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me."

Building on this notion of apophatic anthropology, I offer an explanation for why this sixth-century author chose to write under an apostolic pseudonym. He does not merely sign the name of Dionysius the Areopagite to his writings. He goes much further and literally assumes the identity of this first-century figure. He writes not treatises but letters addressed to other apostles and disciples; he imagines himself into this apostolic community, to the point that he is present at the Dormition of Mary; he counsels John sequestered on Patmos. And yet all the while the author is also somehow in the sixth century: quoting—sometimes at great length—from Proclus' works; treading dangerously close to contemporary Christological controversies; describing the ceremonials of Byzantine churches rather than the home churches of the New Testament. The author seems to be writing as *both* a sixth-century Syrian *and* a first-century Athenian. The fact that his own pseudonymous writing renders him two-in-one suggests that it is much more than a convenient literary conceit, and that the pseudonymous writing in fact aligns with the mystical anthropology. I argue that the very practice of pseudonymous writing itself serves as an ecstatic devotional exercise whereby the writer becomes split in two and thereby open to the indwelling of the divine. Pseudonymity is thus integral and internal to the aims of the wider mystical enterprise. In short, Dionysius both offers an account of what it is to be properly human in relation to God—namely, as

unknown to ourselves as God is—and, *in the very telling*, performs an exercise aiming to render his own self so unknown. The result of such *agnōsia*, however, is no mere "agnosticism" but rather the indwelling of the unknown God (*agnōstos theos*) as Christ, on the model of Paul in Gal 2:20, wherewith the aspirant simultaneously "unknows" God and self. Thus this book aims to question the distinction between "theory" and "practice" by demonstrating that negative theology—often figured as a speculative and rarefied theory regarding the transcendence of God—is in fact best understood as a kind of asceticism, a devotional practice aiming for the total transformation of the Christian subject.

I want to insist, however, that this approach to the *CD* does not preclude or impugn the two dominant trends in Dionysian scholarship; in fact it depends on and hopefully furthers both. As I have said, the first trend has been to assess the nature and extent of the author's debt to late Neoplatonism, often implying (if not stating outright) that the author was only nominally Christian. The second trend, spearheaded by Orthodox theologians, has been to weave the *CD* into the rich tapestry of late antique Eastern Christianity and to downplay the Neoplatonic influence. Both trends continue to this day. At their worst, both trends have retreated into antithetical and mutually exclusive readings of the true identity of the author of the *CD*, as *either* a Christian *or* a Neoplatonist. From this framing of the question of the author's singular identity there followed equally unsatisfactory debates about particular themes in the *CD*, whether this or that element of the whole was *really* Christian or *really* Neoplatonic. Is "hierarchy"—a term Dionysius coins to describe the structure of the created order—a pagan import or his peculiar *translatio* of a Christian notion? Does the *CD* possess a robust Christology or is Christ simply "draperies" adorning an otherwise pagan vision? What of his enthusiasm for "theurgy" or "god-work," a term associated with pagan wonderworkers who dare to use magical means to compel the gods? Perhaps most acutely, whence comes this author's championing of "negative" or "apophatic" theology in the aim of union with the God "beyond being"? Is this a wholesale import of late Neoplatonism's efforts to solicit union with the ineffable One or a properly Christian strategy of resisting idolatry, of safeguarding the "unknown God" from our domesticating efforts to make that God known? These and other questions have to some degree been held captive by the first framing of the inquiry, whereby one starts with the assumption that the author is one or the other, a Christian or a Neoplatonist.

Thankfully, the renaissance in Dionysian scholarship in the past thirty years—inaugurated by the work of Alexander Golitzin, Andrew Louth, and Paul Rorem—has set readers on a more constructive course than the former binary of either/or. On the one hand, scholars who today explore the relationship between the *CD* and late Neoplatonism are no longer keen, as many of their predecessors were, to fault the author of the *CD* for his obvious debt to "pagan" philosophy. Instead, they are more interested in charting the way in which the author creatively innovates on this philosophical inheritance. On the other hand, scholars who today focus on how the *CD* fits into the landscape of late antique Eastern Christianity are no longer as prone to downplay the influence of Neoplatonism, on the understanding that "pagan" philosophy was always being "baptized" for Christian use. In short, a consensus has emerged that the rhetorically and often doctrinally charged labels of "Christian" *vs*. "Neoplatonist" (or more widely, "pagan") present a false dichotomy, unfaithful to the historical record, and are motivated instead by *contemporary* theological and identity concerns that ultimately obscure our appreciation of the late antique religious landscape.

But the significance of the pseudonym and Paul by no means displaces the influence of late Neoplatonism or of late antique Eastern Christianity—both of which are, to my mind, undeniable. The pseudonym and Paul, I argue, constitute the best interpretive lens for understanding the *CD* not because they push these others influences to the margins, but rather because they help us precisely to organize, appreciate, and bring into better focus these influences. In other words, they allow us to

understand better how the author of the *CD* is *both* a Christian *and* a Neoplatonist and that the questions we put to the *CD* need not be governed by this disjunction. Specifically, I argue, attention to the pseudonym and Paul allows us to made headway on the stalled questions mentioned above: hierarchy, Christology, theurgy, *apophasis*, and others. One contribution of this book, then, is to demonstrate how this shift in perspective can allow us to make headway on some central but contested questions in the scholarship on Dionysius.

I also aim to show that this new understanding of the Dionysian corpus raises important questions that go beyond scholarly debates about how best to understand the *CD*, questions that are relevant for the study of Christian mysticism and of religion more generally. First, because for Dionysius a mystical theology assumes a mystical anthropology, it becomes clear that "mysticism" is as much, or more, about exercises for the transformation of the self as it is a description of the mystery of the divine. Thus "mysticism" becomes an important source for understanding theological anthropology and its implementation, that is, normative accounts of human subjectivity and the development of exercises meant to realize these new modes of selfhood. Second, my interpretation of the significance of the pseudonym suggests that we understand the pseudonymous enterprise as an ecstatic spiritual exercise. This opens up the question of whether and how writing serves as a spiritual exercise not only in the case of Dionysius, but also for Christian mysticism and religion more widely.

This book falls into two parts. In the first part, Chapters One and Two, I survey the late antique milieu from which the *CD* emerges and the modern scholarship thereon. My aim in these two chapters is to widen the horizon of our understanding of the sense and significance of the pseudonym and the influence of Paul. In Chapter One I chart the reception of the *CD* in the sixth century, focusing on whether and how early readers understood its authorship. From the sixth century I then jump to the late nineteenth, where modern scholarship on the *CD* begins in earnest with the exposure of the pseudonymous quality of the corpus. I survey the subsequent scholarship on the *CD*, again with an eye to discerning whether and how modern readers understood the sense and significance of the pseudonym and the influence of Paul. From this survey I highlight three promising leads: Alexander Golitzin, Andrew Louth (along with Christian Schäfer), and Hans Urs von Balthasar.

In Chapter Two, I widen the inquiry and consider the *CD* against three relevant late antique historical backdrops: pseudepigrapha, notions of writing as a devotional practice, and convictions about the porous or collapsible nature of time. From among the vast scholarship on ancient and late ancient pseudepigrapha, I consider the "religious" or "psychological" approach to pseudonymous writing, according to which pseudonymous authors believe that the distance between past and present can be collapsed such that, through their writing, the ancient authorities come to inhabit them and speak in their stead. To buttress this approach, I marshal two bodies of evidence. First, building on the consensus of a generation of scholars, I argue that late antique Christians understand time to be porous or collapsible, and that the apostolic and sub-apostolic past can intrude on the present. Second, again relying on a more recent but mounting body of scholarship, I argue that late antique authors understand writing as a practice that could effect this collapse of time, could summon the past into the present. And in order to deepen an understanding of these peculiar notions of time and writing, I look closely at two case studies: the anonymous *Life and Miracles of Thekla* and John Chrysostom's homilies on Paul.

The first part serves as the foundation for the second (Chapters Three through Five), in which I demonstrate how the figure and writings of Paul animate the whole corpus. In Chapter Three, I examine how Paul animates the Dionysian hierarchies. That this chapter concerns the hierarchies should not be taken to mean that I drive a wedge between the "theology" (as found in *DN* and *MT*)

and the "economy" (as found in *CH* and *EH*) of the *CD*, as has often been done in order to devalue the hierarchies. Following more recent scholarship, I insist on the coherence of the *CD*: that the affirmation and negation of the divine names (*DN*) in the service of "unknowing" the "God beyond being" (*MT*) must be understood within the sacramental life of the church (*EH*), which in turn is a reflection of the celestial orders (*CH*). In this chapter, I address several of the stalled questions in the scholarship on the *CD*, questions to which the influence of Paul, I argue, offers a fresh perspective. Specifically, I suggest that Dionysius' own definition of hierarchy derives from Paul's understanding of the "body of Christ" as a divinely ordained ecclesial order. I show how Dionysius' Christology, so often found wanting, derives from Paul's experience of the luminous Christ on the road to Damascus. And I argue that Dionysius' appeals to Iamblichean "theurgy"—understood as "cooperation" (*sunergeia*) with the work of God that deifies the "co-worker of God" (*sunergos theou*)—are also consistent with Pauline phrases.

Paul is just as relevant for Dionysius' understanding of how we solicit unknown with the unknown God through the perpetual affirmation (*kataphasis*) and negation (*apophasis*) of the divine names. In Chapter Four, I trace Dionysius' appeals to Paul as he heightens the tension between the immanence and transcendence of God in the opening chapters of the *Divine Names*. I argue that his understanding of "unknowing" (*agnōsia*), which marks our union with the unknown God, derives from a creative reading of Paul's famous line from Acts 17, "What therefore you worship as unknown [*agnoountes*], this I proclaim to you." This line from Paul's speech to the Areopagus then prompts a close reading of that entire speech, with an eye to understanding how it serves as a template for Dionysius' understanding of the relationship between pagan wisdom and Christian revelation.

Finally, in Chapter Five, I chart the "apophatic anthropology" of the *CD*, the notion that the self who suffers union with the unknown God must also become unknown. Paul is Dionysius' preeminent witness to this "apophasis of the self." For Dionysius, Paul loves God with such a fervent *erōs* that he comes to stand outside himself, in ecstasy, and thereby opens himself to the indwelling of Christ, and so appears to his sober peers as a lovesick madman. This ecstatic madness, wherein Christ "lives in" Paul, is equivalent to the descent of "unknowing," the condition that befalls us as we suffer union with the divine. Dionysius draws on the Platonic and Philonic taxonomies of madness and ecstasy, but, I argue, complements and corrects this philosophical inheritance by appeal to Paul. Finally, I consider a challenge to apophatic anthropology, namely Dionysius' lone but important refusal of ecstasy in *DN* 11. In accounting for this refusal, I distinguish between the denial (*arnēsis*) of the self, which Dionysius impugns, and the *apophasis* of the self, which he commends. I conclude the chapter by returning to the definition of hierarchy with which Chapter Three begins and arguing that the second element of that definition—hierarchy as a "state of understanding" (*epistēmē*)—must be understood as a play on words, that through hierarchy we can enjoy an ecstatic *epistēmē*, that is, an *under*-standing predicated precisely on standing-*outside* ourselves.

If Chapters Three through Five address how Paul animates the entire corpus, in the Conclusion I return to the question of the sense and significance of the pseudonym. Gathering threads from the previous chapters, I settle on three interpretations of the pseudonym, each leading to and buttressing the next. First, the pseudonym "Dionysius the Areopagite" signals that the author of the *CD* is attempting, just as Paul is in his speech to the Areopagus, some rapprochement between pagan wisdom and Christian revelation. By writing under the name of this Athenian judge, the author is looking to Paul, and specifically that speech, to provide a template for absorbing and subordinating the riches of pagan wisdom to the revelation of the unknown God in Christ. Second, the pseudonymous writing of the *CD*—the author's journey back in time to the apostolic age—is at root no different from the widespread late antique practice of summoning the apostles into the present

age. Thus I argue that the pseudonymous author of the *CD*, like the anonymous author of the *Life and Miracles of Thekla* and John Chrysostom in his homilies on Paul, aims to collapse historical time so as to become a *present* disciple to an apostle, here Paul. Writing becomes the means of achieving intimacy with the apostle and, by extension, with Christ, who "lives in" the apostle (Gal 2:20). The notion that writing might be a devotional practice leads me to my third and final interpretation of the pseudonym. I argue that the practice of pseudonymous writing aims to effect the apophasis of the self, that is, it aims to negate the self by splitting it open so that it might be, as Dionysius says of Moses, "neither [it]self nor other." By helping to breach the integrity of the singular self—the "I"—writing opens the self to the indwelling of Christ. In this way, "form" (pseudonymous writing) and "content" (mystical theology), "theory" (theology), and "practice" (asceticism) are wed, united in their efforts to divide the self, integrated so as to disintegrate the known self that would suffer union with the unknown God. <>

Making Christian History: Eusebius of Caesarea and His Readers by Michael Hollerich [Christianity in Late Antiquity, University of California Press, 9780520295360]

Known as the "Father of Church History," Eusebius was bishop of Caesarea in Palestine and the leading Christian scholar of his day. His *Ecclesiastical History* is an irreplaceable chronicle of Christianity's early development, from its origin in Judaism, through two and a half centuries of illegality and occasional persecution, to a new era of tolerance and favor under the Emperor Constantine. In this book, Michael J. Hollerich recovers the reception of this text across time. As he shows, Eusebius adapted classical historical writing for a new "nation," the Christians, with a distinctive theo-political vision.

Eusebius's text left its mark on Christian historical writing from late antiquity to the early modern period—across linguistic, cultural, political, and religious boundaries—until its encounter with modern historicism and postmodernism. **Making Christian History** demonstrates Eusebius's vast influence throughout history, not simply in shaping Christian culture but also when falling under scrutiny as that culture has been reevaluated, reformed, and resisted over the past 1,700 years.

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Eusebius and His Ecclesiastical History

Excerpt: Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History (HE) is the most important of his many books. It created a new literary genre that would have a long and influential history. In an often-quoted statement, F. C. Baur called Eusebius the father of ecclesiastical history, just as Herodotus was the father of historical writing in general. The Ecclesiastical History is our single most important source for recovering the history of the first three centuries of Christianity. And it is the centerpiece of a corpus of writings in which Eusebius created a distinctive vision of the place of the Christian church in world history and God's providential plan.

A book of such significance has attracted an enormous body of commentary and analysis driven by two rather different motives. One was the value of the HE as a documentary treasure trove of partially or completely lost works. For a long time, that was the primary driver of scholarly interest. The past two generations have seen the emergence of a second trend that focuses on Eusebius as a figure in his own right, a writer of exceptional range, creativity, and productivity, and an actor on the ecclesiastical and political stage. How, for example, did current events shape the way Eusebius thought and wrote about the church's past? And what can his construction of the past tell us in turn

about Christian consciousness and ambition during a time of enormous transition? Seen from that angle, the HE becomes not a source for history but itself an artifact of history, a hermeneutical redirection that will be applied to other works of Christian historiography in this book.

The purpose of this book differs from both of those. It is concerned less with what Eusebius used than with how subsequent tradition used him over the very long period since he wrote his history. To do that we need a baseline of understanding. We can only appreciate the impact of his book—and, at times, its eclipse and obscurity—if there is clarity about what he intended to create and how it must be understood on its own terms. This first chapter, then, offers an introduction to Eusebius's life; a selective review of his literary production; an account of his core theological and historical vision; and then a more focused examination of the HE, first in its relation to its companion work, the Chronological Canons, then in a description of its structure, composition, and purpose, and finally in a review of Eusebius's predecessors. The chapter has two purposes: to provide a template for understanding Eusebius's reception by later ecclesiastical historiography; and to give readers not well acquainted with Eusebius an introduction to him and to the rich and diverse contemporary scholarship on him. Subsequent chapters will carry the story forward from Eusebius's first successors to contemporary interpretations and debates over Eusebius and his legacy.

Eusebius As Transitional Figure

Life

Eusebius of Caesarea, or Eusebius Pamphili (b. ca. 260–264, d. 339 or 340) as he was known in antiquity, was born just as the "little peace of the Church," the forty or so years of toleration following the rescript of the emperor Gallienus in 260, was beginning. He witnessed and survived the decade of intermittent persecution launched by Diocletian in 303. And he outlived the emperor who restored toleration and took the first steps toward religious establishment.

Eusebius seems to have been a native of Caesarea Maritima in Palestine, the capital of the Roman province of Judea. He spent most of his life there and rarely left, apart from travels inside Palestine and, during the last two years of the persecution, to Phoenicia and Egypt, and possibly Arabia. In the era after persecution ended, he occasionally traveled for church business. He adopted his surname ("son of Pamphilus") out of respect for the scholarly presbyter Pamphilus, ho emos despotës (my master8), in whose household he apparently lived from a young age. There he was educated and trained in copying manuscripts in the library for which Caesarea would become famous. The library was part of Pamphilus's project of collecting and preserving the works of Origen of Alexandria (ca. 184–ca. 253), who had spent the last approximately twenty years of his life in Caesarea after being forced to leave Alexandria because of difficulties with his bishop, Demetrius. Eusebius became a valued collaborator of Pamphilus and worked with him on an apology for Origen after Pamphilus was arrested in 307 during the last persecution. Following Pamphilus's martyrdom in 310, Eusebius wrote his Life in three books and assumed the role of his successor. There would always be a question about his success in surviving a persecution that took his master. The projects of copying and collating manuscripts, and curating Origen's literary and theological legacy, under the sign of possible martyrdom, left a fundamental stamp on everything Eusebius did throughout a long and productive career.

Not long after the end of persecution in 313, Eusebius was consecrated as bishop of Caesarea. His entry into the privileged fellowship of the Christian episcopacy cemented his standing among Eastern bishops who shared his Origenian theological orientation. For the next quarter century until his death, he would be a dominant figure in those circles and a major player in the clerical jockeying for position in relation to the newly sympathetic imperial government. He experienced a severe crisis when his association with the theology of Arius, an Alexandrian presbyter, put him on the

temporarily losing side of the battle between Arius and Bishop Alexander of Alexandria. Forever after, the Arian tag would tarnish the reputation of his many books, and the Ecclesiastical History above all. In the winter of 324/325, he was provisionally excommunicated during a council of bishops in Antioch, held under the presidency of Bishop Hosius of Córdoba in Spain. He was thus under a cloud six months later when he attended the council convened in Nicaea by Constantine. In an awkward letter written afterward to his church in Caesarea, he strove to rationalize his acceptance of the creed of the council, with its buzzword homoousios and its (to him) dubious associations. Subsequently he was an avid combatant in the dogmatic polemics sparked by the council.

It was not until this last stage of his long life that Eusebius made the actual acquaintance of Constantine, after the final defeat of Constantine's Eastern coruler Licinius in 323/324. Timothy Barnes suggested that the bishop and the emperor probably met in person on no more than four occasions.15 Eusebius made sure his readers were aware of those contacts in his writings, including two speeches and the Life of Constantine, written after the emperor's death and not long before Eusebius himself passed away. So successful was his promotional effort that in modern times he has been reviled as a flatterer and a court theologian, famously denounced by Jacob Burckhardt as antiquity's first thoroughly dishonest historian. Recent scholarship has done much to correct that picture with a more comprehensive understanding of Eusebius as scholar, apologist, and churchman. By bringing under scrutiny his entire oeuvre, in all its impressive variety, without letting our perspective be skewed by the Constantinian literature, we gain a more accurate grasp not only of Eusebius but of the Christian culture of his day during a time of unparalleled turbulence. Historians often talk of "periods of transition." If ever the phrase applied, it fits the generation to which Eusebius belonged and to which he is our premier witness.

On the other hand—and this is part of the gain of the rich trove of research that we will encounter in this book—we can also see how much continuity there was in the before-and-after of that era. We have become better at reading Eusebius as he was—already forty years old at the outbreak of the last persecution—without endowing him with a clear-eyed knowledge of the future that he could not have possessed, of the Christian Roman Empire as it would exist by the end of the fourth century under Theodosius. Peter Brown recently suggested that we might imagine Eusebius—and Constantine, and their generation—as limited by "horizons of the possible considerably more narrow than we might suppose," and that we should perhaps credit Eusebius with no more than a "thin" universalist outlook, for which it was sufficient that Christianity's victory took visible form in buildings and laws and selective purging, without the expectation that the world would be made totally clean of idolatrous practices.

Literary Production

Only a brief and selective survey of Eusebius's literary production is possible here, for the sake of illustrating its diversity and some of its underlying themes, as well as to give a sense of where the HE fits into the whole. An important circumstance for Eusebius's work is its setting in Caesarea, with its vigorous commercial, religious, and intellectual life, and vibrant Jewish, Samaritan, and Christian communities coexisting with Greco-Roman paganism. Eusebius must certainly have interacted in some fashion or other with the Jewish community and its famous academy, founded about the same time as Origen's arrival. Origen's tenure there had dramatically raised Caesarea's profile as a center of Christian intellectual activity. Major archaeological work at Caesarea Maritima has recovered remains of the great expansion since Herod the Great's development of the place formerly known as Straton's Tower. We must always keep in mind the presence of those religious and intellectual others in Caesarea, Jews above all, when we read Eusebius's books.

Eusebius's writings can be organized into five broadly different groups. First, there is his biblical scholarship, for which he was prepared by his years copying and collating biblical manuscripts on the

basis of the Hexapla, Origen's great synopsis of Greek versions of the Hebrew Bible or Christian Old Testament. Manuscripts still survive with his name and that of Pamphilus listed in the colophons. Then there are instruments for biblical study, such as the gazeteer of biblical placenames called the Onomasticon, an invaluable handbook with apposite annotation. Works like the Onomasticon played a role in promoting pilgrimage to Palestine once persecution ended and Constantine's building program commenced. There is also Eusebius's ingenious synoptic index of the contents of the four gospels, commonly called the Gospel Sections and Canons, which distinguished and numbered individual pericopes in the Gospels and organized them in tables, facilitating quick identification of parallel passages. As commentators have noted, Eusebius's fondness for tabular layouts is something that may have been nurtured by his intimate familiarity with the Hexapla. In addition he wrote treatises on controverted passages in the Bible, such as his Gospel Questions and Solutions, on the resurrection accounts and the genealogies of Jesus in Matthew and Luke, in the literary genre known as problems and solutions. Finally, there are the two massive commentaries on the Psalter and on the book of Isaiah, both from soon after 325, and which Eusebius may have singled out for treatment because of his special interest in the fulfillment of prophecy, in debates with Jews and pagans. Both works show his attention to textual variations as documented in the Hexapla and demonstrate his characteristic blend of literal and spiritual interpretation, which tends to avoid Origenian theological speculation in favor of grounding the texts in a continuous, providential history.

A second cluster consists of the apologetic works: the General Elementary Introduction, in its present form a collection of Old Testament prophetic extracts in four books out of an original nine, written while persecution was still underway; the massive twin apologies the Proof of the Gospel (DE) and the Preparation for the Gospel (PE) from the years after the end of persecution in 313, the former chiefly against the Jews and written to prove the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy in Jesus and in Christianity, the latter chiefly to show the priority, and therefore the superiority, of Christianity to Hellenism and to Judaism as well; and the late work the Theophany, which survives only in a Syriac translation. All of these works illustrate Eusebius's reliance on the piling up of quotations and extracts, a method made to order for one with the resources of Pamphilus's library at his disposal. It was his intention, he says in the Preparation for the Gospel, "not [to] set down my own words, but those of the very persons who have taken the deepest interest in the worship of those whom they call gods, so that the argument may stand clear of all suspicion of being invented by us" (PE 1.5.14, trans. Gifford). The PE is especially notable for its articulation of a grand integrative vision of Christianity and the classical tradition.

A third cluster we may loosely call historical works, though it includes the Apology for Origen and the Martyrs of Palestine as well. The universal history conventionally called the Chronicle is rightly paired with the Ecclesiastical History, which took the Chronicle as its point of departure (HE 1.1.6). Both works are discussed in detail in the next two sections, so no more will be said about them here, except that they too rely on quotations from sources. The degree to which their apologetic agenda coexists with their scholarly ambitions is considered below. The dating of both works is similarly debated and cannot be treated here, except to say that in their finished form they both ended with Constantine's unification of the empire after the defeat of Licinius, his last imperial rival.

A special note is necessary here about the Martyrs of Palestine (MP), which has intimate but complex connections with the Ecclesiastical History. The MP exists in two different recensions, one of them longer than the other. The longer one (here L) survives complete only in a Syriac translation that was discovered and published in the nineteenth century. The shorter one (here S) exists in Greek and is found in some of the manuscripts of the HE. This book accepts the following reconstruction of the history and standing of the MP: that L is the older of the two recensions; that it preceded the composition of the HE as Eusebius's report on the martyrdoms he himself witnessed in Palestine up to late 311 (MP Pref.8); that L was adapted to produce the shorter version, S, for

book 8 of the HE; but that S was later removed, after persecution ended definitively in 313, and left to survive separately, being found in different locations in manuscripts of the HE. I decided at the beginning of my research for this book that the Martyrs of Palestine would not be considered, insofar as it seems essentially to constitute a separate work, albeit a very important one, both for its historical value and for its role in fostering a literary tradition of its own, what has been called "collective biography." We will encounter literature of that type in chapter 3, in the East Syrian tradition. But it seems to be something qualitatively different from "ecclesiastical history." In general, I agree with the opinion of Jörg Ulrich that "there must have been an awareness of the difference between historiography and hagiography."

In a fourth category are the late controversial tracts that Eusebius wrote as part of the dogmatic dueling in the wake of Nicaea, Against Marcellus and On Ecclesiastical Theology. They too use quotation and refutation, the former more than the latter. They will make only infrequent appearances in this book. Their relevance here is chiefly that they show Eusebius as wholly invested in a world of ecclesiastical and dogmatic conflict that he and his contemporaries certainly did not invent but that took on new intensity now that the Roman state had an investment in the outcome. I admit to sharing at times the impatience expressed by some of Eusebius's continuators as they recount the perpetual fighting over doctrine. And yet identifying and vindicating orthodoxy is one of the central purposes of the HE.

A fifth and final category consists of the very late works devoted to celebrating the new order coming into being under the sole reign of the first Christian emperor. The Treatise on the Holy Sepulcher (SC) (September 335), on Constantine's church over the burial place of Christ, and the Oration in Praise of Constantine (LC) (July 336), on the occasion of the emperor's thirtieth anniversary, have come down to us bundled in the manuscripts as a single address but now recognized as two distinct works. The Life of Constantine (VC), in four books, was written, it seems, rather hurriedly after the emperor's death in 337 and perhaps left incomplete at the time of Eusebius's own death two years later. The speeches and the Life, along with Constantine's Oration to the Assembly of the Saints, were Eusebius's bid "to make himself the authoritative interpreter of the Christian emperor Constantine." Like some other works by Eusebius, the Life of Constantine is a bit of a genre buster, a "literary hybrid" of biography, encomium, hagiography, and—with its reliance on documents—something of a work of history, as Eusebius notes in the VC in quoting a decree of Constantine to the provincials of Palestine, "both so that the actual text of this decree may survive through our history (tës historias) and be preserved for those after us, and in order to confirm the truth of our narrative" (VC 2.23.2, trans. Cameron and Hall).

It is this triad of works that is most often in question when people speak about Eusebius's "political theology." The term itself has a confusing plasticity, being applicable to all manner of political attitudes and policies, from right-wing legitimation to left-wing social and ideological critique. When the term first came into use after its modern retrieval by political theorist Carl Schmitt, it carried the conservative sense of a legitimation system for a political order. As we will see in the last chapter of this book, Schmitt gave it that connotation at the expense of the reputation of Eusebius himself. In Eusebius's era the political order in question was the ecumenical monarchy of the Roman Empire, as opposed to other regime types with which ancient thinkers were familiar. The two orations and the Life of Constantine were scarcely the only works of Eusebius whose contents lent themselves to ideological service, as the Chronicle, the PE, the DE, and the HE all demonstrate. But the Constantinian writings display a political theology of an exceptionally developed kind. We will take up that subject in the next section. Here we are considering only what place the Life of Constantine in particular will have in this book. Eusebius's continuators will sometimes treat the Life of Constantine as a virtual continuation of the Ecclesiastical History, an easy assumption to make, considering that the first two books of the VC deal in much greater detail with events and persons

already encountered in the HE. One topic in particular that will intrigue later generations is not mentioned in the HE at all but only in the VC: the story of Constantine's conversion and baptism. Popular interest in Constantine's conversion and baptism will grow apace, even though the VC itself will experience relative eclipse not long after its composition, considered "nothing short of a publishing disaster," "an outlier," without discernible influence on fourth-century traditions about Constantine. The most plausible explanation for its unpopularity is the supposed Arian tinge of its theological orientation and its association of Constantine himself too closely with Arianism. It also had little to say about aspects of Constantine's life that especially intrigued later generations of readers in the Greek Christian world, which much preferred the hagiographic lives of the first Christian emperor that became staple reading during the Byzantine period. Unlike the HE and the Chronicle, the VC would not be translated into Latin until the end of the Middle Ages.

What does that mean for the place that the Life of Constantine will have in this book on the reception of Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History? It can only play a supporting role, since the present book is primarily about "ecclesiastical history" and only secondarily about Constantine. But the VC can scarcely be avoided, given the links between it and the HE, and the fact that the final form of the HE culminates in Constantine's ascendancy to sole rule. A Christian emperor and a Christianizing empire will therefore be integral to what we are going to call Eusebius's "theopolitical vision," even if Christian emperor and empire do not dominate the HE as they do the Constantinian literature. The Life of Constantine will therefore become relevant when later Christian historiography writes about Constantine in ways that sound as though they derive from the HE but in fact do not.

Eusebius's Theo-political Vision

The reception history of Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History involves more than the formal study of "ecclesiastical history" as a historiographical genre. It also involves the substantive vision of God and history/God in history that animates the HE and with which future ecclesiastical historians will have to come to terms—whether to accept it, to criticize and revise it, or to ignore it altogether. A conventional theological vocabulary might call that vision salvation history, a category that certainly captures a feature of Eusebius's thinking, especially of his biblical interpretation. It could also fairly be called a theology of history. I prefer to describe Eusebius's fundamental orientation as a theo-political vision, a category admittedly more in vogue in contemporary theology than in scholarship on late antiquity. By it I mean that the vision is powerfully providentialist in its view of history, that it embraces the political realm as an essential and not merely incidental theater of divine action in the world, and that the two, the theological and the political, are grasped as intimately and inseparably connected—though the former claims superiority over the latter in the order of being. We could also call such a vision a political theology. While the Constantinian writings do embody a political theology, their encomiastic character makes them an inadequate optic for examining Eusebius's thought as a whole, as we have already said. Because several of Eusebius's other writings reveal politically resonant assumptions and aspirations without being true vehicles for political theology as such, I am therefore adopting the hyphenated term "theo-political" as a convenient rubric under which to consider ideas that are dear to Eusebius in many of his authorial endeavors, whether as scholar, apologist, or controversialist.

There are four distinct but related elements that together make up Eusebius's theo-political vision. They are not evident in equal measure in all of his writings, as our literary survey has already indicated. Nor do they exert comparable influence at each stage of Eusebius's life and works. No one, I think, would dispute that they are fundamental to his thought. I will comment briefly on each.

- The Bible, seen as a divinely revealed decoding key to history as the oikonomia of the Logos
- The participatory metaphysics of Origen and the Platonic tradition

- A historically based anti-Jewish apologetic well suited for a Christian church in a liminal state, uncertainly poised between persecution and patronage
- A conception of sacred kingship that was virtual Gemeingut in late antiquity

We have already emphasized that current research on Eusebius resists an anachronistic framing of him and his theology as political tools in the hands of a ruthless despot, once upon a time an easy enough caricature, as if he and Constantine were foreshadowing Talleyrand and Napoleon.45 But Eusebius was a bishop before he was a royal panegyrist, and a scholar-apologist before either. The church he served was front and center in his thinking, far ahead of the empire as such.46 In a brilliant essay entitled "Eusebius of Caesarea, Origenist," Charles Kannengiesser showed how Eusebius's literary production, even the works that seem soaked in political theology, were fundamentally animated not by politics but by Christian faith and by Platonic idealism. In Eusebius's Commentary on Isaiah, written in the full glow of the unification of the empire under Constantine, he called the church "the godly polity" (to theosebes politeuma) or "city of God" (polis tou theou), a usage not different from Augustine's civitas Dei, and like Augustine's, an inclusive reality with a preexistence in Israel before its full disclosure after the Incarnation.48 In the peroration to his dedication address for the rebuilt cathedral at Tyre, found at the end of the HE, Eusebius hailed his friend Bishop Paulinus of Tyre as one in whom "the entire Christ himself has taken his seat (autos holos engkathëtai Christos)" (HE 10.4.67), a theological validation of the highest kind. The speech also praises the emperors (plural) as "most dearly beloved of God," but their value is based on their brutal work as the instruments by which God purged and cleansed the world of the harm wrought by the persecuting tyrants (HE 10.4.60). This is no more than the Pauline vindication of the one who bears the sword as God's avenging servant (Rom 13:4). It is true that Eusebius's account of Constantine's defeat of Maxentius in the victory of the Milvian Bridge is presented in terms of a typological comparison with the destruction of Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea (HE 9.9.5–9), a comparison that will receive much fuller elaboration in the Life of Constantine. But the point of the typology in the HE is the emplotment of a military victory in a civil war into a biblically based narrative of divine deliverance. Contemporary history thus validates biblical prophecy in a kind of feedback loop, not primarily to glorify Constantine himself, but as a response to contemporary doubters who, Eusebius admits, regard the Exodus narrative as a "myth."

The fundamental source of Eusebius's theo-political vision is the Bible, particularly those books with a broadly historical orientation: the Deuteronomic history; the major prophets; Daniel; the Gospels; Paul's letters to the Romans and Galatians; and especially the Acts of the Apostles. Doubt has been raised as to the precise literary influence of Acts on the early books of the HE. Without wanting to proclaim Acts as the first church history, an honor that surely belongs to Eusebius, there are nevertheless clear thematic affinities between Acts and the HE, such as an openness to the positive role of the Roman Empire, a prudent reserve about apocalyptic eschatology (Jesus's parting admonition to his disciples, "It is not for you to know the time or the hour" [Acts 1:6], is quoted approvingly by Eusebius in the preface to the Chronicle), and universalism, as expressed in the Pentecost account, which Eusebius invokes to great effect in describing the Council of Nicaea—a "universal council" (synodon oikoumenikën), the first such use of that phrase—in the Life of Constantine (VC 3.6–8). Above all there is the shared commitment to salvation history: Richard Pervo noted that it is more or less universally accepted that "Luke's principal theme is the continuity of salvation history."

So too with Eusebius, though Eusebius differs from Luke in his concern to backdate salvation history to Abraham rather than to make Resurrection, Ascension, and Pentecost the narrative point of departure. That history was under the dispensation of the Logos, who revealed its inner meaning by the prophets. In the preface to the Proof of the Gospel, Eusebius credits biblical prophecy with a

purview that embraces the whole sweep of human affairs, secular as well as religious. The passage bears quoting:

> What sort of [prophetic] fulfillment, do you ask? They are fulfilled in countless and all kinds of ways, and amid all circumstances, both generally and in minute detail, in the lives of individual people and in their corporate life, now nationally in the course of Hebrew history, and now in the lives of foreign nations. Such things as civic revolutions, changes of times, national vicissitudes, the coming of foretold prosperity, the assaults of adversity, the enslaving of races, the besieging of cities, the downfall and restoration of whole states, and countless other things that were to take place a long time after, were foretold by these writers.

Eusebius's Commentary on Isaiah is constantly taken up with finding the fulfillment of prophecy in "the course of events" (hë ekbasis tõn pragmatôn). "Literal" (kata/ pros lexin) interpretation of prophecy meant finding fulfillment in observable historical events. "Spiritual" (kata/pros dianoian) interpretation typically meant the meaning of those events, which for Eusebius could be grasped only transcendentally, in terms of the divine plan. Thus there was always an "inside" and an "outside" of events, the former of which was known only to faith, in what Peter Brown has recently called "the charged pairing of invisible and visible."

The second element in Eusebius's theo-political vision consists of his immense debt to Origen, beginning with Eusebius's appropriation of a theistic metaphysics derived most immediately from Middle Platonism, in which a secondary divine principle links the source of all being to the rest of reality. Eusebius routinely called the Logos such a secondary principle, at least until Nicaea disallowed it. Then there is Eusebius's adoption of a spirituality that treated asceticism and intellectual inquiry as kindred enterprises—"the philosophical life" embraces both, as Eusebius saw modeled concretely in Pamphilus. Origen held to a doctrine of the church that recognized apostolic tradition as foundational, but according to which that tradition was preserved and protected by a hierarchy of talent and holiness which was by no means coterminous with ordination. Charles Kannengiesser has pointed out the proximity between what Eusebius says about apostolic tradition in the beginning of the HE and what Origen says about it in the celebrated preface to his treatise On First Principles. As Origen's and Pamphilus's heir, Eusebius can be seen as an exemplar in his own right of the scholar-bishop. We can leave to late medieval and Reformation-era polemics the concept of a "fall of the church" from its primal purity. But one unhappy effect of the bishops' transformation into officials in a church of the empire may have been the loss of centers of study like the one inspired by Origen's legacy in Caesarea. Eusebius straddled that transition. To Origen, furthermore, Eusebius also owed an understanding of the Roman Empire as a peacemaking pathway for the gospel, although here too Eusebius will take that openness much farther than Origen. Finally, it was from Origen that Eusebius received the philological and hermeneutical tools that Alexandrian scholarship provided for understanding divine revelation, which Origen had insisted was a single unified whole in both Old and New Testaments.

Origen's centrality in the HE is indisputable: he dominates book 6, just as Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria dominates book 7, they as a matched pair representing Eusebius's ideal types of the charismatic teacher and exegete, and the scholarly bishop/pastor. As we noted, Eusebius assisted Pamphilus in the composition of an apology for Origen, adding a sixth book to the original five after his master's death in 310. Eusebius's and Pamphilus's labors on behalf of Origen's legacy, and Eusebius's life of Origen in book 6 of the Ecclesiastical History, will constitute one of the most precious—and at times controversial—elements in the reception of the HE. Origen's name will never cease to spark reaction. In sum: "There should be no doubt that Ecclesiastical History is the most Origenian of Eusebius' apologetic works handed down to us."

All of that being said, anyone who comes to Eusebius after reading Origen will encounter a very different intellectual sensibility. Most obviously, Eusebius could not match Origen's speculative abilities. It's not that Eusebius wasn't interested in the deep things of the spirit. As readers of the Preparation for the Gospel know, he was intensely engaged in issues of epistemology, ontology, ethics, and eschatology, as shown by his massive excerpting of texts by both Christians and Hellenists, Plato above all. But he preferred quotation to argument—more correctly, he treated quotation itself as a form of argument.66 As a rule, he avoided speculation over issues, especially involving eschatology, that were controversial among his fellow Christians. He does not, for example, endorse Origen's speculations about universal salvation. His own declared beliefs appear to presume an irreversible posthumous divide between the saved and the damned. At times Origenist doctrines are introduced as alternative theories, via impersonal allusions like "some say" (phasin tines) or "another might say" (allos d'an eipoi), as in his Commentary on Isaiah, which Eusebius wrote with Origen's own commentary at his side.

But more than reluctance to touch hot-button topics is at work here. Eusebius was clearly more attuned to the historical and the concrete, and ultimately to the political, than Origen was. It is not easy to conceive of Origen creating works like the Onomasticon, the Chronicle, or the Ecclesiastical History. Lorenzo Perrone has suggested that their different orientations reflected Eusebius's awareness of the new cultural situation created by the end of persecution, and hence he was more open to an engagement with classical culture, and also more attuned to strictly literary activity "as an 'ecclesiastical writer' and as a Christian philologos." Did Eusebius's lifelong residence in Palestine also dispose him to be more interested in the concrete evidences of Christianity's origins, and of course of Judaism as well? (That interest had its dark side of course, as we will see.) Origen was not uninterested in empirical confirmations of biblical narratives when they came to his attention. But he didn't design entire books around them. When Origen speculated at the end of Against Celsus about the possibility of a universal ethic (contrary to Celsus's scorn), he projected it into a possibly very distant—even otherworldly?— future, whereas Eusebius was ever on the lookout for signs of world-historical convergence, in the records of the past or in anticipations of the future. Origen surely welcomed favorable signs of the times. It is probably the two letters that Eusebius says Origen wrote to the emperor Philip (244–249) and his consort that are the source of Eusebius's description of Philip's request to attend the prayers on the last day of the Easter vigil (HE 6.34; cf. 6.36.3). But the historical fulfillment of prophecy in all manner of secular and ecclesiastical life became basic to Eusebius's apologetics and exegesis to a degree far exceeding Origen's interests.

There seems to be no real precedent in Origen for another central motif of Eusebius's theo-political vision, his highly original apologetic against Judaism. The challenge he faced was the familiar one of the contradiction between the Christian embrace of the Jewish scriptures and yet the selective abandonment of central Jewish practices. Versions of typological interpretation were the oldest tactic for having it both ways. Eusebius's adaptation of typology built on the conventional notion that there had always been a true and a false Israel, but he historicized it in novel ways. Borrowing ultimately from Philo, he said that the patriarchal worthies of Genesis had practiced a pure form of religion that looked like a kind of ethical and rational monotheism, grounded in a single transcendent God and in a religious practice that was "in accordance with nature, so that they had no need of laws to rule them, because of the extreme freedom of their soul from passions, but had received true knowledge of the doctrines concerning God." Eusebius called the practitioners of this superior religion Hebrews and distinguished them from those whom he called Jews, who followed the law of Moses with its cultic, dietary, and juridical prescriptions. The life of the latter group was a fall from the higher standard that had prevailed previously. It was introduced by Moses, "a Hebrew of the Hebrews and not a Jew, because the Jewish nation did not yet exist," as a necessary accommodation to the debased condition of the people after their long tenure in Egypt. Henceforth, "Hebrews" and

"Jews" would be intermingled and coexist within the one people of Israel, while making themselves known by their respective ways of life. The preface to the HE will claim that Christianity is in continuity with the higher way of life of the Hebrews (1.4.4-15).

The distinction between Hebrews and Jews thus served Eusebius by grafting Christianity onto the longue durée of Jewish history. The powerful need to demonstrate Christian claims to be the true Israel did not become less important with the end of persecution. Constantine's Christian sympathies may have made it even more urgent to distance today's Christians from today's Jews now that the church had the prospect of the assistance of the state. We have already noted Eusebius's proximity to a thriving and learned Jewish community in Caesarea. His respect for Jewish learning and his willingness to exploit it, Just as Origen once had, cannot allow us to overlook a supersessionist attitude to contemporary Judaism, which has left its mark on the HE and on other works of his. He may or may not have been the source of the notorious language about Jewish "blindness," "perjury," and guilt for "murder of the Lord and patricide" in Constantine's letter on the dating of Easter, but he nevertheless saw fit to quote the letter in the Life of Constantine." Passages in the partial remains of Eusebius's treatise on Easter contain disturbing parallels to the same language of the Jews as those who killed the Savior. It is well known that the uneasy tolerance Jews had enjoyed under the pagan empire gradually eroded under its Christian successor. A Christian politics and a Christian state would not be a hospitable environment for Jews and Judaism until the advent of modern liberalism.

But Eusebius's distinction of Hebrews and Jews had an additional benefit by being mapped onto a similar fissure between two levels of participation in Christianity. The key text here is a complex typology in Eusebius's Proof of the Gospel (DE 1.8), in which Christianity's higher and lower way recapitulates Judaism's. For one of Eusebius's apologetic innovations was his principled defense of an emerging double standard in the Christian way of life, the Christian tropos tou biou. The radical ethic of the Sermon on the Mount, the transvaluation of earthly values by the pacifism, poverty, and celibacy of a virtuoso ascetical elite, was the fulfillment of the "Hebrew" way of life. It was "above nature' and beyond ordinary human society (politeias), given by "the perfect Teacher to those who were able to receive it" (cf. Matt 19:12). The mass of Christians followed a way of life that was "subordinate and more human:' It permitted them to marry and procreate, and to pursue the secular business of government, the military, agriculture, and commerce. Just as Moses had had to devise a "secondary degree of piety" for those who could no longer adhere to the higher way of their ancestors, so too Jesus willed his disciples to grant a comparable concession to human weakness.

The timeliness of this distinction is obvious, coming when a Roman emperor was sending signals of his Christian sympathies after the defeat of Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge. Eusebius's typology fitted smoothly with the third canon of the Council of Arles that Constantine had summoned in August 314, which appeared to deny communion to Christian soldiers who threw down their weapons in time of peace, though of course Arles was only a Western council in which Eusebius could not have taken part."

On the fourth element in Eusebius's theo-political vision: we have said enough already to discourage understanding Eusebius simply as a tool of Roman despotism. But the empire is an obvious presence in the narrative of the HE, even if the positive role the empire plays falls short of the political theology of the Constantine writings. How should that role be understood? It is a safe generalization that subjects of the later Roman Empire regarded the emperor as in some sense touched with sacrality. Court ceremonial, statuary, iconography, the diction of legislation and bureaucracy, and imperial panegyric had the effect of investing office and person with a numinous mystique." Neither Jews nor Christians could have remained completely immune to this, and Eusebius certainly was no exception. The one God—ho theos ton holon, the God of the universe, as Eusebius routinely calls

him—had the emperor and the empire under his sway, as he had everything else." Abundant texts in the New Testament sanctioned the doctrine that the one who held the sword was God's servant to execute wrath on the evildoer (cf. Rom 13:4).

The exceptions to this generalization were those under the spell of apocalyptic hopes and fears. But even they, for whom Satan was the power behind the throne (Rev 13), took it as doctrine that Satan's sway was only temporary and about to come to a definitive end—by a different sword, carried by the mounted Word of God (Rev 19:11-16).

Eusebius's basic perception of the empire as a preparer of the way for the gospel continues an apologetic line that begins with the Gospel of Luke and runs through the second- and third-century Greek Christian authors. Origen's Against Celsus 2.3o contains the core of the argument: that Christ was born in the reign of Augustus; that Augustus had ended warfare between the nations; that all had gone well for the empire since the birth of Christ; and universal peace was a divinely intended development as a precondition for the spread of a religion whose message was about peace but which forbade vengeance against enemies. Eusebius quotes an extract from Melito of Sardis's apology to Marcus Aurelius that makes the same points (HE 4.26.7-11). By its centralization of authority, Eusebius claims elsewhere, the empire was the restraint (to koluon) against those whom the gods of polytheism were inspiring to thwart Christianity—an apologetic assertion that equates national diversity, what Eusebius calls "polyarchy," with polytheism." "Together, at the same critical moment, as if from a single divine will, two beneficial shoots were produced for mankind: the empire of the Romans and the teaching of true worship." The empire is God's instrument for the chastisement of the Jews for the death of Jesus," not the instrument of Satan to persecute the saints. It seems clear that the book of Revelation's portrayal of the empire as the beast from the sea and the agent of Satan is one reason for Eusebius's reserve regarding its canonical status. Instances of Roman persecution of Christians are relativized as temporary coups rather than permanent satanic occupation.

The emergence of an emperor with Christian sympathies deepened this line of argument. We have already noted Eusebius's riff on the book of Exodus for his account of the defeat of Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge (HE 9.9.4-8). At his first introduction of Constantine in book 8, when he was named emperor by his father's troops after Constantius's death in 3o6, Eusebius made sure to say that he had already been appointed emperor long before by God himself (HE 8.13.14). God fights on his side as his ally (HE 9.9.1) and, with the defeat of his last rival, Licinius, in 324, he is said to have had God as his friend and protector, who even exposed Licinius's perfidy to him (HE 10.8.6).

What can the later writings on Constantine add to this theo-political composite? Quite a lot, in fact. The Life of Constantine will build on the theme of Constantine as God's friend to create a rich portrait of the Christian emperor. Constantine is a new Moses, a comparison that is more implicit than explicit in the HE but is worked out in remarkable detail in the first two books of the VC: "The whole of Constantine's life is now to be read in the figure of Moses." He is a universal conqueror to whom the world pays tribute (VC 4.5-13, 4.50), a repressor of idolatrous worship (2.44-45, 2.47-61.1, 3.54-58), a generous and humane ruler (1.41-43, 2.11, 4.1-4), God's servant (therapon), a builder of Christian churches in what would become the Holy Land (2.45-46, 3.25-53), and an orator on theological themes (4.32).94 He is a divinely appointed caretaker of the Christian church (3.59-66) and suppressor of heresy (3.63-66). In a much-debated analogy, he is even hailed as "a kind of universal bishop" and "a bishop of those outside [sc. the church]" 4.24), who convenes councils in Nicaea (3.4-24) and in Jerusalem (4.43-48) to mark the twentieth and thirtieth anniversaries of his imperial accession. He participates at Nicaea even though an unbaptized layman, and Eusebius describes him entering to take his seat "like a heavenly messenger (angelos!) of God" (3.10.3)." His reception of the bishops after the Council of Nicaea is portrayed hyperbolically as the kingdom of

Christ come down to earth (3.15). He is a patron of the publication of new copies of the Bible, produced at government expense in Caesarea (4.37). He is the protector of Christians in Sasanian Persia (413) who, at the end of his life, was planning what Eusebius describes as a virtual Christian holy war against Persia (4.56). And in death he styles himself the companion of the apostles, according to Eusebius's account of the shrine in Constantinople dedicated to the apostles and his own mausoleum (4.58-60)."

The Tricennial Oration draws on motifs from Hellenistic royal ideology and Middle Platonic philosophy to give a cosmic dimension to Eusebius's vision. Eusebius presents a carefully constructed set of parallels that establish a correlation between the metaphysical structure of being, in which the one God governs the universe through his lieutenant the Logos and through the monarchical political structure of the empire. Monarchy and monotheism thus reinforce one another. The Tricennial Oration goes beyond earlier Eusebian deployment of this legitimation scheme by plugging Constantine into it through the philosophical doctrine that a wise ruler learns how to imitate the divine governance of the world in his own reign, though Eusebius departs from Hellenistic versions of this by not regarding Constantine as himself "living law" (nomos empsychos). The chain of legitimation runs from God the Father through the Logos as intermediary to Constantine as his imitator: "And this selfsame One [the Logos] would be Governor of this entire cosmos, the One who is over all, through all, and in all, visible and invisible, the all-pervasive Logos of God, from whom and through whom bearing the image of the higher kingdom, the sovereign dear to God [Constantine], in imitation of the Higher Power, directs the helm and sets straight all things on earth." The parallel between the Logos and Constantine is then worked out in terms of length of reign, divine and human kingship, spiritual and political combat against the powers of polytheism, divine and human pedagogy, divine and human judgment of the good and the wicked, and divine and human rational (nonbloody) sacrifice (LC 2.1-5).

> Thus outfitted in the likeness of the kingdom of heaven, he [Constantine] pilots affairs below with an upward gaze, to steer by the archetypal form. He grows strong in his model of monarchic rule, which the Ruler of All has given to the race of man alone of those on earth. For this is the law of royal authority, the law which decrees one rule over everybody. Monarchy excels all other kinds of constitution and government. For rather do anarchy and civil war result from the alternative, a polyarchy based on equality. For which reason there is One God, not two or three or even more. For strictly speaking, belief in many gods is godless. There is one Sovereign [the supreme God], and His Logos and royal law is one."

My concern here is not with the historical authenticity of Eusebius's portrait of Constantine as Christian saint, ideal emperor, and imitator of the cosmic rule of the Logos, but with how it serves a comprehensive theo-political vision. He is writing panegyric, not history. But Averil Cameron has pointed out the social power of Christianity's "rhetoric of empire of which Eusebius's discourse is a prime example."' In the Life of Constantine and the Tricennial Oration, we meet his political theology in its most fully developed form. It will become the template for a Christian monarchical ideology that would sustain Byzantium for another thousand years. It bears repeating that the various ingredients baked into this ideological soufflé go well beyond what is found in the HE. Not all of its elements will accompany the journey of the HE and its companion, the Chronicle, throughout the nonGreek instantiations of the Christian historiographical tradition. The "Constantine" who will become known throughout the East is essentially the product of hagiography and legend. Of course, Eusebius too was purveying hagiography and legend after his own fashion. At the same time, he was aspiring to do more than that in his historical works, the HE and the Chronicle, to which we now turn. <>

Women's Lives, Women's Voices: Roman Material Culture and Female Agency in The Bay of Naples edited by Brenda Longfellow & Molly Swetnam-Burland [University of Texas Press, 9781477323588]

Literary evidence is often silent about the lives of women in antiquity, particularly those from the buried cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Even when women are considered, they are often seen through the lens of their male counterparts. In this collection, Brenda Longfellow and Molly Swetnam-Burland have gathered an outstanding group of scholars to give voice to both the elite and ordinary women living on the Bay of Naples before the eruption of Vesuvius.

Using visual, architectural, archaeological, and epigraphic evidence, the authors consider how women in the region interacted with their communities through family relationships, businesses, and religious practices, in ways that could complement or complicate their primary social roles as mothers, daughters, and wives. They explore women-run businesses from weaving and innkeeping to prostitution, consider representations of women in portraits and graffiti, and examine how women expressed their identities in the funerary realm. Providing a new model for studying women in the ancient world, **Women's Lives, Women's Voices** brings to light the day-to-day activities of women of all classes in Pompeii and Herculaneum.

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Negotiating Silence, Finding Voices, and Articulating Agency by Brenda Longfellow and Molly Swetnam-Burland

Negotiating Silence

In 1975, excavators in the House of Gaius Julius Polybius (IX.13.1–3) in Pompeii made a remarkable discovery in room HH, which opens off the peristyle garden: a group of six skeletons, the remains of several people who had sheltered together in the eruption of Vesuvius and one (or more) others who had died in the upper level of the house, and whose bodies had fallen into the room as seismic activity damaged the structure. At least two were women. One was a mature adult, wearing jewelry and holding a cloth bag that contained a hoard of coins; another, likely in her teens, was in the late stages of pregnancy. The discovery was a powerful reminder of the human face of the circumstances that led to the unique preservation of the sites around the Bay of Naples. Men, women, and children lost their lives, even as many of them hoped for survival and made preparations to sustain themselves and their families.

Yet one notable thing about this particular case is that scholars hoping to present the sites to the general public have used it to spin fanciful stories about Roman women's lives: the older woman has been imagined as the wife of the homeowner, presumed to be the mother of others in the group; the younger woman has been cast as his daughter, about to begin a family of her own. Their final moments have been reconstructed as an interpersonal drama, in which a group was forced to take cover in different parts of the house, knocking on the wall to communicate with each other, because a wayward toddler had run away from his mother to see the eruption firsthand. Estelle Lazer has pointed out how little scientific evidence there is to support an interpretation of the skeletons as biologically related, let alone to reconstruct their last actions. Perhaps equally troubling is that, even in accounts that are intended more as vivid reconstructions of the past than factual narratives, women are relegated to traditional social roles. This volume, in contrast, uses recent developments in the study of Campanian material culture to focus attention on female agency and social engagement. It gathers together scholars who are using epigraphic, archaeological, art historical, and architectural evidence to take a new look at women's lived experiences.

Finding Voices

The last decade has witnessed great change in the standard narratives regarding daily life in the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Once omitted from scholarship altogether or considered of limited importance in public life, women are now included in most treatments of the material. General books on Pompeii often include a section discussing women. Yet the broad scope of these works means that women and their many activities are not the focus, but rather ancillary to men and male activities. Sourcebooks include women on equal footing to men but rely nearly exclusively on epigraphic evidence that provides only a partial picture of the lived experience.

In reality, of course, women were integrated into the rest of the community, and there is little evidence that female patrons or workers emphasized gender-coded activities. In other words, the civic, religious, and funerary monuments built by and for women cannot be visually distinguished from those built by or for men. Nor can female workers in the fullery be distinguished from men, or the handwriting of a woman be identified in a graffito. This lack of obvious differentiation has meant that scholars interested in Roman social history have treated Pompeii as a city inhabited by men, effectively silencing female community members when they are not being held up as an exception or

exemplum. This volume focuses on the silences, and its goal is to consider how women from a range of social backgrounds engaged with the local community through families, businesses, and religious activity, and how they expressed their identities in the funerary realm.

Studies of material culture and the built environment beyond Pompeii, too, tend to assume freeborn, often elite, male users and viewers. Most studies of Roman art and archaeology explicitly or implicitly focus on male activities and agency, at best acknowledging women as backdrops to the activities of elite men—in large part because of the nature of the textual evidence that helps illuminate the intentions of patrons and responses of viewers. Natalie Kampen's pathbreaking monograph on representations of women from the Isola Sacra necropolis of Ostia was for years the only sustained attempt to grapple with the working lives and identities of non-elites. The past two decades, however, have seen an increased interest in addressing the lives and agency of Roman women, in our scholarship and in our teaching. Our understanding of the prominent role of imperial women is now well developed, and scholars have integrated female activities and agency into the larger social world of Roman communities by focusing on religious activity and the sponsoring of public monuments by elite women in their local communities. Though these works have moved the field in exciting ways, several trends are notable: first, elite and imperial women are generally privileged over women of other social groups; second, women of means are defined in terms of male politics, prestige, and patronage; third, textual evidence and lapidary inscriptions are brought to bear on the question more often than visual or archaeological material.

This volume, with its close focus on the cities preserved by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE, moves the discussion forward on several fronts. The unique nature of the material record in the Bay of Naples opens up exciting possibilities for the study of women because we can see them in action in so many ways: through inscriptions that testify to monuments they built; through portraits from houses, tombs, and public spaces that show how they presented themselves or were presented by others in different contexts; through painted inscriptions (dipinti) that show they sponsored candidates for elections; through mythological paintings they commissioned and enjoyed in their residences.

Scholars working with this material have already done much to add nuance to our understanding of Roman women's lives. To take salient examples, Liisa Savunen and Frances Bernstein have shown that women, particularly non-elites, involved themselves in local elections by endorsing candidates; Margaret Woodhull explored how paying for monuments allowed elite women to build connections and prestige;13 Bettina Bergmann and Judith Barringer revealed how images of women in mythological paintings related to literary tropes and societal constructions of ideal behavior.14 In this volume, we build upon this framework to take our knowledge of Pompeian women even deeper.

Our authors, on the whole, favor interdisciplinary approaches that bring texts and images into conversation. Several of our contributors are also on the forefront of scholarship that draws on graffiti, informal inscriptions left on the walls by those who inhabited the city. Difficult to work with and understudied, these handwritten texts show women in action—recording their names in buildings (and thus writing themselves into public space), transacting business deals, sending greetings to their friends. We discuss women of a range of ages and social classes, young and old, slave and free, working and leisured. At the same time, we also look beyond Pompeii and Herculaneum, seeking to understand how the unusual evidence preserved there relates to the traditional media used to study women, including imperial portraits, literary texts, legal sources, and monumental inscriptions. The result is that, through our case studies, we not only uncover the voices of the often-overlooked, but better understand the life experiences and motivations of the elite women we thought we understood so well.

Articulating Agency

We have structured the book around three broad themes: public and commercial identities, women on display, and representing women. Throughout, our authors offer new approaches, at times upending long-standing interpretations of the material by adopting a principle of inclusion that counters the male bias in our sources by reading women into the picture in places where they would, in past scholarship, have been omitted. Lauren Petersen articulates this new methodology in chapter 1, "Pompeian Women and the Making of a Material History," arguing for the necessity of bringing material evidence to bear on women's lives and outlining the challenges and rewards of bringing textual and visual evidence together. She shows how scholarship on even the best-known and most meticulously documented contexts in Pompeii, such as the sanctuary of Isis, has prioritized discussion of men and boys over women and girls. In that case, the "silence" is all the more striking because, as Petersen points out, the evidence in fact points to the involvement of several women as both devotees and patrons of the cult. This is a lacuna of our making, in other words, not one inherent to the evidence. Similarly, the focus on the axial arrangement of domestic spaces—fauces to atrium to tablinum to peristyle—has created a male-centric model of viewership that ignores the rich evidence for women throughout the house. Yet that evidence is, indeed, there. Petersen cites a touching graffito from the atrium of the House of Trebius Valens (III.2.1) that records a woman's experience of childbirth. Her essay poses a challenge, taken up by the rest of the volume: understanding ancient women's lives requires creative thinking and new ways of looking, and brings rich rewards.

We then turn to women's roles in the public sphere, focusing on their economic activities and the prestige they could gain through work and family connections. The chapters by Molly Swetnam-Burland and Lauren Caldwell adopt a comparative approach that brings material from Campania into conversation with inscriptions, legal texts, and papyri from throughout the Roman world. In chapter 2, "Women's Work? Investors, Money-Handlers, and Dealers," Swetnam-Burland takes a fresh look at the kinds of labor that women could perform, arguing that they did at times take part in financial operations (counting money, managing resources, and making loans) typically associated with men. In chapter 3, "From Household to Workshop: Women, Weaving, and the Peculium," Caldwell reexamines the evidence for weaving in the houses and shops of Pompeii, and she argues that producing textiles did far more than enable women to showcase their virtue and piety. Roman law allowed a father to invest money in endeavors undertaken by those in his household and under his legal authority—this included girls, who could use the money to seed small weaving businesses or who could receive specialized training as apprentices in other households. Taken together, the two papers reveal the opportunities for and agency of women in an economic system that was largely intended to profit men.

The other papers in this first section show how women used means that they earned or inherited to benefit their communities. In chapter 4, "Buying Power: The Public Priestesses of Pompeii," Barbara Kellum discusses elite women as patrons of major monuments in Pompeii. She focuses on the impressive buildings along the east side of the Forum, arguing that their patrons simultaneously presented themselves to good effect within the local traditions and revealed themselves as well-connected and educated, deliberately referencing the monuments of Rome. In chapter 5, "Real Estate for Profit: Julia Felix's Property and the Forum Frieze," Eve D'Ambra brings these threads of inquiry about women's economic activities and civic patronage back together, with a close look at the amenities and décor of the estate of Julia Felix—the largest business in Pompeii known to be run by a woman. Close examination of the Forum scenes adorning the atrium provides a glimpse of how fully integrated women from all levels of society were into commercial life, from a graceful matron offering a handout to a bedraggled beggar, to a woman watching over the sale of cloth, to a seated woman holding a child while considering the purchase of shoes.

The second section of the book, "Women on Display," demonstrates how the contextual examination of material remains can help us understand how individual women self-identified and were identified by others. The first two papers focus on portraits of women in three different media and social arenas while the last two consider how women moved through and were documented in the cityscape. Brenda Longfellow begins chapter 6, "Contextualizing the Funerary and Honorific Portrait Statues of Women in Pompeii," with a reexamination of female portraiture in Pompeii, bringing a largely overlooked corpus, sculptures from extra-mural tombs, into conversation with one of the best-known sculptures from the city, the marble portrait of Eumachia that stood in the city center. She considers both the role female tomb builders had in shaping the format of portrait statues for themselves and others as well as how the later honorific statues, sanctioned by the town council, may have been responding to the earlier funerary precedents. Elaine K. Gazda moves the discussion of portraiture to the famous megalographic frieze in the Villa of the Mysteries in chapter 7, "Portraits and Patrons: The Women of the Villa of the Mysteries in Their Social Context." She demonstrates how distinctive the facial features of the domina and other women are in the frieze and suggests these are portraits of household members who perhaps were also members of a Dionysiac thiasos, or community of worshipers. Painted in the mid-first century BCE, this frieze was conceived at a time when cemeteries were the only other place in Pompeii with portraits of women. Together, these two essays challenge our notions of what portraits tell us about public prestige—usually considered in a male-centric model that imagines portraits as a way of communicating honor earned through civic or military service. Longfellow and Gazda show how faces and bodies not just communicated domestic virtues but also showcased women as notable and noticeable to audiences of their peers, at home and in the city.

The second set of essays in this section looks to women lower in the social spectrum. Erika Zimmermann Damer explores how women were named in graffiti from Herculaneum and Pompeii. In chapter 8, "'What's in a Name?' Mapping Women's Names from the Graffiti of Pompeii and Herculaneum," Zimmermann Damer shows, first, that references to women as mothers and wives abound. Yet there are also women acknowledged as elderly, pregnant, charming, and beloved, revealing not only those stages of life most often overlooked by elite, male authors, but the deep-felt emotional bonds of women's lives. Even more importantly, her spatial approach demonstrates that women were everywhere, their presence recorded in homes, shops, tombs, baths, and public porticos. In chapter 9, "The Public and Private Lives of Pompeian Prostitutes," Sarah Levin-Richardson then explores issues of movement and visibility in the city for a specific category of women: prostitutes, who were in part defined by their sexual availability to the public at large, even as their presence in places beyond the brothel is little acknowledged by scholars. She shows, too, that these women expressed themselves not just as passive objects of lust, but as active participants in the sexual acts they performed.

The third and final section of the book, "Representing Women," explores what idealized representations of women may tell us about their lived experiences. In each chapter, our authors move beyond traditional approaches, which examine depictions of women relative to literary sources or as perceived by the male gaze, instead exploring women as viewers engaged in rich semantic dialogues. Chapters 10 and 11 create a mutually informing dialogue about erotic imagery in the city, investigating how panel paintings worked within their broader environments, and offering new ways to think of paintings that purport to show "real" behavior at luxurious parties. In chapter 10, "Women, Art, Power, and Work in the House of the Chaste Lovers at Pompeii," Jennifer Trimble demonstrates how a series of paintings that adorned the bakery showing men and women carousing at a symposium contrast sharply with activities that transpired in adjacent rooms, in which grain was milled and bread prepared. In the fictive reality of the paintings, privileged men and women are strongly gendered yet slaves are not—perhaps reflecting the reality of the male and female slaves

who worked together and shared the same duties. Luciana Jacobelli, in turn, looks at party scenes from House V.2.4 that depict a woman taking on a more masculine role, drinking from the same type of vessel as men and presented as their equal. In "The House of the Triclinium (V.2.4) at Pompeii: The House of a 'Courtesan'?," she argues that the house may have been owned by a courtesan, a woman who offered companionship and sex, independent of a pimp or brothel. Both essays show how the representation of gender could be flexible—male and female slaves emerge as gender-neutral, lacking the differentiation of importance to free and freed people; a high-status courtesan could cross boundaries to behave like and appeal to men.

Jessica Powers then offers a detailed look at a gilded marble plaque embedded in the wall of a tavern (chapter 12, "Sex on Display in Pompeii's Tavern VII.7.18") that provides new possibilities for thinking about the explicit sex scenes in Pompeian spaces. She argues that the relief is an example of spoliation—reused from an earlier context—and shows how fresh carving and the application of new pigment brought the relief into line with popular erotic imagery, so that it could serve as a pendant to a freshly painted erotic scene on the facing wall. In the final chapter, "Drawings of Women at Pompeii," Margaret L. Laird flips the script, to consider how women were depicted not in professionally produced artworks (sculptures, paintings, mosaics), but in graffiti, sketched freehand by non-expert artists. These are notable for their lack of interest in hairstyle, jewelry, and other features that characterize painted and sculpted depictions of women. She argues that images of women were not common—female figures could not compete in the Roman imaginary, for example, with gladiators, which are among the most frequently appearing drawn images. Yet Laird nonetheless reveals the power of images of women, able to arrest the eye and engage the mind. Images of women could be erotic and humorous, but also could invoke the gods and ward off the evil eye.

Next Steps

It is our hope that the essays assembled in this volume will, in turn, inspire more work on the women of the Bay of Naples. In our epilogue, Allison Emmerson discusses the impact of our work and suggests some future directions. Yet if we have a single aim, it is to bring to light a wide range of women's experiences, and in so doing to provide models for the ways that other scholars can use the evidence—though at times it is scanty—creatively to cast women as active participants in the social circles in which they moved and the cities in which they lived. To return to the evocative case with which we began: if we are to imagine the lives of the women who died in the House of Gaius Julius Polybius, let us look beyond their roles as wives and mothers to those interests and aspirations that we can indeed ascribe to their peers. Perhaps the young woman wanted to become a public priestess, like Eumachia two generations before, with a statue off the Forum and devotees among the local businessmen. Perhaps the older woman had once written her name on the plastered columns of the Campus ad Amphitheatrum (also known as the Grand Palaestra), or even drawn the face of Medusa in the Stabian Baths to protect herself from evil spirits. Perhaps both took spindle to hand not so that they could sit in the atrium, showing off their virtue, but with the idea in mind that they might use the fruits of their labor to earn a little bit of money—to be spent on whatever their hearts desired, whether food for the table, education for a child, or a flashy gold bracelet.

The Complexity of Silence by Allison L. C. Emmerson

The discipline of Classical Studies is in a moment of transition. Through scholarly books and journal articles; in the departmental meetings, course offerings, and tenure decisions of university departments; even in "think pieces" intended for the general public, the future of our field is under debate, or even, according to some, under attack. The profession's annual conference is particularly fraught, carrying the risk that tensions might erupt between traditionalists and modernists as they rub elbows through a chain of meeting rooms and cash-bar receptions. What does it mean to study Classics? What should it mean?

These are not new questions. In the fall of 1985, the American Philological Association (APA, renamed the Society for Classical Studies, or SCS, in 2013) rejected from its annual conference a panel on Ovid proposed by an associated group, the Women's Classical Caucus (WCC). Apparently, the APA had determined that certain papers included in the WCC's session did not meet the organization's standards; some speculated that the subtle entendre in the title of one talk, "How to Make a Woman," was too risqué for the program committee. Closed out of the official schedule, WCC members scrambled to secure a room and advertise their unofficial session through printed fliers. The slight might have signaled a break between the two organizations—a rupture resulting from growing instability in a discipline struggling to reconcile its traditional grounding in lexicographical and syntactical studies with the new approaches of literary criticism, and in which feminist theory had become a particular flashpoint. Instead, the leadership of the APA and the WCC came together to renegotiate the procedures by which the program committee reviewed panel proposals, granting far greater autonomy to affiliated groups. The two organizations mended their relationship and carried on together, into new decades and a new century of scholarship.

Thirty-five years later, the struggles of 1985 manage to feel both far distant and deeply relevant, provoking a reaction already familiar to anyone who engages regularly with ancient Greece and Rome: the sense of history repeating itself. To be sure, women in antiquity (or ancient gender studies) is now an established subject. In the program for the 2020 meeting of the SCS, women's voices were ubiquitous and forceful. Panels included "Women in Rage, Women in Protest: Feminist Approaches to Ancient Anger," "Lesbianism before Sexuality," and the WCC's annual contribution—the group having returned to the official program every year from 1986 forward—"Sisters Doin' It for Themselves: Women in Power in the Ancient World and the Ancient Imaginary." At the same time, new topics, tied to the intersectional feminism of the modern academy and rooted in the concerns of the Trump and #metoo era, also appeared, outnumbering what are now more traditional offerings focused on the experiences of ancient women. These included paper sessions devoted to Black classicism, classical reception in contemporary Asian and Asian American culture, and the relationships between ancient tragedy and the modern experiences of refugees and immigrants, as well as workshops focused on ways to increase diversity in the field, to address social justice in the classroom, and to engage in civic activism through Classical Studies. An additional workshop, offered at three separate times throughout the first day of the conference, focused on bystander training, providing tools by which witnesses might stop harassment and assist victims.

Clearly, much has changed since 1985. Nevertheless, the critiques that once flocked around studies of women have not disappeared, but simply migrated to circle new topics, in particular work on race, the role of the field in unforgiveable institutions such as slavery and colonialism, and the legacy of Western civilization as a social construct. Three decades ago, certain voices claimed that extending our inquiry to the experiences of women would bring about the end of our field. Today, we are told that these new subjects signal the discipline's imminent collapse. Through it all, the study of the ancient Mediterranean goes on.

In reflecting on the contents of the present volume, I found my thoughts turning back to the WCC's underground panel of 1985, and especially to an argument from Phyllis Culham's paper, which she elaborated in a contribution to the special issue of Helios dedicated to women in antiquity and published the following year. In "Decentering the Text: Praxis vs. Logos," Culham contended that those who wish to understand women's lives must look beyond ancient literature, and that the works of elite men can illuminate nothing but their own experiences. Rather than the traditional canon, she pointed to material culture as the way forward, identifying archaeological evidence as the key to finding "real" women in the classical past. Unsurprisingly, the argument met with robust

pushback. As Amy Richlin said so well, the texts might not represent women directly, but they do show what women had to put up with.

Others pointed out, correctly, that material sources are no different from texts in that both require deciphering and interpretation, and both are subject to the bias of the interpreter. The physicality of an ancient object, be it a sword or a spindle whorl, might give the impression of direct connection to the ancient world, but reality remains as elusive in the archaeological as in the textual record.

Returning to the present, one need only review the program for the 2020 annual meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA), held jointly with that of the SCS, to see the limited impact that Culham's call has had on the study of material culture. To be sure, women presenters abounded, and the AIA's Women in Archaeology interest group hosted a workshop on balancing fieldwork and parenting duties, two attestations of positive development in a field that often has been hostile to female practitioners. Research utilizing material culture to reconstruct ancient women's lives, however, was almost entirely absent. No panels focused on women, and only two papers dealt explicitly with feminist-inspired topics, both of which were studies of portraiture in ruling families.

In general, archaeologists have proven far less willing to explore gender-related subjects than have our colleagues in history and philology. While occasional articles, books, and museum exhibits highlight women, the work still lacks the breadth and visibility of equivalent investigations into ancient literature, and in most cases such studies retain a focus on art historical and (especially) epigraphic evidence, rather than material culture more broadly. I suspect a number of explanations for the situation, not least the toe that archaeology keeps in the sciences, bringing a corresponding fear that pursuing ancient women might not be impartial or objective enough to warrant attention. Likewise, there is the common idea that the types of evidence we recover from the material record are not appropriate to answering questions about gender, and that with the exception of specific circumstances like the excavation of sexed skeletal material from graves, our interpretive sieve is not fine enough to isolate women's experiences. Of course, as Lauren Hackworth Petersen points out to open this volume, arguments left ungendered have the curious tendency of reverting back to a male perspective. A generation after the explosive SCS meeting of 1985, men remain the default in archaeology; women are still a special interest group.

This last point is what draws me back to Culham's argument. The many scholars who have successfully pursued women through the texts have proven beyond a doubt that rejecting those sources would have been unwise, but even so Culham's article retains something valuable, a core statement of potential that remains largely untapped. Culham was correct that archaeology offers the opportunity to engage directly with artifacts that were manufactured and used by women. Of course these objects require careful consideration and interpretation, but if we can find women hidden behind the verses and lines of male-authored literature, we should be capable of identifying them in items they used on a daily basis. I would argue, furthermore, that there are few better sites at which to undertake this work than the cities destroyed by Vesuvius, a perspective supported by past research. Indeed, the potential of the Bay of Naples to illuminate ancient women has been recognized for over half a century. Already in the 1960s, Michele D'Avino had published La donna a Pompei, an initial look at evidence for women's lives in the city. In the 1980s, Frances Bernstein wrote her PhD dissertation on Pompeian women; in the 1990s, Liisa Savunen did the same. By the first decade of the 2000s, surveys of Pompeii meant for students and general readers included sections on women, rightly emphasizing the diversity of female experiences in the city.

These books were a step up from others that ignored women entirely, but their organization created—certainly unintentionally—an othering of female perspectives, implying that men ruled the

texts as a whole. Approaches that incorporated women throughout the discussion avoided that problem but faced a new one, since they highlighted a few individuals who were easily lost in the overall narrative. All of this work, moreover, tended to fall into similar patterns, covering the same material and emphasizing the same conclusions. Today, certain studies intended for specialists continue to feature women in Pompeii, but the overarching impression is that the evidence has been used up, that the city has revealed all it can of the women who once populated it. In the absence of new information, we are left reverting back to the "gender neutrality" that so effectively prioritizes men and silences women.

The radical rejection of this status quo drives the current volume and comprises its chief significance. The authors of the preceding chapters are unwilling to accept that the answers they seek are unavailable in the evidence we have, and so find their own methods of telling new stories or revising old ones. This is the first edited volume devoted solely to women in Pompeii, and it brings a visibility that the subject has lacked in the past. The contributions demonstrate that fresh ideas might emerge from reexamining well-known evidence (e.g., Gazda's study of the Villa of the Mysteries frieze, Kellum's work on buildings in the Forum, Longfellow's analysis of female portraiture, or D'Ambra's investigation of the estate of Julia Felix), as well as by introducing novel comparanda to the remains (e.g., Swetnam-Burland with fasti of the familia Caesaris, Caldwell with papyri from the Fayum). Other chapters illuminate the potential of emerging bodies of data, with some of the most exciting results coming from the growing interest in Pompeii's graffiti record. Laird's look at the drawings of women etched onto Pompeii's walls and Zimmermann Damer's careful consideration of female nomenclature in informal texts suggest the considerable agency the city's women might have exercised. All of these approaches are served by the burst of conservation funds currently flowing into Pompeii (a factor particularly relevant for Gazda's contribution), as well as by the diffusion of digital methods (Zimmermann Damer clearly shows their possibilities). The authors bring innovative perspectives to women in the city, not only as members of families but also as workers, investors, consumers, and active directors of their own lives.

Any study of the ancient world must retain a firm hold on the evidence, but these chapters also yield benefits by cautious forays outside the more solid confines of the preserved materials and into the expansive world of imagination. Archaeologists usually hesitate to label our work as imaginative; few of us wish to give the impression of having invented our conclusions. Nevertheless, reconstructing the past requires creativity even in the best of circumstances, and imagination is doubly necessary when confronting narrative omissions. As both Petersen and Zimmermann Damer emphasize, women have been silenced at various points in the making of Pompeii's history. The process of recovering their voices is complex and calls for an inclusive toolbox. Whether Levin-Richardson highlighting common routes prostitutes could have taken from the purpose-built brothel, Jacobelli speculating on the identity of a female proprietor, or Powers contemplating possible reactions to erotic imagery in a bar, many of these contributions use imagination as an analytic tool, envisioning how ancient women might have interacted with material culture as a means of drawing information from it. The approach risks leading down false paths, and readers might take issue with some conclusions. Nevertheless, I would emphasize that such undertakings can be valuable exercises in and of themselves; only by pushing against the boundaries of the evidence are we able to discover where the limits actually lie. Such work takes courage, and to be successful requires a well-defined methodology, a careful use of theory, and a rigorous attention to detail. In returning the wall paintings of the House of the Chaste Lovers to their context within a commercial pistrinum, for example, Trimble is able to postulate on the various women who might have encountered them and to better position the images within the decorative scheme of the building as a whole. Zimmermann Damer provides another excellent model, grounding her principle of radical inclusion in thoughtful and clearly articulated methods that center the archaeological data without obscuring its difficulties.

This volume makes an additional contribution by moving its attention beyond well-known and wealthy women like Eumachia, Mamia, and Naevoleia Tyche. Almost all of the chapters deal in some fashion with individuals outside Pompeii's socioeconomic elite, and several focus almost entirely on women who occupied lower rungs on the social ladder. Swetnam-Burland demonstrates that women of all statuses engaged in financial transactions at Pompeii, both with and without male brokers. Moreover, Caldwell shows how the legal mechanism of the peculium allowed women—elite or otherwise—to participate in business ventures, arguing that spinning and weaving could provide economic opportunities even as they symbolized female virtue. Longfellow's careful chronological approach to women's portrait statues reveals that freedwomen were among the first to adopt funerary portraits, while Trimble's reading of the wall paintings at the House of the Chaste Lovers emphasizes the potentially varied reactions of the diverse group of women who might have encountered them. D'Ambra, furthermore, points out that the Forum frieze from the estate of Julia Felix made Pompeii's lower classes fully visible, literally elevating the daily activities of both men and women into a work of art. Finally, Levin-Richardson uses the physical remains of the brothel to recreate the lives of the prostitutes who worked and possibly lived there, returning humanity to individuals who have been too often stripped of it both in antiquity and in modern scholarship. The collection as a whole comes together to add new voices to the chorus of Pompeian women, surpassing any prior study in the number and variety of individuals it includes.

This volume also succeeds in demonstrating that mess is inherent to the study of Pompeii. To focus only on its physical remains, the city was destroyed violently, spoliated and abused for nearly seventeen hundred years, and subject to centuries of experimentation in the development of excavation and conservation methods, not to mention the negative effects of modern tourism, climate change, and the simple and inexorable downward pull of time. The archives of excavation records and recovered artifacts introduce their own types of disorder, adding to the jumble of fragmented and incomplete evidence. The city, however, was no simpler in its past life. When considering what steps might follow this contribution to further our understanding of Pompeii, Petersen's call to embrace messiness, equivocality, and uncertainty—to recognize the full complexity of the silences in our evidence—seems timely. I hope that other scholars pick up threads introduced in these chapters, seeking new methods for accessing life in Pompeii, for all its residents.

The volume will have an even greater impact, if it inspires future projects targeting other marginalized groups. Issues such as race, ethnicity, and ability remain almost completely unexplored in the Bay of Naples and are pursued only rarely for Roman Italy as a whole. The substantial body of scholarship on women in antiquity, which this book now joins, has thoroughly debunked the once-common idea that the lives of Greek and Roman women are inaccessible from the present. Surely future projects will show that the silence of other groups likewise results from the questions we ask and the narratives we uphold. An essential part of this work must be done on our campuses and in our classrooms, actively working to dismantle the white supremacist roots of the field, uplift inclusive voices, and support the rise of a new and diverse generation of scholars. Only when women entered the field in large numbers did ancient women emerge as viable subjects of scholarship. Prioritizing diverse perspectives is already revealing novel insights into the past and promises to carry our knowledge in significant new directions.

Classical Studies is once more in a moment of transition. Or more correctly, the field continues to transition, in ways that make our knowledge stronger, more complete, and thoroughly better than it once was. Debates rage on, but that is nothing new, and if the recent past is any guide, the controversy should not discourage those of us who wish to pursue inclusivity as we seek to understand life in the ancient world. This book shows what can be accomplished when scholars are willing to engage with the figures who are obscured by traditional approaches to the sources. The authors have explored a variety of methods; I hope others will find more, and that future work—

following the spirit of collaboration and exploration that defined the conference from which these papers derived—will continue to embrace the complexity of silence. <>

Duns Scotus on Divine Love: Texts and Commentary on Goodness and Freedom, God and Humans edited by A. Vos, H. Veldhuis, E. Dekker, N.W. Den Bok, A.J. Beck [Routledge, 9780754635901]

The medieval philosopher and theologian John Duns Scotus (1266-1308) was one of the great thinkers of Western intellectual culture, exerting a considerable influence over many centuries. He had a genius for original and subtle philosophical analysis, with the motive behind his philosophical method being his faith. His texts are famous not only for their complexity, but also for their brilliance, their systematic precision, and the profound faith revealed. The texts presented in this new commentary show that Scotus' thought is not moved by a love for the abstract or technical, but that a high level of abstraction and technicality was needed for his precise conceptual analysis of Christian faith. Presenting a selection of nine fundamental theological texts of Duns Scotus, some translated into English for the first time, this book provides detailed commentary on each text to reveal Scotus' conception of divine goodness and the nature of the human response to that goodness. Following an introduction which includes an overview of Scotus' life and works, the editors highlight Scotus' theological insights, many of which are explored here for the first time, and shed new light on topics which were, and still are, hotly discussed. Scotus is seen to be the first theologian in the history of Christian thought who succeeds in developing a consistent conceptual framework for the conviction that both God and human beings are essentially free. Offering unique insights into Scotus' theological writings and faith, and a particular contribution to contemporary debate on Scotus' ethics, this book contributes to a clearer understanding of the whole of Scotus' thought.

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A selection of theological texts

Scotus had a genius for original and subtle philosophical analysis. The motive behind his philosophical method was certainly his faith; his precise semantical, logical and philosophical distinctions and innovations serve a theological enterprise. Ultimately. Scotus' thought is not moved by a love for the abstract or technical as such, but a high level of abstraction and technicality is needed for a precise conceptual vindication of that which moves his thought more than anything else: the love of God.

A close, systematic reading of Scotus' works proves quite rewarding, therefore. His texts are famous not only for their complexity, but also for their extraordinary brilliance, their systematic precision and profound faith. We believe that the key theological texts we have selected for this volume are strongly representative of these qualities in Scotus' thought. Unfortunately, not many of his texts have been translated, and among those which have, his more straightforwardly theological texts form a minority.' By offering the present translations, we hope to provide a further aid to the understanding of the whole of Scotus' thought.

The main concern of Scotts' theology is the conceptual vindication of a central Christian conviction: that the relation between God and humans is a relation of lore - of Love calling for love. At least two things are required for love: freedom and goodness. Scotus maintains that God is both free and good - that is, true to himself yet free towards creatures. God is consistent in his choices. Moreover, since God has made human beings 'in his image,' man's freedom and goodness are supposed to reflect God's.

Scotus' distinction between contingency and necessity is crucial to his understanding of freedom and goodness. Not just human beings, but the whole of creation owes its existence to God's will. According to Scotus, not only the existence of creatures, but also God's choice to actualize them is (synchronically') contingent. Yet, not all things are contingent; God's existence, for instance, is necessary. For this reason, God as well as human beings are also related to what is necessary.

The texts selected here show how Scotus conceives of, on the one hand, the fundamental distinction between the contingent and the necessary and, on the other hand, the freedom and goodness both of God and human beings. His conception is both rigorous and subtle, consistent and surprising.

We dare to say that Scotus is the first theologian in the history of Christian thought who succeeds in developing a consistent conceptual framework for the conviction that both God and human beings are essentially free. This consistency is partly due to Scotus' sense of the necessary, which matches his sense of the contingent. It is within a framework of 'contingent and necessary theology' that Scotus considers faithful reflection (fides quaerens intellectum') capable of vindicating both the goodness and freedom of God's love.

Obviously the selection in this volume cannot provide a complete account of such a rich theological theme. There are other texts of Scotus concerned with important aspects of divine and human love:

for example, his innovative analysis of the predestination of Christ.

In the remainder of this introduction we will sketch the life and work of Scotus and indicate the specific nature of his texts. Subsequently we will give a presentation of the texts selected for this book, and conclude with some remarks on the character of our commentary on these texts.

Scotus: life and work

Johannes (John) Duns Scotus probably was born late in 1265 or early in 1266, in or near a small town called Duns, in the south of Scotland. It is likely, however, that he is not so much named after that town as that 'Duns' was a family name as well. We therefore alternatively may can him 'Duns' or 'Scotus.' Around 1279 he entered the Franciscan convent of Dumfries. After having reached the age of 25 he was ordained (March 17, 1291). In 1288 he became a student of theology in Oxford, after having studied philosophy, or rather, the liberal arts. for eight years.

In 1297 Duns became a 'baccalaureus.' For four years he had the task of lecturing on the Sentences of Peter Lombard, the standard

textbook for systematic theology in those days. The first year of the baccalaureat was supposed to be used for preparing lectures to be given in the second year. In this period Duns wrote his so-called Lectura. lecture notes on the text of the Sentences. The actual course Scotus delivered on the basis of this Liam immediately established him as an acute and original theologian.

By June 1301 Duns had done all that was necessary to become a doctor in theology ('magister theologise'). However, in 1301 or 1302 he was sent to Paris, to teach Lombard's Sentences as a 'baccalaureus' once more. We take this as an acknowledgment of his brilliance.° In 1303 he was expelled from Paris because of a conflict between Pope Boniface VIII and King Philip IV of France. It is not known where he went, possibly to Cambridge, but in 1304 he was back in Paris and in 1305 he was given the title of magister. In 1306 he started his work as a professor.

Together with a staff of assistants Scotus worked at (among other things) the Ordinatio, which is the official publication of his commentary on the Sentences. He made use of the several versions he already had, but also of other material which had been written in the meantime.

In 1307 Duns was probably forced to leave Paris again; he departed for Cologne in order to work as a professor at the Franciscan stadium. When on November 8, 1308, he suddenly died, the Ordinatio was unfinished.

Duns' early death had serious consequences for the publication of his oeuvre. Now his pupils had to work with various texts without a clear idea of the final product, Around 1315 a compiled text was published; it would enter history as the Opus Oxoniense ('The Oxonian work'), but strictly speaking it was neither a work

of Duns nor written in Oxford. When in the course of time the Lectura came to be forgotten (just as the meaning of the term `lectura'), Scotus' thought could only be accessed by means of this non.authentic 'Oxonian' commentary on the Sentences. Although the editors of the Wadding edition (the 1639 publication of Scotus' Opera) sometimes used good manuscripts, it was impossible then to produce a perfectly reliable text based only on the so-called Opus Oxoniense. The Lectura was rediscovered in the 1920's, and from 1950 onwards a critical edition of the Ordinatio' and other works have been published. This edition is far from complete.'

The character of the texts

The selected texts are parts from a commentary on Peter Lombard's Sentences. Every 'baccalaureus' was supposed to lecture on this textbook as a proof of his ability. Such a commentary makes use of the so.called lquaestio'-technique, which was common in those days. Thematic problems are addressed by subsequent 'quaestiones' ; the understanding of the issue is deepened by examining various answers to the question. The text in which a `question' is treated, usually runs as follows. After posing the question, some of the most important counter-arguments (arguments against the position which the author will take) are put forward, together with some of the most important

pro.arguments. Then a presentation of the author's solution or answer to the question follows. The commentary is concluded by a treatment of the arguments against this view.

Such tightly structured texts have a high density of argumen.tation. They are too demanding to allow for a 'superficial' reading. Yet the insights gained by a systematic semantic analysis make the effort rewarding.

The texts in the present collection all stem from recent critical editions or from reliable, checked manuscripts. Concerning the Prologue, I 17 and I 40-41 we have used the text of the Lectura. As stated above, this work is Scotus' first major production; as such. it is the key to Duns' rich but complicated work. In the Lecture we find his great 'discoveries' in their first appearance, which are usually more accessible and shorter than their counterparts in the Ordinatio.

With regard to the texts of distinctions 46 and 47 we made use of the Ordinado, simply because there are no parallel texts in the Lecture. For whatever reason Dims stopped commenting on book I after Lecture I 45."

Although Scotus discusses major ethical questions, these texts are almost unknown and, until recently, hardly discussed. This certainly is partly due to the fact that they do not appear until book III of the Sentences. However, thanks to Wolter, we now have a selection of Scotus' 'ethical texts'; from these we have chosen distinctions 111 28 and 29.

A presentation of the texts selected

We now turn to the content of the texts. In order to see how, in Scotus' view of the relation between God and humans, both divine and human love are guaranteed in their respective goodness and freedom, we have chosen to arrange the selected texts in a thematic order. This order is slightly different from that of the distinctions presented by Lombard and followed by Scotus as Lombard's commentator (the numbers below correspond to the chapters).

(I) Necessity and contingency in scientific theology

We have already said that it does not follow from the fact that God's acts of will are contingent, just as the world which they create, that there are no necessary states of affairs at all. We mentioned the example of God's existence: another example is his goodness, which means (among other things) that it is impossible for God not to do the right things for the right reasons. In almost every text we have selected for this book an aspect of this goodness is analyzed by Duns. Moreover, there are also necessary connections: not only between necessary aspects of God's being, but also between states of affairs which are contingent in themselves. An example of the latter connection is the relation between being elected by God and becoming blessed: the one cannot be true unless the other is true.

Because of these two kinds of necessity - necessary states of affairs and necessary relations - Scotus can argue that theology is a science even in the strict Aristotelian sense of knowledge of necessary truths. This not only applies to the doctrine of God where his necessary properties are studied, but also to the theology of salva.tion history, where necessary relations between contingent acts or facts can be detected.

A discussion of necessity and contingency is not only elucidating for the question of the scientific status of theology (partly related to God's knowledge), but also for the nature of ethics (partly related to God's will). This insight appears in the Prologue-text as follows: Since God necessarily is the best possible being, he must be valued above anything else. For Scotus this 'axiom' is not only the foundation of scientific theclogy, but also of ethics.

(2) Necessity and contingency in theological ethics

In ethics, as in science, there is not only a contingent, but also a necessary dimension. Still too often Duns Scotus is presented as a 'voluntarist'. Of course, there are things which arc contingently good. They are good because God freely wills them - like keeping the Saturday instead of any other day as Sabbath. However, not all that is good is good because it is freely willed by God. There are many things which are necessarily good and hence, should be necessarily willed. As we have seen, an example is loving God above all. The command to love God, therefore, is a necessary precept.

The ethical necessity to love God above all is for Scotus the cornerstone of his solution to the 'classical' problem of Christian ethics: the problem of love for God, for our neighbor and for ourselves. He argues that not only love for our neighbor, but first of all love for ourselves, is a necessary implication of love for God. In this way it becomes clear that love for God is the unifying principle not only of relations between human beings, but also of each human being's relation to himself.

(3) Eternal We and the act of love

If it is necessary that human beings should love God above all, one of the next questions is of course how to realize this love. This question brings us into the heartland of the doctrine of justification and to the border of the doctrine of predestination. Here, Scotus develops his view of the famous paradox, that our love for God is God's gift to us. He gives a very precise analysis of divine gift and human merit, of humans freely loving God and God freely accepting humans in the everlasting communion of his love.

Duns distinguishes between two aspects of the human act of love for God which is considered to be the 'meritum' required for entering the eternal communion of God: the act itself and its meritorious.ness. The human will is the main cause of the act of love, but not of its meritoriousness. The act of love 'merits eternal life' primarily because of a special act of God's free will: his acceptance of humans' act of love as pleasing to him.

(4) Divine election and merit

The love for God may seem to be endangered by the idea that someone is, or is not, elected by God. If God's love for human beings is 'elective,' it seems that neither their free will nor their moral goodness play a constitutive role in receiving eternal life. Scotus explains that, because election is an act of will, someone is elected by God in a contingent way and hence, could have been not-elected. If someone were to sin ultimately, God would not have accepted him to eternal life. 'That person, however, was not an elect who became a reprobate: he never was an elect in the first place.

In this way a human merit seems to be the ground for God to elect. Scotus denies this, however, for a very specific reason: as an act of will, election is a purposeful act, yet someone's act of love cannot be the final purpose of God loving that person. Why does God elect? To make someone ultimately happy by admitting him into community with God (eternal life). The human act of love is a (necessary) means to that end.

(5) The goodness of God's will vindicated

Given the existence of evil and sin, either God's goodness or his power seems to be defied. For either not all he does is good and worthy of our love, or not all that is realized is in fact realized by his power.

This problem, which can more generally be formulated as the relation between God's will and what actually happens in the world, is addressed by Scotus from two sides. He asks whether everything which God wills, is realized (distinction 1 46). Several texts from the Bible could give the impression

that God cannot always realize the things he wants to realize. Here Scotus embarks on a nuanced analysis of different 'layers' both in created reality and in God's will. He also asks whether God wants all that in fact happens to happen (distinction I 47). Some things in the world are so bad that we cannot believe they are of God's will. However, if he does not will them, how is God related to them? Here Duns presents a nuanced theory of divine willing and permission.

In his solution to both sides of the problem Scotus is able to maintain that God's will, freely sustaining all created reality, is essentially good: either by willing and realizing what is good. or by permitting and not.preventing what is evil or sinful, in such a way that this permission is in itself not a bad thing.

(6) An infinite act of love

In trinitarian theology a vital role is played, once more, by the will, the divine will. Scotus resumes the Augustinian tradition in which the procession of the Holy Spirit is considered a 'production' of the divine will (as distinct from the generation of the Son which is seen as a 'production' of the divine intellect). This explanation of the trinitarian procession(s) seems to entail, however, that the Holy Spirit does not differ from creatures with respect to his ontological status. Originating from an act of will he seems to exist contingently.

Scotus argues that the procession of the Holy Spirit originates from the divine will as directed to a necessary object. The infinitely good God is a necessary object of the will - first of all of the divine will. Because this will, unlike the will of creatures, is infinite and perfect, it is capable of willing the divine essence to the full without failing. Only God can value God adequately. This means that there is an infinite love necessarily originating from God's will, which is the Holy Spirit.

Thus in trinitarian theology necessary theology and necessary ethics come together in understanding the most basic acts in God. God's acts with respect to creatures must be free (contingent) acts. for then his will is directed to contingent beings. His contingent activity, however, is founded on acts which are necessary for him: the two processions. This entails that God's acts with respect to human beings not only must be free, but also good and loving. God cannot give a command which he does not fully fulfill himself.

The nature of our commentary

In our commentary we aimed at a clear exposition of the main points of Scotus' text, without entering into every detail. Some technical elaborations are given in the footnotes. We offer both the original Latin and an English translation of the selected texts. The Latin text is from the critical Vatican edition (except that of Ordinatio III 28-29. which is Wolter's revision of the Wadding edition on the basis of codices A and S); the English translation is original. The main text of our commentary does not require the ability to read Latin.

Our commentaries on the various distinctions usually begin with a more general introduction to the specific theological issue. In most cases this involves indicating its relevance for contemporary theology. The commentaries are sometimes concluded by indicating the importance of Scotus' position for some specific aspect of the history of theology.

In this way we hope that Scotus' views contribute to contemporary theological discussions. Moreover, his views have had more influence in history than is nowadays recognized. Chapter 1 may elucidate the debate on the scientific status of theology as a discipline. Does theology meet strict criteria for counting as a science? Chapter 2 may contribute to the discussion on the relationship between the love for God, neighbor and self which has stirred twentieth century theological ethics since Anders Nygren's book Agape and Eros (1930). Chapter 3 enters the discussion on justification and merit, a major issue in the Catholic-Protestant debate. Chapter 4 addresses a major internal

problem of western theology: the doctrine of predestination and reprobation. A central question of this doctrine concerns the relation between divine goodness and human merit (or its absence) in God's election. Chapter 5 may shed some light on an important aspect of the problem of theodicy by contributing to a 'justification' of God's action with regard to the way the world is. Lastly, in chapter 6 an old player is reintroduced back onto the stage of trinitarian theology, which is presently dominated by 'social trinitarianism'. The Augustinian 'psychological Trinity', in Scotus' elaboration, does not show the flaws by which `social' conceptions are affected, yet it can do justice to most of their motives. <>

Series: History of Metaphysics: Ancient, Medieval, Modern Editors: Dragos Calma, Wouter Goris, Olivier Boulnois, and Pasquale Porro

The series "*History of Metaphysics: Ancient, Medieval, Modern*" intends to overcome the limits of current research by publishing both canonical and overlooked authors or topics. It aims to enrich and reassess the history of metaphysics through volumes on authors and topics that have shaped the history of thought and yet, for various reasons, have been ignored.

The publication of this volume has received the generous support of the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme through the ERC Consolidator Grant*NeoplAT: A Comparative Analysis of the Middle East, Byzantium and the Latin West (9th-16th Centuries)*, grant agreement No 771640 (www.neoplat.eu). <>

Supersapientia: Berthold of Moosburg and the Divine Science of the Platonists by Evan King [Series: History of Metaphysics: Ancient, Medieval, Modern, Brill, 9789004464902] Open Source

This study examines the motivations and doctrinal coherence of the *Commentary on the Elements of Theology of Proclus* written by Berthold of Moosburg, O.P. († c. 1361/1363). It provides an overview of Berthold's biography and intellectual contexts, his manuscript remains, and a partial edition of his annotations on Macrobius and Proclus. Through a close analysis of the three prefaces to the *Commentary*, giving special attention to Berthold's sources, it traces the Dominican's elaboration of Platonism as a soteriological science. The content of this science is then presented in a systematic reconstruction of Berthold's cosmology and anthropology. The volume includes an English translation of the three fundamental prefaces of the *Commentary*.

The publication of this volume has received the generous support of the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme through the ERC Consolidator Grant *NeoplAT: A Comparative Analysis of the Middle East, Byzantium and the Latin West (9th-16th Centuries)*, grant agreement No 771640 (www.neoplat.eu).

CONTENTS

The study that follows is a revised and expanded version of a doctoral dissertation completed in 2016 at Clare College, Cambridge, devoted to the aims and argument of Berthold of Moosburg's *Expositio* on the *Elementatio theologica* of Proclus ("*Supersapientia*. A Study of the *Expositio super Elementationem theologicam Procli* of Berthold von Moosburg"). The final stages of this work were accomplished within the framework of the erc Grant NeoplAT CoG 771640. I beg the reader's pardon that such an unrelenting grip on the text, perhaps more excusable for a dissertation, has been retained here. The understanding of Berthold's thought in its complexity is still under construction. To contribute something to this ongoing inquiry, it seemed safest to proceed by keeping close attention on Berthold's arguments as well as to his modifications of his sources, in order to begin to appreciate the uniqueness and coherence of his project.

Like the dissertation, this book's division in two parts is intended to reflect the distinct methodological traits of Berthold of Moosburg's commentary on Proclus. It seemed to me that a phrase from Dionysius the Areopagite often cited by Berthold, that theology must proceed "not according to ourselves" (*non secundum nos*), had at once an exegetical and a philosophical significance for his commentary on Proclus. These words encapsulate, to my mind, his attitude toward the history of philosophy and his views about the place of his own project within it: the study of the beatifying wisdom of the Platonists would be undertaken in the form of a commentary that distilled an entire tradition – a work Berthold himself described as a "compilation". Dionysius' phrase was also used by Berthold to underscore the necessity for a Platonic understanding of universals when reasoning about the divine: God and the separate substances are to be understood not according to our abstractions but by attending to what is causally operative independently of our thinking.

The Introduction gathers the extant information about Berthold's life, library, and intellectual contexts, attempting to produce a coherent account of his career where this is permissible, while also acknowledging the gaps in the record. Part 1 takes its inspiration from the two-sidedness of Berthold's commentary project, as exegesis and as philosophy. It is structured as a guided tour through Berthold's three prefaces to the commentary (*Prologus*, *Expositio tituli*, *Praeambulum*). This sequential reading pauses at various stages to allow us to tunnel into the decisive instances of

Berthold's synthesis and transformation of his sources as they occur. This will allow us to glimpse the unwitting originality of the Platonism he articulated in his attempt to revive the divinising philosophy he glimpsed in the distant golden age of antiquity. Special attention is given in these chapters to the relationship between paganism and Christianity in Berthold's thought. Along with the translation of the three prefaces at the back of the volume, it is hoped that this portion of the book will introduce the reader to the spirit animating the *Expositio*.

Part 2 ranges more freely through the commentary to provide a more systematic and doctrinal picture of Berthold's Platonism. Its two chapters are structured around Berthold's Hermetic motif of the macrocosm and microcosm, which provides a natural framework for ordering the major themes of Berthold's cosmology and anthropology. After setting out his understanding of the discord between Plato and Aristotle in terms of their philosophical approaches to first principles, it examines how an ecstatic and realist reasoning about universality has its objective correlate in every level of Berthold's cosmology, from the spontaneously creative activity of the Good, through the essential order of separate substances, to the physical laws of the diffusion of light. The discussion of Berthold's anthropology in the final chapter focuses on the relation of the individual to the ideal human nature (the *imago Dei*) that subsists at the lower limit of the essential order of causes. Here we understand how, for Berthold, the awakening of "the one of the soul" (*unum animae*), which is the goal of Platonic philosophy and the *Expositio*, can bring the individual into harmony with human nature and, through it, with the providential Good, and so be raised to an operative union with God.

The Renewal of Medieval Metaphysics: Berthold of Moosburg's Expositio on Proclus' Elements of Theology edited by Dragos Calma and Evan King [Series: History of Metaphysics: Ancient, Medieval, Modern, Brill, 978-90-04-45380-7] Open Access

This is the first volume exclusively devoted to the *Expositio* by Berthold of Moosburg (c.1295-c.1361) on Proclus' *Elements of Theology*. The breadth of its vision surpasses every other known commentary on the *Elements of Theology*, for it seeks to present a coherent account of the Platonic tradition as such (unified through the concord of Proclus and Dionysius) and at the same time to consolidate and transform a legacy of metaphysics developed in the German-speaking lands by Peripatetic authors (like Albert the Great, Ulrich of Strassburg, and Dietrich of Freiberg). This volume aims to provide a basis for further research and discussion of this unduly overlooked commentary, whose historical-philosophical importance as an attempt to refound Western metaphysics is beginning to be recognized.

The publication of this volume has received the generous support of the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme through the ERC Consolidator Grant *NeoplAT: A Comparative Analysis of the Middle East, Byzantium and the Latin West (9th-16th Centuries)*, grant agreement No 771640 (www.neoplat.eu).

The Elements of Theology in the Latin West (Revisited)

18 May 1268. An important medieval manuscript (Vat. Lat. 2419, f. 105va) registers this date as the last day of William of Moerbeke's work on the first-ever Latin translation of Proclus' *Στοιχείωσις θεολογική* (*Elementatio theologica*). Another important manuscript confirms both the date and the translator, and adds: the fourth year of the Pontificate of Clement IV. The manuscript, offered to the

above-mentioned Pope, was copied in Moerbeke's inner circle most probably in the late 1270s. It contains the *Book of Causes* and the *Elements of Theology*, copied one after the other, which shows that Aquinas' exquisite proof of the relationship between the two texts was already accepted, although it is not unusual to find that his arguments were often reduced to clichés: the medieval scribes either attributed the *Book of Causes* to Proclus or simply mistook it with the *Elements of Theology*. And yet Aquinas shows, although rarely in explicit ways, that there are differences between the two texts. For Aquinas, the *Platonici*, to whom Proclus belongs, departed from the teaching of the Christian Fathers, whereas Aristotle often professes a consonant doctrine. Dionysius the ps.-Areopagite, the faithful disciple of St. Paul, is called to correct Proclus, and at times is "followed" by the author of *Book of Causes*.

Unlike the *Book of Causes* and the (authentic) Aristotelian works, there is no evidence that the *Elements of Theology* was part of the *curricula* of European universities. There might be evidence of its teaching in the second half of the 14th century in the German mendicant *studia*, with the purpose to introduce novices to philosophy, as one can deduce by studying the diffusion of John Krosbein's commentaries, or rather paraphrases, on all the Aristotelian works, as well as on the *Book of Causes* and the *Elements of Theology*. The anonymous commentary preserved in the MS Vat. lat. 4567 is also a paraphrase of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, chapter by chapter, which does not seem to have had a significant diffusion.

In 1936, Martin Grabmann, with his incomparable effort to unearth previously ignored texts, discussed a relatively short text, certainly incomplete, preserved in the manuscript Paris, BnF, lat. 16096, f. 172va–174va. Although the manuscript is important and well known to scholars – it contains numerous important works and belonged to Godfrey of Fontaines, who bequeathed it to the library of the Collège de Sorbonne –, this short text remained unpublished until 1991. Lambertus Maria De Rijk's editorial efforts still did not attract enough consideration from scholars. Yet it might be one of the very first Latin commentaries on Proclus' *Elements of Theology*, composed (or at least copied) in Paris in the last quarter of the 13th century. Godfrey left numerous marginal notes in this manuscript, but not on the folios that interest us. It is certain that some parts of the manuscript have been copied by one of Godfrey's secretaries: one can recognize the same hand in BnF, lat. 16080 and in the famous BnF, lat. 16297. The short text edited by De Rijk bears in the margins the title *Questiones super librum Posteriorum*, and most catalogues and descriptions of the manuscript (with the notable exception of Concetta Luna) refer to it with this title.

The two short *questiones* edited by De Rijk following one another in the MS BnF, lat. 16096 are written by the same author and belong to one single, larger text (the copy preserved ends abruptly). The author himself refers to the *questiones* according to their specific topics: the first is *De ente ipso* and the second *De uno*. The first discusses the status of the first being according to Plato, the *Pitagoreici*, and Aristotle, and begins with: *queritur utrum sit aliquid sic ens quod sit ipsum esse solum et cuius ratio sit ratio essendi solum sine appositione*. The second *questio* has four explicit references to Proclus (to Prop. 1, 2, 18), and several references to Plato, the *Platonici*, and Aristotle. The *Book of Causes* and Dionysius are never mentioned, nor any other theological source. It is difficult to understand the institutional context and the purpose of this acephalous text, but it is clear that the anonymous author does not refer to the *Elements of Theology* as to an external authority; rather, he refers to it as the present treatise (*presens tractatus*) without naming it explicitly and with the intention to describe its metaphysical outline:

> scimus igitur ex presenti tractatu duo. Primum est quod est prime Unum ab omni multitudine exemptum. Quod non est unum et non-unum nec Multitudine participat. Secundum est quod omne quod participat Uno, est unum et non-unum seu unum aliqualiter plurificatum.

He also refers generally to the *probatio Procli* (p. 11) and alludes to the *propositio que dicit quod omne quod non est Unum ipsum est unum et non-unum non est usquam vera* (p. 10). These are manifest proofs that the reader (or the public?) already knows that the author comments on the *Elements of Theology*. The questions have arguments *pro* and *contra*, and solutions. It gives the impression of a commentary *per modum questionis*, typical of the late 13th-century Parisian fashion. Yet, the details of the composition of these two questions remain unclear: in what context were they written (*hec scripta*)? If it was for the students, under what circumstances? Or were they written in order to satisfy a circumstantial request? The author notes that he does not give too much weight to his considerations on Proclus, and pretends that his own text was written without much reflection. If this is not a rhetorical expression either faking modesty or hiding incomprehension, we should trust him. However, we must note that these anonymous questions are soaked in typical Proclean concepts or syntagms (rarely identified in the *apparatus fontium*) such as *prime ens, maxime ens, prime Unum* (p. 4, 10, 11 – cf. *Elements of Theology*, Prop. 13, 22, 65, 73, 102, 127, etc.); *ens imparticipatum quod omnibus irradiat* (p. 4 and 7 – cf. *Elements of Theology*, Prop. 23, 24, 69, 162), which equally appears in the Moerbeke's translation of Proclus' *Commentary on the Parmenides*; *primum deificatorum est ens* (p. 7 – cf. *Elements of Theology*, Prop. 138, 153); *Unum prime* (p. 8 – cf. *Elements of Theology*, Prop. 13); *neque Unum multum neque multitudo Unum* (p. 9 – cf. *Elements of Theology*, Prop. 5, 163, 164, 165); *divinus intellectus* (p. 9 – cf. *Elements of Theology*, Prop. 129, 182).

Despite his evident interest in Proclean metaphysics, the anonymous author is not persuaded by the arguments on Being and One. About the former he argues that it is impossible to conceive an absolutely simple being, without *quia, quantum* or *quale*. About the latter he expresses his doubts about the distinction between *Ipsum Unum* and *prime Unum*.

This anonymous text must be included in any updated narration about the Western reception of the *Elements of Theology*. It represents yet another proof that Proclus was read in Paris in the last quarter of the 13th century, in a time when not only Godfrey of Fontaines, who owned (and even requested the copy of?) these *questiones*, but also Henry of Ghent, Giles of Rome, and Dietrich of Freiberg were either students or masters of the same university.

A half century later, the Latin West would know the first complete and overwhelmingly positive reception of Proclus, which coincides with an original and still largely underestimated intellectual project arguing that Aristotle's metaphysics is limited in its objectives and methods. This was Berthold of Moosburg's daring project.

Berthold of Moosburg

Berthold of Moosburg was born in Bavaria, probably before 1290. This can be inferred from the earliest report of his activities in 1315, when the Dominican chapter meeting held in Friesach dispatched him to Oxford, presumably for his advanced theological studies in the *studium generale*. If his education followed the protocols of the order, by that time he would have been trained in the Dominican schools of logic and natural philosophy for about five years, and perhaps had already lectured in the schools of logic for two to three years.

In Oxford, Berthold would have studied with scholars like the Dominican master of theology Nicholas Trevet (1257/65–c. 1334), whose commentaries on ancient literature, philosophy, and theology locate him in a group of writers now known as the "classicising" friars. Oxford was a tumultuous place for the Dominicans at this time, due to a conflict between the mendicant and secular clergy that began in 1303 as to whether, among other things, a dispensation from the University was required in every case for a student to proceed directly to the theology doctorate after studying arts outside the University. Between 1312 and 1320 the fallout between the friars and the University had escalated so far that the regular stream of Dominican friars to the *studium* was

often substantially interrupted. In 1314, the English Dominicans appealed to King Edward II, and again in 1317 to Pope John XXII, requesting the repeal of the Statute of 1253 which resolved "the affair of Thomas of York", a Franciscan whose exceptional case had set the precedent for the contested arrangement. Over these years Berthold mostly likely discovered the *Sapientiale* of the same Thomas of York (c. 1220–d. before 1269), a metaphysical summa which became for Berthold a sort of *vade mecum* of classical and Arabic philosophy.

Brief glosses on Dietrich of Freiberg's *De iride et radialibus impressionibus* indicate that Berthold gave a commentary on Aristotle's *Meteorology* III.5 (on the pole of the rainbow) in 1318, while also relying on Dietrich's calculations. Along with Berthold's own, more extensive glosses on Macrobius' *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis*, most of which can be dated to before 1323, these suggest that Berthold was tasked with teaching natural philosophy after leaving Oxford. These glosses on Macrobius demonstrate Berthold's familiarity with texts on philosophical theology, astronomy, arithmetic, and harmonics, and above all with the *Elements of Theology*, which he cited ten times. Shortly after writing these glosses, Berthold made his first in-depth study of the *Tria opuscula* of Proclus. These showed him a Platonic criticism of Aristotle's metaphysics that argued for a superior and more ancient anthropological theory ("the one of the soul" above intellect) that would be decisive for his understanding of the rationale and higher purpose of the *Elements of Theology*.

In 1327, Berthold appears as a lector in the Dominican convent in Regensburg, where he may have been teaching theology. Then, from 1335 to 1361, we find him named four times in the city records of Cologne, which identify him as an executor to the will of a beguine named Bela Hardevust. At some point in this period, perhaps nearer to 1335, he taught theology at the *studium generale* in Cologne. Berthold perhaps worked on his *Expositio super Elementationem theologicam Procli*over this period, but it is equally possible that he began his project after reading the *Tria opuscula* in the early 1320s.

In 1348, we find Berthold in Nuremberg, where he is identified as a vicar to the province of Bavaria. This coincided with the expulsion of the Dominicans from Cologne (1346–1351). During this period, Berthold would have been in contact with the community of Dominican nuns in Engelthal, which was a major centre of vernacular spiritual literature in the 14th century. The writings from Engelthal contain at least one, possibly three, trace(s) of his pastoral activities there, and suggest that his relationship with this community in his home province antedated his vicariate.

Berthold resigned his executorship of Bela Hardevust's will in Cologne in 1361. Since the texts it seems he bequeathed to the Dominican library in Cologne began to disperse around the feast of Pentecost in 1363, we may assume that he died sometime between 1361–1363. Berthold of Moosburg's only extant work is his *Expositio*, which is now preserved in two 15th-century manuscripts (MSS Oxford, Balliol College Library, 224B; Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 2192).

Worldly Philosophy

Berthold's rigorous and constant method of interpreting the *Elements*, with a *suppositum, propositum* et *commentum* applied to virtually all of its 211 propositions is unique and impressive. So too is the use of sources throughout the entire text: he never wearied of citing author after author, always choosing what seemed most appropriate for his own purposes. Each of Berthold's choices, to cite some authors and ignore others, was significant. One could argue that these can be explained by his context: the libraries in Cologne or Regensburg or wherever he worked on his text did not always have the same texts – that is a fact that nobody will contest. However, the *Expositio* gives the impression that Berthold went from Proclus to the sources and not from the sources to Proclus. His

regularity in citing the same sources throughout the *Expositio* gives the impression that he carefully planned his commentary. One could assume that he had a good knowledge of the *Elements of Theology*, and that he prepared thematic files with citations for each of the 211 propositions. Indeed, it is hard to imagine that he discovered each of the propositions of the *Elements* while he was commenting on them or that he wrote such an extensive text without preliminary preparation. Being the first in the Latin world to undertake such a project, he did not have a model to copy: he came with a method, a structure, and a plan. There is also the Index of terms that he seems to have produced himself in order facilitate a clearer and rapid access to the content of the *Expositio*.

One of the most fascinating and also complex ways to approach Berthold's *Expositio* is to unfold his understanding of *theologia*. Each of the three introductions to the *Expositio* (the *Prologus*, the *Expositio tituli*, and the *Praeambulum*) opens with a reflection on *theologia* or the *theologus*. Like a Platonic dialogue, the opening lines of the *Prologus* set the entire framework – and in this case, it is a line pronounced by St. Paul, the highest theologian of the divinizing wisdom, regarding the sages of worldly philosophy: "summus divinalis sapientiae theologus Paulus loquens de mundanae philosophiae sapientibus". St. Paul, after acquiring *in raptu* the knowledge of God's mysteries, concedes (Rom. 1:19–20):

> [Q]uia quod notum est Dei, manifestum est in illis: Deus enim illis manifestavit [Berthold: revelavit]. Invisibilia enim ipsius, a creatura mundi, per ea quae facta sunt, intellecta, conspiciuntur: sempiterna quoque eius virtus et divinitas […].

Immediately thereafter, Berthold introduces a choir of authorities – Christian (Western and Eastern), Jewish, and Muslim alike – that unfolds and supports Paul's verdict in a polyphonic orchestration: Ambrose, Gundissalinus, Dionysius the p.s.-Areopagite, Algazel, Maimonides, John of Damascus, Peter Lombard, the *Glossa ordinaria*, Hugh of St. Victor, Augustine, Alfarabi, Thomas Gallus, and Maximus the Confessor (rather: what Berthold believed to be Maximus the Confessor). Berthold's intention is to produce a *symphonia*, that is a concord of Hellenic philosophy with Christian revelation. And that is manifest not only in these opening lines, but throughout the entire text. This constant quest for concord is the key for interpreting the *Expositio*. Building bridges is the quintessence of Berthold's intellectual project, and justly could it be linked to a tradition originated in the 2nd century with Clement of Alexandria and even earlier with Justin Martyr of Neapolis, born in the city of Marinus, Proclus' disciple and biographer.

In the three introductory texts of the *Expositio*, Berthold sets a tension between theology and metaphysics, not (as a hasty reading might conclude) between theology and philosophy. *Theologia* for Berthold is a true science – that is nevertheless based on believed or trusted principles – about the *invisibilia Dei*, about beings beyond the senses and the intellect.

> Cum enim Aristoteles […] non ducat nos sursum in cognitivis et cognitionibus animae nostrae nisi usque ad intellectum et intellectualem operationem et nihil ultra hanc insinuet, Plato autem et ante Platonem theologi laudant cognitionem supra intellectum, quam divulgant esse divinam maniam, et dicunt ipsam talem cognitionem esse unum animae. *Praeambulum* C, p. 66

or

> [E]x praedictis evidenter apparet scientiam istam in suorum principiorum certitudine ratione principii cognitivi, per quod circa divina versatur, non solum de omnibus particularibus scientiis, sed etiam metaphysicae Peripatetici, que est de ente in eo, quod ens, incomparabiliter eminere. *Praeambulum*, p. 64–65

or

> Ex dictis evidens est eminentia habitus supersapientialis scientiae Platonicae ad habitum sapientialem metaphysicae. *Praeambulum*, p. 68

Aristotelian metaphysics offers, according to Berthold, a narrow understanding of reality. It limits objects to being as such (*ens inquantum ens*) and all knowledge to intellect. But principles beyond being as such are beyond sense, and therefore beyond the cogitative power, beyond the possible intellect, and beyond discourse. The only language applicable to these invisible realities (*invisibilia*) is the language of *super*-iorities used by St. Paul's "disciple" Dionysius the Areopagite (*scientia supersapientialis, exellentissima, divinissima, difficilima* etc.). And the only way to access these superior levels of reality is by ascending through reasoning, following Platonic principles, to intellect, and finally beyond intellect to the *unum animae*. To refrain from accessing this higher rung of realities, to refrain even from positing them, is to fail to fulfil the aim for which we have been created. That is not an intellectual option, one among others; it is a choice that goes beyond intellect and transforms the very nature of the human being.

Does Berthold oppose a *PlatoChristianus* to an *AristotelesArabus*? One should resist the temptation to reduce Berthold's project to this simple equation. And one could immediately add: it is even irrelevant inasmuch as many of Berthold's borrowings from Peripatetic philosophy (Arabic or not) are already "altered" by the nuanced readings of Dietrich of Freiberg, Ulrich of Strassburg, and Albert the Great. However, one must note that for Berthold, the *Book of Causes* is not a reasonable alternative. For him, unlike numerous other medieval authors (as previously mentioned), the *Book of Causes* is not a shorter or abridged version of the *Elements of Theology*. They are different in their method and in their object:

> Ex praemissis summatim colligitur et forma seu modus procedendi in hoc libro et ratio nominis ipsius, quod a forma imponitur, scilicet elementationis theologicae, et quare non vocatur "prima philosophia" seu "metaphysica" aut "de pura bonitate" aut "de lumine luminum" vel "de causis causarum" aut "de floribus divinorum", sicut quidam alii consimilem tractantes materiam, sed in excelsum dissimiliter a praesenti auctore suas editiones vocare curarunt. *Expos. tit.* K, p. 48–49

The *Book of Causes* offers a science about superior causes analysed according to their functionality (that is, in relation to their effects); as such it is too remote from Proclus' own interest which is to elevate the intellect toward the divine. Yet it is what is beyond the senses that one needs to understand, not the actuality or the act of being analysed in the *Book of Causes*, as Berthold expresses it clearly when discussing its famous fourth proposition ("the first of created things is being"):

> [Q]uem quidam firmati in existentibus et non opinantibus aliquid esse super entia dicunt fore esse, sicut dicit auctor *De causis*: "prima rerum creatarum est esse". Esse autem est actus entis. Sed tales vocat Dionysius indoctos, in 1 cap. *De mystica theologia*, ubi dicit sic: "Istos autem dico (subaudi: indoctos), qui in existentibus sunt firmati nihil super existentia supersubstantialiter esse opinantes". *Expositio*, 71D, p. 35

It is an interesting interpretation of the fourth proposition, not only because he cites Dionysius (a reminiscence of Albert?) but because Berthold understands this first created thing as existence or the act of being. Interestingly, he does not comment on the links between Proclus' Prop. 138 and the fourth proposition of the *Book of Causes*.

It is true that Berthold opposes Plato or Platonism (*Plato et ante Platonem theologi* – an expression taken for Proclus – or the *theologia divinalis Platonicorum*) to Aristotle or Aristotelianism. Nevertheless, he copies massively from and refers explicitly to Aristotelian texts: for example, he

copies, wittingly or not, Albert's commentary on the *De causis* through Ulrich of Strassburg; he also possessed and read Albert's autograph commentaries on Aristotelian texts, such as his commentary on *De animalibus*. He also reads and copies astrological texts from Peripatetic philosophers. Berthold's project is theological in the broad sense, it is about *invisibilia Dei transitive accepta* on which both Pagan and Christian authors have written, and which has all the characteristics of a science. It is a *scientia Platonica*, under every aspect superior to Aristotle's metaphysics, which nevertheless remains a *philosophia prima* or, as Ruedi Imbach puts it in a recent article, an "Agatho-theology", given Berthold's tendency to accentuate the priority of Good over the One in his interpretation of Proclus.

Retrieving Berthold of Moosburg

This volume and the three days of conference proceedings that preceded it are equally a tribute to Loris Sturlese and to the team of researchers formed by him over the years who edited Berthold's lengthy commentary. Loris Sturlese's work began with his PhD thesis, published in 1974, consisting in an analysis of the manuscripts, the historical context, and a partial edition of Berthold of Moosburg's *Expositio*. Gradually connecting Bochum and Lecce, he joined the editorial project around the work of Dietrich of Freiberg, formed collaborators, and coordinated the publication of the entire commentary within the series *Corpus Philosophorum Teutonicorum Medii Aevii*, now comprising thirty-eight volumes. The entire text of Berthold's *Expositio* is now published, but the last volume, comprising the index of sources, is still in preparation. We considered that it was important, indeed necessary, to celebrate this work of over forty years and to encourage further studies on Berthold.

Paul Hellmeier provides a comprehensive and detailed analysis of Berthold's use of biblical authorities in the *Expositio*, and argues that these citations have a profound significance for understanding Berthold on the relation between pagan philosophy and Christian revelation. Hellmeier first establishes the precise number of references to Scripture in the *Expositio* (194 citations). He finds that the biblical texts most frequently cited by Berthold were, from the Old Testament, the book of Wisdom and the Psalms, and, from the New Testament, the Pauline Epistles. The distribution of biblical citations in the *Expositio* is uneven. Almost half in the entire commentary occur in the *Prologue* (73 citations). Almost all of these, as Hellmeier's appendix to his study shows, were Berthold's additions to the text and were not incorporated from other direct sources. It was otherwise for the Scriptural citations in the main body of the commentary itself, where most of the biblical citations in the *Expositio* were taken over indirectly and through another source (mostly Honorius Augustodunensis, Dionysius, Thomas of York, or Augustine). These citations cluster around the propositions of the *Elements of Theology* devoted to the gods (Propositions 115–159) and those concerning the soul, contemplation, and the spiritual body (Propositions 184–211).

All these citations are considered by Hellmeier in his thematic case studies of Berthold's use of the Bible on the transcendence of the One, the primordial causes, the Trinity, contemplation, and the Resurrection. The way Berthold used Scripture for these central doctrines in the *Expositio*, Hellmeier argues, indicates that we should not speak of "an equal coexistence of pagan wisdom and the Christian concept of revelation" in the *Expositio*, but rather a synthesis of pagan and Christian wisdom "formed under the clear auspices of Christian doctrine" (p. 47).

Alessandra Beccarisi unveils the importance of Avicebron's *Fons vitae* for Berthold's theory of essential causality. Beccarisi emphasizes that Berthold's *Expositio*represents not only the most extensive medieval reception of Eriugena (as King and Ludueña have shown elsewhere), but also of Avicebron (p. 62).

Berthold's lengthy discussions of essential causality while commenting on Propositions 18 and 172 show that he borrows three key features from Avicebron's metaphysics. (1) "God does not give himself, but what He has *apud se*, that is *forma universalis*", which acts by necessity (p. 63), an action that proceeds from the God through the mediation of God's Will. (2) "Only *radii et vires* [i.e. perfections] of the substances are communicated" (p. 64) to the inferior realities, not the substances themselves, otherwise one would have to admit that created substances can create from nothing. (3) God's Will, different from His Intellect, "is the link between God and creation, a first hypostasis of the divinity that is – at the same time – a hypostasis external to God (…) and an aspect of the divine essence" (p. 65). From Dietrich, Berthold borrows notably the idea that the agent intellect (*intellectus in actu*) is an essential cause and that it contains its own effects. He then distinguishes, like Dietrich, between essential and accidental causes, and between essential and substantial causes. However, unlike Dietrich, Berthold applies the definition of essential cause exclusively to the agent intellect, excluding God and the celestial souls. It is, according to Beccarisi, a significant difference between the two authors, enabling us to understand the role of Avicebron. Berthold argues that God (*prime Deus*) is beyond the intellect, and we can know only His will (*voluntas Dei*) identified with Proclus' *prime bonum*. The creative flow pouring out of God's essence is neither an impersonal nor a necessary act, but the result of God's creative will. Through the essential chain of emanating forms, we can turn to the noblest intellectual object: *voluntas Dei*.

Fiorella Retucci's main goal is to show that both Berthold of Moosburg and Thomas of York "converge on two points: first, the attempt to recover the classical and ancient heritage, aimed at founding self-sufficient philosophical wisdom and, second, the emphasis on the continuity of the Platonic tradition" (p. 89). According to Thomas, the truth can manifest itself either through Scripture or through rational inquiry. The former allows a broader participation of human being in wisdom, whereas the latter is accessible to very few due to its inherent difficulty. However, Thomas establishes a hierarchy between these fields by attributing a greater value to rational investigation than to belief. Human beings can "emancipate themselves from bestiality and, by their own effort, obtain the dignity of humanity"; they "alone are responsible for the perfection of their own nature" (p. 92), and can ultimately be assimilated to God.

Berthold endorses Thomas' views and equally argues that "divine revelation is not necessarily needed for the well-exercised human intellect" (p. 94). The philosophers' specific way of attaining the knowledge of God is through an oblique vision (*per motum obliquum*), and this knowledge is partial. They can also enjoy a direct vision (*rectus motus*) which is not an alternative to philosophy, but it is given to those who have previously searched to obtain an oblique vision. "The idea of God is, in fact, naturally present in the human intellect", hence "no human being is (…) deprived of the knowledge of God" with all His particular qualities (i.e. unity, trinity etc.) (p. 95). Thomas and Berthold agree on this view, and they found in Platonism a confirmation of their intuition. Considered as such, as a "perfect and self-sufficient wisdom", philosophy, and more broadly pagan wisdom, is neither subordinated to theology nor integrated in a system of revelation. They legitimately coexist autonomously and independently of each other. More specifically, the Platonic tradition is for both Thomas and Berthold the only philosophical "valid science of the divine" (p. 101), in all aspects superior and closer to truth than the Aristotelian tradition. Retucci provides in the Appendix a list of all citations from Thomas' *Sapientiale* in the *Expositio*.

Henryk Anzulewicz argues that Albert the Great's thought is a key element in the understanding of Berthold's intellectual project. First Anzulewicz reassesses the previous historiographical research on Berthold, observing a certain tendency in scholarship to underestimate the role of revealed theology in respect to natural or immanent philosophy. It is undisputable that the core of Berthold's work is the idea that Proclean metaphysics in particular, and Platonism in general, is the summum of philosophical theology. Yet one major question remained unanswered: is this philosophical theology

a philosophical revelation? Anzulewicz argues that the solution lies in Berthold's theory of intellect, which depends extensively on Albert the Great (without denying the role of Dietrich). Anzulewicz argues that the influence of Albert is stronger than has been previously acknowledged, notably in respect to the Peripatetic doctrine of *intellectus adeptus* that represents the foundational layer for Berthold's views on the divinization of man, upon which the Proclean concept of *unum animae* is grafted.

The first aspect discussed is Berthold's tripartite typology of the divine intellect (*secundum causam, secundum existentatiam, secundum participationem unitatis*). Albert used the same concept already in his early works, such as the *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, primarily on the basis of Dionysius the ps.-Areopagite and the *Book of Causes*, but it soon became part of his intellectual speculation used throughout his entire career. Berthold's twofold distinction between the *intellectus separatus simpliciter* and the *intellectus non-proprie separatus* depends on both Proclus and Dietrich, yet one must also note ideas and even passages tacitly copied from Albert's *Commentary on the Metaphysics*. A third aspect where one can recognise the influence of Albert's noetics is the description of the six intellects involved in any cognitive process (*intellectus speculativus* / *contemplativus, practicus* / *operativus, adeptus, possibilis, formalis, universaliter agens*). However, Berthold, unlike Albert, distinguishes between these intellects according to their theoretical or practical goal. These differences do not rule out that Berthold was inspired by Albert. On the contrary: as Anzulewicz points out, Albert the Great is for Berthold the model to interpret the *littera Procli*.

Ezequiel Ludueña brings to light new citations of Thomas Aquinas in the *Expositio* and argues for their importance in Berthold's metaphysics. At the present state of research, the quantitative presence of Aquinas seems limited. Ludueña identifies three new citations of Thomas in the *Expositio*, bringing the total to 15 citations. Nevertheless, Ludueña argues that Berthold drew upon Aquinas for two aspects of his distinctive interpretation of Proclus' gods (their ontological status and their causal function).

According to Berthold, there are six gods or unities, which are principles immediately subordinate to the One. These six gods, presupposing the absolute and creative influence of the One, are the origins of the universal formal determinations of power, being, life, intellect, soul, and nature. Unlike every other entity created by the One, each god originates its own formal series and exists as determinate unity without being composite. In other words, each god, considered as a formal cause, is a "simple one" and is *per se* subsistent. Ludueña shows that Berthold used Aquinas' commentary on the *Book of Causes* for "another, more developed, way of explaining how the *unitates* are an *unum per essentiam* even if they participate in the absolute One" (p. 187), even though Aquinas had rejected the Platonic doctrine of separate forms or gods. He also proposes that Berthold was inspired by Aquinas' account of instrumental causality in his frequent descriptions of the gods as "instruments" of the One, and in his explanation of how the gods "cooperate" with the One through its causal power.

Ludueña suggests that there may be a lingering tension between these two aspects of Berthold's interpretation of the gods, that is, between their status as self-constituted formal principles and as instruments of God's efficient causality. Berthold's recourse to Aquinas on the *Book of Causes* for these central metaphysical questions, he concludes, is proof that Berthold read the *Elements of Theology* through an interpretative tradition thoroughly formed by the *Book of Causes*.

Tommaso Ferro revisits the question concerning the extent of Berthold's debt to his German Dominican predecessors. Scholars now take for granted that Albert the Great and Dietrich of Freiberg had an enormous influence on Berthold's metaphysics, his theory of intellect, and his methods for establishing the relationship between pagan philosophy and Christian theology. Ferro

argues that Berthold's interpretation of the Augustinian distinction of natural providence (*providentia naturalis*) and voluntary providence (*providentia voluntaria*), which was fundamental to the *Expositio*, was inspired by Ulrich of Strassburg's *De summo bono*.

Berthold's primary concern with distinguishing the methods of "the philosophizing theologians or theologizing philosophers" and the theologians, rather than their aims or objects, Ferro maintains, has more in common with Ulrich, who frequently superimposes the objects of revealed theology and natural philosophy, than with Albert or Dietrich, for whom the separation is stricter. Proclus' status in Berthold as a pagan touched by divine grace (*apud* I. Zavettero, p. 219) is more intelligible within the framework of the *De summo bono*, where philosophical and theological questions are considered (Trinitarian theology, grace, the sacraments, etc.). Ferro then examines certain overlooked passages in the *Expositio* devoted to the nature of the divine intellect, its causality, and providence (Propositions 114, 121, 141, 144). In all these cases, Berthold relied on Ulrich's principles to explain why "Intellect" is the most proper name for God and how the essential causality of the divine intellect – its providence – grounds the stability, order, and intelligibility of the cosmos. The doctrine of natural providence thus accounts for the possibility of knowing "the invisible things of God from the creation of the world" (Rom. 1:20). Berthold's reliance on Ulrich for these pivotal doctrines is evidence, Ferro contends, that Martin Grabmann was correct to call Ulrich the "co-founder" of the Dominican school in Cologne.

Evan King's aim is twofold: on the one hand, to provide an overview of the presence of Dietrich of Freiberg in Berthold's *Expositio*; and on the other hand, to examine the similarities and differences between the two Dominicans. King emphasizes that, on average, Berthold cites Dietrich twice in each commented proposition. In the *Expositio*, there are only two explicit references to Dietrich, yet Berthold's familiarity with the latter's thought is astonishing, as it becomes clear from the very useful table presented by King: the *Expositio* contains, in 228 sections of the text, 464 citations from almost all of Dietrich's known works.

King equally examines the doctrinal impact of Dietrich on Berthold's theories of transcendentals, of time and eternity, of the doctrine of causality, and of theology as a science. The last is unexpected inasmuch as, according to King, it bares the traces of one of Dietrich's lost works: the *De theologia, quod sit scientia secundum perfectam rationem scientiae*. A careful examination of the terminology and a patient reconstruction of the polemical context of the late 13th-century University of Paris, notably the debate between Henry of Ghent and Godfrey of Fontaines, enable King to conclude that one can see in the *Praeambulum* the reflection of Dietrich's endorsement of Godfrey's distinction between the certitude of evidence and the certitude of adhesion. The aim of Berthold's own position is to show that "Platonic philosophy (…) both meets and exceeds the Aristotelian criteria for demonstrative scientific procedure" (p. 266), by substituting Platonic philosophy for Dietrich's revealed theology. Platonic wisdom "has the same scientific structure, proportionately speaking, as the other genuine sciences, except the purely mathematical". Berthold and Dietrich have different agendas, echoing their diverse understanding of the relation between pagan and Christian rational traditions. For Dietrich, the difference between these two traditions would only be overcome in the end of time, whereas for Berthold, they have already been overcome in the Golden Age of ancient Platonism.

Loris Sturlese analyzes Berthold's theory of deification in its historical context. For Sturlese, Berthold's discovery of the hierarchy of immutable causes in Proclus had a precise anthropological significance that addressed a debate concerning the dignity of the individual human soul, which occupied writers of Latin and German literature in the 14th century.

According to Berthold, following Thomas of York, the intellectual ascent to God occurs in three ways, corresponding to "the three movements" of angels and souls described by Dionysius. Sturlese finds that Berthold modified Dionysius to emphasize that the vision of God is a prerogative of the "oblique" movement, which corresponds to the soul's ascent through discursive, philosophical reason. Berthold then focalized this theory on Proclus' own perfect realization of all three intellectual movements. This not only makes Proclus a prototype of the divine man (*homo divinus*), it also makes his anthropology of the one of the soul (*unum animae*), with its concomitant metaphysics of the One and Good beyond Being, the benchmark for philosophical wisdom. Here Dionysius was being assimilated to Proclus: Berthold judged Proclus' formulation of the *unum animae* "clearer" than Dionysius', Sturlese proposes, because Proclus had rationally demonstrated that the soul's sensible and intellectual activities depend on a principle that grounds the division of knower and known. If the human condition for Berthold is precisely "that of living in the unawareness of bearing within oneself a secret vestige of the One" (p. 295), then, in one sense, the rational awareness of this dignity is the fruit of the discursive reflection Berthold so valued in Proclus. Compared to Dietrich of Freiberg and Meister Eckhart, Berthold's notion of a principle beyond intellect, and his citations of the *Mystical Theology* of Dionysius, placed a greater emphasis on the possibility (and difficulty) of experiencing a transitory union with God in this life. Berthold thus united the two orders of natural and voluntary providence, metaphysics and eschatological merit, in his theory of the *unum animae*. Sturlese concludes by asking whether there is still a lingering tension between these two sides of deification in Berthold, that is, between the soul's natural, metaphysical condition as divine and its realization of union with God in becoming.

Wouter Goris compares the views of Albert the Great, Ulrich of Strassburg and Berthold of Moosburg on the first principle's freedom (to act) in relation to its will (*voluntas*) and omnipotence (*omnipotentia*). Goris underlines that Aristotle's definition of "the free" as *causa sui* inspired Plotinus' *Enneads* VI.8, whereas Proclus, who does not mention it in the *Elements of Theology*, discusses the concepts of the self-sufficient (*autarkes*) and the self-constituted (*authupostaton*). The author of the *Book of Causes* does not want to cut the ties with the Aristotelian tradition and preserves the notion of *causa sui ipsius*.

Goris emphasizes the structural differences between Albert's and Berthold's views on freedom (which echo the more general aims of their intellectual projects): the former tries to harmonize the Platonic and the Aristotelian traditions, while the latter accentuates the contrast between them, clearly preferring one over the other. Albert, faithful to the Aristotelian concept of *causa sui*, "introduces necessity into the concept of freedom he attributes to the first principle" (p. 311) yet argues in favor of a Platonic concept of absolute freedom, compatible with the freedom of choice. Ulrich of Strassburg transforms Albert's discussion by stressing the compatibility of freedom and necessity; hence, the Aristotelian concept of freedom, still very important in Albert, "is reduced to a mere afterthought" in Ulrich. This tendency becomes even more salient in Berthold who relies on the Proclean triad *imparticipatum – participatum – participans*, and who insists on the notion of freedom in relation to what acts *per esse* (which Goris calls "the essence of a Platonic concept of freedom"), whereas both Albert and Ulrich discussed it in relation to *agere et non agere*. In the *Expositio* there is no room for the Aristotelian concept and vocabulary of freedom: *causa sui*, a self-refuting and self-contradictory concept according to Berhold, is replaced by *gratia sui* or *sui ipsius existens*. The only acceptable meaning of this concept of *causa sui* is in terms of formal and essential causality: "freedom is essential self-constitution" (p. 317).

Theo Kobusch situates Berthold's view on double providence in relation to the major figures of the long tradition of Neoplatonism (both Latin and Hellenic). According to Berthold, natural or essential providence enables us to know, through philosophically grounded propositions, more than the Aristotelian *ens inquantum ens*: they enable us to know God. Voluntary providence speaks about God

according to the principles of the Christian faith through the hierarchies (angelic and human) endowed with free will, in which the divine retribution of rewards and punishments is manifested. These two modes of theologizing are neither contradictory nor mutually complementary; rather, voluntary providence is a complement, an aid to natural reasoning, a part that renders the whole perfect. Kobusch claims that the real original contribution of both Berthold and Dietrich to the history of Western philosophy consists in their effort to reverse the relationship of servitude: revealed theology loses its primacy in respect to all domains pertaining to philosophical theology (a view that could find echoes among contemporary Catholic theologians).

The Hellenic origin of this problematic cannot be overlooked. The topic is present in Porphyry, Proclus, Hermias, Hierocles of Alexandria, Simplicius, and is transmitted to Philoponus and John of Damascus. Kobusch emphasizes that, for the Neoplatonists, divine providence in its broadest understanding, as governance of the entire universe, is the subject of first philosophy, and it pertains to the metaphysician (understood as a theologian) to discuss necessity and contingency, freedom, ethics, and education. However, the major difference between the Neoplatonic and Christian understanding of double providence is the concept of care: for the former, divine providence does not contain any form of direct or personal relation to individuals, whereas for the latter, divine providence is essentially turned toward humans. For example, unlike the former, the latter consider that through free choice (i.e., repentance) anyone can obtain divine forgiveness, and thus modify the retributions for their moral misconducts.

Alessandro Palazzo focuses on the central theme of natural providence in the *Expositio*, and considers how it arose from Berthold's reflection on the theory of providence and fate he found in Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* and, most importantly, Proclus' three works on providence (*Tria opuscula*). Palazzo argues that there are two complementary approaches to the notion of providence in Berthold, one that is naturalistic and *a posteriori*, and another that is metaphysical-theological and *a priori*. Regarding the first, he observes that the only time the crucial passage from Augustine on twofold providence is cited in the *Expositio* is in Proposition 141A, which the Index (*Tabula contentorum*) identifies as a discussion of the distinction between providence and fate. This reflects Augustine's description of natural providence as what presides over physical phenomena (celestial motions and terrestrial causes). Palazzo then shows how Berthold builds on Ulrich of Strassburg, first with Boethius, and then with Proclus, who provides the clearest account of the hierarchical relation of the realms (*regna*) of providence (the presence of all things in the divine mind) and fate (the unfolding of that content in time, space, and the chain of causes). For Berthold, Proclus' approach autonomized the realm of nature, which can be studied according to its own laws and without reference to a higher level of reality. The top-down view of natural providence emerges in Proposition 121, where Berthold uses Proclus' notion of an essential order to establish that providence exists in God "causally" and in the gods or primordial causes "essentially" and "participatively". Palazzo insists that the dynamic relation between fate and providence should not be overlooked when considering the meaning of natural providence in the *Expositio*: it explains the presence of the extensive discussions of nature (Proposition 34) and celestial phenomena (Proposition 198) in the commentary and, therefore, it provides a more complete picture of Berthold's understanding of how the soul ascends to share in God's "providential cognition" through philosophical reason.

Sylvain Roudaut considers Berthold's complex views on forms, arguing that he developed an original theory of formal causality by adjusting doctrines inherited from various sources to the *Elements of Theology*. Roudaut shows that in the *Expositio*, light is not a metaphor (for creation) but has a metaphysical meaning and it is defined as the first (emanated) form. Light is a theoretical model allowing one to understand the diffusion of essence from the divine unity to created beings. Indeed, Berthold claims that all divine unities (in Proclean terms: the gods following the One) are essentially

identical and can be called uniform. "The Gods are constituted by a single formal intention, just like light in the physical real is the purest form" (p. 409)

Berthold's view on "universal essence" (as Roudaut calls the theory of an essence, emanating in the intellectual light, and capable of different modes of being) is fundamental for his "theory of generation of natural forms at the lowest level of matter". Roudaut equally indicates that Berthold's distinction between *essentia*(characterizing *entia secundum speciem*) and *substantia* (characterizing celestial bodies and beings from the sublunar world) is echoed in the distinction between *forma essentialis* and *forma substantialis*. The former "refers to a form that does not inhere in a subject (…), an intention that more truly informs a subject without becoming one with it", and the latter "refers to a part of the compound substance (…) restricted to designate the part of the hylomorphic compound" (p. 406). A second major conceptual distinction, equally deriving from the dichotomy previously explained, underlines the difference between *species* and *forma* (or *idea*). *Species* refers to specific reasons "that express intelligible features possessing a universal mode of being devoid of individual character", whereas *forma* / *idea* refer "to the model from which an individual entity comes to being" (p. 407). Berthold inherits key-concepts from his German Dominican predecessors, but equally finds inspiration in Avicebron. His extraordinary capacity to combine sources enables him to innovate and to extend this heritage to themes absent both in Proclus and in the Latin tradition.

Michael Dunne compares Peter of Ireland (and marginally Thomas Aquinas) with Berthold of Moosburg on the so-called noetic triad: Being-Life-Intellect. The content of Proclus' Proposition 102 of the *Elements* was known to Aquinas' first master of philosophy, Peter of Ireland, through chapter XVII(XVIII) of the *Book of Causes*, that Peter cites at length in the prologue of his commentary on the *De longitudine et brevitate vitae*. However, as Dunne observes, Peter of Ireland is selective in his use of the quotation: he excludes those passages in the secondary propositions of the chapter XVII(XVIII) that refer to *scientia* and *intelligentia*, and preserves only those presenting the dependence of beings upon the First Being and of life upon the First Life. Peter explains that being is given *per modum creationis* and life *per modum formae*, inasmuch as, firstly, "life is to be found in living things in the way of a form and not in the way of a created thing" and, secondly, "life does not become actual, does not go out into being, by means of creation but only […] by infusion" as any form does (p. 443). Berthold, while commenting on Proposition 102 of the *Elements*, distinguishes between life and living, and introduces the example of intellects which, although they live, are not properly life. Berthold distinguishes eight levels of life, from *vita essentialis* and *vita intellectualis* to *ultima vita* which presupposes only vital movement (of nutrition).

Stephen Gersh's comparison of Berthold of Moosburg, Nicholas of Cusa, and Marsilio Ficino documents the subtle transformations that constitute medieval and Renaissance Platonism. These three great representatives of the Platonic tradition share a common philosophical method and goal: in various ways, each thinker held that doxography (a reflection on the history of philosophy) was integral to the pursuit of philosophy itself. They also strove to demonstrate the profound compatibility of Platonism and Christian doctrine by appealing to the authority of Augustine and invoking the example of Dionysius the Areopagite. To illustrate the numerous important differences in these Christian Platonisms, Gersh provides a wealth of information in a series of case-studies of the authors' attitudes toward Hermes Trismegistus, Pythagoras, Plato, the Latin Platonists, Proclus, and, finally with Ficino, Plotinus and the Greek Platonists. In most instances, Gersh finds a shift from "the medieval phase" of Platonism, which includes Berthold and Cusanus, to "the Renaissance phase", represented in Ficino. In the broadest sense, these terms denote an author's access to new sources, with Cusanus regarded as a "transitional" figure by his use of humanist translations of Plato and Proclus, and Ficino's translations of Plato (published in 1484) and Plotinus (completed in 1490) inaugurating a turning point in the Platonic tradition in the West. What emerges from Gersh's analysis is that Proclus, as the author of the axiomatic *Elements of Theology* (Berthold), is eclipsed by

Proclus, the commentator on the dialectical *Parmenides* (Cusanus), and finally by Plotinus, as the pre-eminent interpreter of Plato (Ficino), inasmuch as Proclus' polytheism was subjected to increased criticism.

…

The studies reunited here are not meant to provide an exhaustive panorama of Berthold's thought. Nevertheless, singly and in concert with one another, these contributions open paths for further investigation. We now can better appreciate the importance of vital sources for the *Expositio*, such as the Scriptures for Berthold's conception of the relationship between paganism and Christianity, Avicebron on the doctrine of *fluxus* and essential causality, and Thomas Aquinas' analyses of Proclus in his *Super Librum de causis Expositio*. How does Berthold's interpretations of Avicebron on essential causality and the doctrine of forms compare to those of Thomas of York, whose massive influence on the *Expositio* we are now in a position to gauge? Does his positive reception of the *Fons vitae*, which departs so strikingly from Albert the Great's rebuttal of Avicebron's metaphysics, mark an original synthesis between the Franciscan philosophies from Oxford and the Albertist traditions of Cologne? In his reading of Proclus and Dionysius on contemplative felicity and even deification, was Berthold inspired more by the *Sapientiale* or by Albert, by Ulrich of Strassburg or by Dietrich of Freiberg? Much more remains to be done to measure the extent of Berthold's debt to his Dominican predecessors. Berthold was certainly reliant upon Albert, Ulrich, and Dietrich in numerous fundamental ways – in his conception of freedom, in his noetics, in his understanding of theology itself. Nevertheless, his modifications of and departures from his sources is even more striking and decisive. Have the boundaries of the historiography of the "German Dominican school" been confirmed or undermined? The impact of other Dominicans was previously overlooked, but there are now good proofs that further studies should be undertaken on the influence of Aquinas on Berthold.

The doctrine of natural and voluntary providence has received considerable attention in this volume. This is not, however, disproportionate to its weight in the *Expositio*. While not pretending to achieve unanimity on a subject that permeates every facet of the commentary, each study has nevertheless brought to light new aspects of the theory. We see how Berthold's project responded to a perennial question of the Neoplatonic tradition relating to divine care and the place of the human within the universal order. Moreover, Berthold's conception of natural providence served not only to demarcate the domain of philosophical inquiry relative to Christian theology, but also to lay the foundation for Berthold's philosophy of nature. Key influences on Berthold's interpretation of Augustine's notion of "twin providence" have also been reassessed (Proclus' *De providentia et fato*, Albert the Great, Dietrich of Freiberg) or highlighted for the first time (Ulrich of Strassburg). Berthold's endorsement of Proclean Platonism was unprecedented in the Middle Ages and, undoubtedly, scholars will continue to weigh the precise balance between pagan philosophy and Christianity in the *Expositio*, as we come to a clearer sense of how this remarkable synthesis of these traditions arose within its context.

Understanding Berthold's Christian Platonism also requires us to move from the *Expositio*'s immediate context, and the problematics it answered, to comparing it with other great syntheses of Platonism and Christian doctrine. The "medieval" features of Berthold's reception of Proclus come into much sharper relief when they are compared to the Platonisms of Nicholas of Cusa and Masilio Ficino. Further comparisons of Berthold's *Expositio* with the major receptions of Proclus in the Georgian commentary on the *Elements* by Ioane Petritsi (12th c.) and the Greek *Anaptyxis* (*Refutation*) of the *Elements* by Nicholas of Methone (d. c. 1166) may yet help us to appreciate the distinctive features of these branches of the Platonic tradition.

Can one consider Berthold's project in terms of a renewal of medieval metaphysics? We would firmly respond with the affirmative, not because we need to justify the choice of the title of this volume but because the *Expositio* sets the plan of a different metaphysics, outside universities, outside the stream of the Aristotelian tradition, in a context and with a purpose that still remain to be explored. These papers bring forth numerous and solid arguments that Berthold's *Expositio* should not be ignored by any serious history of Western metaphysics.

Dragos Calma was responsible for drafting section 1 and 3; Evan King for section 2. The section 4 was jointly written. This research was undertaken within the framework of the ERC research project CoG_NeoplAT 771640. <>

Tear Down These Walls: Following Jesus into Deeper Unity by John H. Armstrong. [Cascade Books, 9781725298088]

"I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message. I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one--as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me" (John 17:20-21, NLT). For most Christians these words of Jesus seem like an unreachable ideal. Or they promise spiritual unity without a visible demonstration between real people. Some even read these words with a sense of fear seeing this text used for a compromise agenda. How should we understand this prayer offered for all who follow Jesus? What if Jesus really intended for the world to ""believe"" the gospel on the basis of looking at Christians who live deep unity in a shared relationship with him? What if there is way of understanding what Jesus desired so that we can begin anew to tear down the many walls of division that keep the world from seeing God's love in us? Is our oneness much bigger and deeper than we could imagine? John Armstrong has devoted three decades to the work of Christian unity. His story and ministry have encouraged many around the world and now they are reflected in this memoir of a life devoted to unity.

Reviews

"Reflecting on a lifetime call for Christian unity, **Tear Down These Walls** is a must-read for anyone who has a ministry call of healing wounds in the body of Christ. This work invites us into the life-giving relationships made possible by a Christ who calls every part of his church to follow him more closely, and in that process to love their fellow Christians more deeply." —Alexei Laushkin, Founder, Kingdom Mission Society

A fascinating and awesome book which—taking start from the narration of the biographical events that led the author to a lifelong commitment to the cause of ecumenism—provides an honest and insightful glance at the issues at stake in the journey to unity. Bridging past and future, personal conversion and ecclesial identity, biblical perspective and confessional sources from various Christian traditions, the book proposes the key concepts of a 'new ecumenism,' such as 'missional ecumenism,' 'cooperative love,' 'relational unity,' and calls for a concrete individual and communal involvement in the ecumenical enterprise that is costly, but possible. —Teresa Francesca Rossi, Associate director, Centro Pro Unione, Rome,

"Armstrong lays out his passion for ecumenism and rehearses much of his personal journey from a rigid, doctrinaire stance to an open appreciation of and readiness to work with (and learn from) Christians of all sorts of backgrounds. He invites readers to embrace what he has styled 'missional ecumenism,' an approach to seeking the unity of Christ's followers that is deeply relational and

welcoming. This book offers renewed hope for the ecumenical future." —James R. Payton Jr., Professor, McMaster Divinity College

"Through his very rich faith experiences, Armstrong shares keen insights into the crucial work of the ecumenical movement for the twenty-first century. For anyone who wholeheartedly accepts Jesus' words, 'That they may be one,' **TEAR DOWN THESE WALLS** is an engaging and encouraging read. In a secularized world searching for answers, Christian unity is essential for the new evangelization. **TEAR DOWN THESE WALLS** provides a hope-filled framework for the task that lies before us: to give witness to the power of unity we have in Christ in overcoming the divisions that have plagued the Christian church for over one thousand years." —Mitchell T. Rozanski, Archbishop of St. Louis, Missouri

"**TEAR DOWN THESE WALLS** is an ecumenical memoir in which John Armstrong (once again) invites us to participate in costly unity for the love of God and others. As a dear friend, John has helped lead me into a deeper historical, theological, and practical understanding of Jesus' high priestly prayer in John 17, and this great work has certainly contributed to that process. Tear Down these Walls will leave you challenged, convicted, and encouraged!" —Jeff Gokee, Executive director, PhoenixONE

"Promoting Christian unity begins with spiritual ecumenism. Armstrong's theological story teaches that Christian unity is the result of grace, not works. The unity Christ wills for his church displays to the world a revelation about the nature of God. 'Missional ecumenism' is grounded in the nature of God expressed as 'relational love.' If Christians abide in God-love, the unity Christ prayed for will make it more possible for the world to believe." —Thomas A. Baima, Provost, University of Saint Mary of the Lake

"This book helps one see how both the character of God (love) and the nature of the church are profoundly interrelated and expressed via relationships. Armstrong's stories and reflections help us make friendship—not buildings and programs—central in church life. These pages will motivate you to devote more time to personal relations with other Christians, for the ecumenical movement is a work of grace rooted in friendships." —Tom Ryan, National director, Paulist Ecumenical Relations

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This book is as much autobiography as theology. It maps a faith journey from sectarian isolation to authentic community embracing the full family of God. Because John and I have shared it, I commend not only the discovery he chronicles, but the man who lived it. The backdrop is clear. In just three short decades, we have witnessed an unprecedented decline of the American church, raising an obvious question. Why? And its corollary: What must we do? In these pages John's answer points in an unexpected direction, "back to the future." It is the plan for reformation and renewal found in Scripture and widely practiced in the earliest days of the church. He uses the term "missional-ecumenism" to describe it. Here is how John uses this hyphenated word.

We are called to a unity that embraces all believers! Who can defend 45,000 denominations living largely in isolation and often unwarranted conflict, much less the preponderance of interpersonal discord found in church life today? Such incongruity cripples us within and explodes like a "blinding flash of the obvious" on all who witness us without. It was not so in the beginning and the unity of all believers is itself the high ground in Scripture.

True unity must be grounded in God's mission. Nothing less will do. The American church's historic focus on buildings and programs designed to exceed member expectations, grow membership, and sustain ourselves internally, has simply not worked. To focus there is to "major on minors." The mission that Christ passed to us is to live as "salt and light" in his kingdom, to love God so much that his love overflows us, into the lives of our "near ones," inseparably binding our faith to works and our teaching to practice as two sides of the same coin. This is a shared mission that we are called to advance together, as one. The unity John describes is no mere difference of degree. It is a difference of kind and its absence looms large, like an elephant in the church.

John has paid dearly for advocating "missional-ecumenism." Yet, the vision and strategy he presents are above reproach. Though not common practice, it is common sense. As we draw closer to God, we find ourselves closer to one another. This journey begins by simply sharing our lives with fellow believers in other faith traditions, coming to know them, respect them, and love them. It then grows into sharing together the very mission for which we were created. As with all relationships, life together is not easy or automatic. There are places of ambiguity and challenge. Yet, it is the way of love prescribed by a God of love. It is the only way that works! "By this everyone will know that you belong to me" (John 13:35).

Richard W. McDaniel

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> A house divided against itself cannot stand. —President Abraham Lincoln, citing Mark 3:25
>
> Jesus espoused humility, servanthood of leaders, and breaking down walls between people. —President Jimmy Carter

Speeches are sometimes memorable. Some are even historic. Modern history is replete with examples of how spoken words have moved people to see the world more clearly. In elementary school I memorized what is perhaps our nation's most famous speech: "Four score and seven years ago . . ." We learned Lincoln's Gettysburg Address to better understand our divided past and embrace a vision rooted in sacrifice and courage.

Words do matter. Words still shape history and change lives. Just days after America was attacked at Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt's words galvanized the nation. The president said the day Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, would become "a day that will live in infamy." As a twelve-year-old boy, I was challenged by the words of President John F. Kennedy's inaugural address: "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." And who doesn't remember the moving words of Martin Luther King, Jr., spoken at the Lincoln Memorial on August 28, 1963: "I have a dream . . ." Some spoken words are just electric, especially if they contain images and metaphors that fill us with courage, hope, and promise.

In my lifetime, another presidential speech stands out in a remarkable way. The indelible image left on those of us who heard these words remains. For more than four decades the Cold War had threatened our planet with nuclear destruction. The symbol of our division was a concrete wall dividing East and West Germany. It was this wall that President Ronald Reagan spoke about in his memorable words of 1987.

> Behind me stands a wall that encircles the free sectors of this city, part of a vast system of barriers that divides the entire continent of Europe. . . . Standing before the Brandenburg Gate, every man is a German, separated from his fellow men. Every man is a Berliner, forced to look upon a scar. . . . As long as this gate is closed, as long as this scar of a wall is permitted to stand, it is not the German question alone that remains open, but the question of freedom for all mankind.
>
> General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization, come here to this gate.
>
> Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate!
>
> Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!

To this day the president's vivid metaphor—"tear down this wall"—inspires me. Whatever you think of President Reagan, his words were a strong, clear, and timely call for openness and peace.

When the Berlin Wall did come down in 1989, I remember where I was and the incredible joy I felt. I was watching how the power of Reagan's words changed the world. His metaphor of "the wall" perfectly described a moment that reshaped the world. Pieces of the wall are now a monument of remembrance in many parts of the world. A reunited and prosperous modern Germany demonstrates what happens when walls are torn down and people come back together.

My admiration for Reagan's words—"tear down this wall"—provides me a lively metaphor through which I express the theme of this book. Just as the Berlin Wall once divided a nation, and even a great deal of the wide world, so Christians have been divided from one another for centuries. This was profoundly true in my childhood world, where I grew up never really going to a friend's church, especially if that church was Catholic or Black. Christians had built their own walls through ideology, politics, ethnicity, race, gender, and denominationalism. Yet there is another story, one not so well known to most Christians. Over the last one hundred years many of these old walls of separation have been torn down. Others are falling before our eyes, but too few know or understand this important story. I will attempt to explain this modern history and encourage you to help others in tearing down these walls of division. I will then attempt to show you how to build friendship bridges in the very places where these walls once divided us.

My own story can be pictured by these walls. Mine is a story of being led by the Spirit to seek God's healing mercies with all Christians. From a narrowly parochial world and a separatist evangelical background, I was led on a life-transforming journey.

Looking back over my life, I realize I agree with the words of Frederick Buechner: "All theology is biography." Like history, theology gets a bad rap when it is taught merely as systematic ideas. But the theological story I will share is rooted in a long, slow journey into God's love.1 I hope this story will prompt you to align your life with the central theme of this book—our relational unity in Christ's mission. So mine is a theological story and a personal memoir. All the stories I share are told to focus your imagination and prayer on Jesus' words in John 17:20–23:

> My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

To be sure, you have a story too. It includes deeply personal discoveries and choices. I share my story for two reasons. First, I want you to understand your own spiritual story in an entirely new way. Second, I want you to understand the mission of Christ in a life-giving way that grips your imagination. More specifically, I hope you will gain a whole new understanding of what it means to live the gospel of the kingdom faithfully in fellowship with the "one holy catholic and apostolic church."

Around the time of Ronald Reagan's words at the Berlin Wall I began to discover that my particular mission was to tear down walls that had kept churches and Christians from loving one another. It may sound simple, but it's not.

In 1981, as a thirty-two-year-old pastor, I began to experience a deep relational oneness with God and others. My new journey began in the context of an ever-growing post-denominationalism inside an emerging post-Christendom culture, even though few had yet been awakened to the serious decline and marginalization of the church in America. Because of this journey, I met a significant number of Christians who were discovering that we shared a common ancient faith, one that is greater than all of our historical and personal differences. C. S. Lewis appropriately called this shared faith "mere Christianity." The discovery I made did not pit the Bible against Christian tradition. Rather, my discovery showed me how biblical faith was deeply rooted in the living Christian tradition, a tradition found in all the classical expressions of our one faith. It is this one faith that calls us to become a bold and prayerful people who envision a time when walls will be torn down. It calls us to a dream! Frankly, we live in a time when we can no longer afford to see other Christians as our enemies.

Many of us have drunk deeply from the wells of various Christian traditions other than our own. We have discovered far more good reasons to be together than to remain divided. The words of Martin Luther King, Jr. speak to the depth of our collective souls: "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" Indeed, what are you doing for others that will build them up in the love of Christ?

I sense a growing hunger for a profound renewal of Christian faith among many. I believe this will be a faith that is more about life lived well than about winning debates and building walls. I am convinced that what I have seen and lived for decades has not been ephemeral. It all points to someone and something far greater.

In 2010 I wrote a book with an intentionally provocative title: Your Church Is Too Small: Why Unity in Christ's Mission Is Vital to the Future of the Church. This new book is a richer telling of the same story joined with the vision behind it. This vision has worked itself out in my life over the last eleven

years, and this book includes that part of my theological story. In this new book I will undertake a serious recasting of my vision for the church. I hope you will agree at least with the overall arc of my story: Our church really is still too small if we embrace what Jesus taught us about his mission. I pray you will join me in becoming part of a growing movement of people who seek to live out this ancient story in our modern context. I have dared to pray, as a friend taught me years ago: Dream a dream so big that it is destined to fail unless God is in it! <>

THE LIFE AND WORK OF ERNESTO DE MARTINO: ITALIAN PERSPECTIVES ON APOCALYPSE AND REBIRTH IN THE MODERN STUDY OF RELIGION by Flavio A. Geisshuesler [Series: Numen Book Series, Brill, 9789004457706]

In **THE LIFE AND WORK OF ERNESTO DE MARTINO: ITALIAN PERSPECTIVES ON APOCALYPSE AND REBIRTH IN THE MODERN STUDY OF RELIGION,** Flavio A. Geisshuesler offers a comprehensive study of one of Italy's most colorful historians of religions. The book inserts de Martino's dramatic life trajectory within the intellectual climate and the socio-political context of his age in order to offer a fresh perspective on the evolution of the discipline of religious studies during the 20th century. Demonstrating that scholarship on religion was animated by moments of fear of the apocalypse, it brings de Martino's perspective into conversation with Mircea Eliade, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and Clifford Geertz in order to recover an Italian approach that promises to redeem religious studies as a relevant and revitalizing field of research in the contemporary climate of crisis.

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Let the Earth Shake: From Crisis-Born Hero to Master of Civilizational Crisis

> A short while ago, the atrocious news of the earthquake of Messina had reached Naples and the people stood bewildered in light of a tragedy, which seemed to be of cosmic proportions. As people were learning hour by hour more terrifying particulars, their imagination fabricated even greater terror. The night before I was born, a convoy for collecting clothing for the sufferers from the earthquake from Calabria and Sicily was passing through Via Fonseca. My mother used to tell me that, upon the signals by the men of the convoy, which emerged as high-pitched shouts and invocations, the windows of the high apartment buildings would open up, the balconies would fill up with people, and the women would throw down offerings: Bed sheets, gowns, shirts, underwear, socks, shoes, infant straps, skirts, blouses for women and suits for men. In this downpour of paraphernalia, the shouting of those who were giving and those who were receiving, the crying of the women, and the clamor of the low gateways out of which ever more donors surfaced, the street was transformed into an immense oblative phantasmagoria. It was difficult to distinguish pain from celebration, pity from gratitude, receiving from giving. My mother, excited and moved, was also on the balcony to make her offering. Then, so she used to say, upon seeing a Sicilian refugee in mourning sitting on top of a wagon of this convoy with a baby on her breast, she at once felt her legs buckle. Asking for support from her neighbors, she was carried home. They sat her down in the nearest chair. [...] When she regained consciousness, she looked around with her eyes veiled in tears and murmured: "We are ready." The labor had started.

In this passage, which forms part of a larger collection of autobiographical reflections, all of which are translated for the first time in this study, Ernesto de Martino (1908–1965) retells the story of what happened the night he was born. What is striking about this account is not only the author's evocative literary style, in which the use of a term like "oblative phantasmagoria" gives the reader an important hint at his identity as an intellectual trained in the study of religion, but also that he intentionally located his birth within the context of a cosmic drama. Entitled Via Fonseca, this passage depicts the dramatic scenes taking place in the street in front of de Martino's house after the earthquake of Messina on December 28th, 1908 as the city of Naples was flooded with displaced victims in search of food, clothing, and shelter. The 1908-earthquake shook much of Southern Italy in the early morning hours with a moment magnitude of 7.1. Lasting for a mere thirty seconds, it was a massive event of international dimensions. Leveling entire cities, permanently altering coast lines, and causing the death of close to 100,000 people, it was the most destructive earthquake ever to strike Europe in recorded history and left a lasting mark on the collective psyche of Italians for decades to come.

What makes de Martino's retelling of his birth even more remarkable, is the fact that it is mythopoeic in nature, consisting of a combination of historical realities and the creative re-envisionings by its author. Indeed, while the devastating earthquake of Messina shook the Island of Sicily on December 28th, 1908, Ernesto was born in Naples on December 1st. In the same year, but almost a full month earlier. The earthquake narrative sets the tone for the rest of de Martino's life as the trope of the shaking earth is a repeatedly invoked in his writings. Throughout his career, the Italian thinker linked natural calamities, particularly earthquakes, with socio-political crises and intellectual debates in Italy, Europe, and the Western world as a whole. The idea of the earthquake being an "extraordinary event," which can stimulate an intellectual movement towards "deeper spiritual reflection," stems from Ernst Cassirer, the early twentieth-century neo-Kantian philosopher, whom de Martino greatly appreciated. Just as the Lisbon earthquake of 1755 changed

the thinking of Goethe, Rousseau, Voltaire, and Kant, de Martino portrays himself as the spawn of crisis to set the theme for the century-long intellectual, spiritual, and cultural aftershocks that would follow the tremblor of his birth in the early twentieth century.

Today, in light of a series of challenges—such as the corona virus pandemic, climate change, or the refugee emergencies in Europe and North America— debates surrounding the crisis of Western civilization seem as present as never before. However, what common discourse frequently forgets is that none of these ideas are as new as they might seem. On the contrary, the history of the Western world is characterized by a long-standing tradition of crisis-thinking that exerted a deep fascination on de Martino. As scholars since his untimely death in 1965 have argued, de Martino's work was dominated by the idea of the "coexistence of modernity with that of the apocalypse."4 Roughly one hundred years after the publication of Oswald Spengler's Decline of the West (1918) and the ravaging of the "Spanish flu" (1918–19), this first comprehensive study of the life and work of Ernesto de Martino (1908–1965) in English language retells the dramatic story of civilizational crisis in the twentieth through the eyes of scholarship on religion.

While Ernesto de Martino is one of the greatest thinkers on religion that Italy has ever produced, his work has remained largely unknown outside of his native land until today. The reasons for this neglect, particularly in the Anglophone world, are multiple. Not only have Italian thinkers generally received less attention than their French and German counterparts, but de Martino was also a particularly complex individual with a wide range of concerns and orientations. I remember that when I first envisioned writing a book about de Martino in 2010, I climbed through the stacks of the old Alderman library at the University of Virginia, having to collect his individual works from various sections, many of them located on different floors: History of religions, cultural anthropology, folklore, musicology, transcultural psychiatry, or moral philosophy. While his thinking can be theoretically unified in its life-long fascination with the study of religion and its relationship to apocalypse and rebirth, his explorations were broad: From Ancient Greek ritual to Marxist ideology, from the Fascist sacralization of the state to Southern Italy's folkloric practices surrounding spider-bitten women, or from apocalyptic tendencies in modern French literature to the Christian roots of secularism, de Martino had something to say about all of these issues. Finally, another factor contributing to his relative neglect by international scholarship is that his thinking about crisis always involved a political dimension. Here too, his persona was anything but one-dimensional: After registering with the fascist party during his years as a student, he later joined the anti-fascist militia, before becoming a leading force in Italian socialist and communist circles.

In light of this remarkable breadth, it is little surprising that his work has provoked a flood of studies from many different orientations. Particularly in Italy, de Martino has become a cult-like figure with followers from all possible fields of research in recent years. During my years of research in Rome, where I benefited from access to de Martino's archives hosting a treasure-trove of unpublished materials, I found knowledgeable admirers of his thinking not only in the form of historians of religion and anthropologists, but also in socialist politicians, undergraduate students of musicology, experts of Italian philosophy, and pretty much anyone stemming from the mezzogiorno, the Southern region of Italy. Although de Martino is still one of the most underestimated scholars of religion of the twentieth century, the few international studies dedicated to his work have emphasized how his true importance can be fruitfully compared to the likes of Mircea Eliade (1907–1986), Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908–2009), and Clifford Geertz (1926–2006).5 What has never been comprehensively addressed, however, is that this uniquely colorful Italian thinker positioned himself in the heart of the international discipline of religious studies. Indeed, de Martino entertained a fertile exchange with the phenomenologist of religion Mircea Eliade with whom he shared an interest in religious experience and its relevance for the political circumstances during the 1930s. He engaged in a close reading of all the major works of the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, with whom he

agreed that a distancing perspective that moves beyond this experience was necessary for understanding religion. Finally, he also articulated important anticipatory remarks on what would become Clifford Geertz's interpretative anthropology, sharing its emphasis on a self-reflexive encounter with foreign religious cultures.

In all of these appointments with his time's leading scholars of religion, de Martino highlighted how the twentieth-century study of religion was shaped by an underlying fascination with civilizational crisis. The Italian thinker believed that scholars of religion, just like a thermometer for body temperature, were particularly sensitive to the feverishly mercurial nature of their world. For example, he argued that the scholarly projects of leading figures of the first half of the century, like Rudolf Otto and Mircea Eliade, were largely driven by the idea of civilizational crisis as a radical rupture from a premodern theological worldview. More generally, commenting on the lack of unified vision in light of the divergent perspectives, de Martino characterized the discipline itself as a field ruptured by crisis. He not only diagnosed that the leading thinkers of the study of religion in the twentieth century incarnated the socio-political tensions surrounding them, but he also believed that this led to the materialization of distinct currents of thought within the discipline. Specifically, in the twentieth century, the crisis-ridden discipline of religious studies was operating on three tectonic plates: The insider-phenomenological approach of Mircea Eliade, the outsider-explanatory approach of Claude Lévi-Strauss, and the cultural-discursive approach of Clifford Geertz.

Beyond situating him within the global discipline of religious studies through the relationship with Eliade, Lévi-Strauss, and Geertz, this study also offers an interpretation of the comprehensive corpus of his published and unpublished writings, introduces his major teachers amongst the Italian intelligentsia, and lays open the complex socio-political context that gave rise to de Martino's thinking. Born in Naples in 1908 and passing away in Rome in 1965, he lived through some of the most turbulent years of recent history: Coming of age after WWI and the time Mussolini took power to create a "third Italy," emerging as a scholar during the Civil War and the Resistance in the final years of WWII, gaining the status of a leading intellectual during the reemergence of the "Southern Question" in the 1950s, before dedicating the end of his life to the investigation of apocalyptic movements in all realms of cultural production during the cold war years, de Martino was always on the forefront of intellectual and political debates that marked the Western world.

Despite his fascination with crisis as a rupture that encompassed civilization, politics, and science, de Martino's fundamental attitude remained steadfastly committed to optimism. His thought reached its most radical expression in the moments when he argued that crisis must be regarded as an opportunity for civilizational renewal or rebirth. The greatest power of de Martino's work might lie in his insistence that intellectuals can only overcome crisis if they are willing to generate a "unity of thought" that overcomes our culture's tendency to think in "separate entities" ("compartimenti-stagni"). This is even more true for our globalized, digitalized, and rapidly changing world. As the coronavirus pandemic has painfully reminded us, we are increasingly confronted with complex crises that are just as biological as they are cultural, just as scientific as they are social, just as virological as they are political. In this light, de Martino's eclectic research interests, his continuous composition of speculative theories in light of empirical phenomena, and his fearless integration of contrasting disciplinary perspectives are more relevant than ever.

In this book, I decode de Martino's philosophy of civilizational crisis and cultural palingenesis by means of seven concepts that marked his scholarship over the course of his career. In the first chapter, I tell the story of the young Ernesto's early years as a student and explain how his scholarly interests in religion, like that of many of his contemporaries, can only be understood in light of "the decline of the West" (la decadenza dell'occidente), a concept that stands for the larger crisis of the modern world-view of progress and the rise of cultural pessimism during the interwar years. In

chapter 2, I discuss "civil religion" (religione civile) by juxtaposing it to Eliade's "politics of nostalgia," arguing that the Italian scholar's thinking was based on a palingenetic conception of time according to which political religion is both the return to something from the past and the invention of something new. In chapter 3, I elaborate on "the crisis of the presence" (la crisi della presenza), arguing that de Martino used it not only to explain the origin of magic in non-modern societies, but also to warn of a contemporary crisis, namely the rise of magical thinking during the Second World War. In discussing the theory of "de-historification" (destorificazione) in chapter 4, I argue that it allowed the Italian thinker to integrate the positions of the insider-phenomenological approach of Eliade and the outsiderexplanatory approach of Lévi-Strauss as religion is both a flight from history and an effective means to transform it. In chapter 5, I introduce the concept of "critical ethnocentrism" (etnocentrismo critico), which de Martino developed during his ethnographic explorations of the Italian South in the 1950s, arguing that it is marked by a series of traits that can also be found in Lévi-Strauss's Tristes Tropiques and post-colonial anthropology. Centered on the "loyalty to the cultural homeland" (fedeltà alla patria culturale), chapter 6 shows that de Martino, despite having much in common with interpretative and self-reflexive anthropology of the likes of Clifford Geertz, virulently opposed any form of cultural relativism, remaining firmly committed to the values of Western civilization. Finally, chapter 7 explores de Martino's final notes redacted before his death in order to explore the "ethos of transcendence" (ethos del trascendimento), a principle that forms the foundation for a strong cognitive and moral model of truth, which promises to offer an effective alternative to post-modern thinking. Thus, if much of recent scholarship on de Martino has started to celebrate him as an early harbinger of the various turns that characterize post-colonialism, poststructuralism, and postmodernism, this study makes a different argument. De Martino's work was profoundly dialectical in nature. If it is post-modern, then only inasmuch as it remained deeply grounded in modernity. As a consequence, his work should be regarded as an anticipated analysis of and resolute response to the cultural-discursive paradigm that came to dominate the humanities in recent decades. Although many of his political and intellectual choices will sound questionable and smack of a naïve form of modernism—particularly his youthful infatuation with fascism and his steadfast commitment to ethnocentrism—his value lies precisely in his commitment to a dialectical type of science. De Martino's dialectical thinking encourages us to Let the Earth Shake because any crisis offers science an opportunity to improve its methods and to increase our knowledge about the world. Unlike contemporary scholars of religion, who have rightly been accused of believing their science to be "incapable of learning from its mistakes or correcting its weaknesses," de Martino was confident that science is capable of growth and progress. <>

Close Reading: Kunsthistorische Interpretationen vom Mittelalter bis in die Moderne, Festschrift für Sebastian Schütze

edited by Stefan Albl, Berthold Hub and Anna Frasca-Rath [De Gruyter, 9783110710939]

Close Reading puts the artwork in the center of concentrated art-historical interpretations programmatically. Seventy-two international authors each analyze one work of architecture, sculpture, painting, drawing, or graphic work, from Albrecht Dürer and Matthias Grünewald, to Titian, Artemisia Gentileschi, Michelangelo, and Nicolas Poussin, Francesco Borromini, and Fischer von Erlach, to Oskar Kokoschka and Shirin Neshat. They pursue various methodological approaches, address the creation context or questions regarding dating and attribution, the history of a

collection, provenance, and restoration, or dedicate themselves to relationships between picture and text as well as to iconographic, iconological, and image-theory aspects.

Sebastian Schütze for whom this volume is his Festschrift, studied art history, classical archaeology and ancient history in Berlin, Bonn, Cologne and Rome. After completing his doctorate at the Free University of Berlin in 1989 (studies on Massimo Stanzione's painting with a critical catalogue of his works), he was a research assistant at the Bibliotheca Hertziana (Max Planck Institute for Art History) in Rome from 1992 to 1997. In 1997 he habilitated at the FU Berlin (Cardinal Maffeo Barberini, later Pope Urban VIII, as a client and patron. Beiträge zu einer Archäologie des rdmischen Hochbarock). After serving as professors at the Universities of Leipzig, Munster and Dresden, he was Professor of Modern Art History at Queen's University in Kingston Canada from 2003 to 2009. Since 2009, Sebastian Schütze has been University Professor of Modern Art History at the University of Vienna, where he has also served as Dean of the Faculty of Historical and Cultural Studies since 2018. In 2013 he was elected as a corresponding member in Germany and in 2016 as a real member of the philosophical-historical class of the ÕSterische Akademie der Wissenschaften. His research focuses primarily on Italian art of the early modern period and its European appeal.

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This commemorative publication on the occasion of Sebastian Schütze's 60th birthday is part of the long and beautiful tradition of honouring scientists on the occasion of their milestone birthday. Nevertheless, this time is far too early to pay tribute to the life's work of the jubilee or even to draw a conclusion. With this publication, the multifaceted nature of his scientific achievements is shown in the mirror of the studies of friendly colleagues, employees and former doctoral students. Like a kind of photo mosaic, an idea of the diverse areas of interest and the topics of Sebastian Schütze's lively and always open scientific dialogue with his environment appears from the entirety of the contributions and contributors.

Requiring authors to closely read an object of their choice, the commemorative publication focuses on a central method of Sebastian Schütze's studies. This methodical approach is ultimately also to be understood as a commitment to an art history that, despite all the thematic and theoretical expansion of the subject, repeatedly focuses on the work of art. Each contribution presented here is

based on a work or a small group of works and is dedicated to their interpretation and interpretation. Which methodological approach the contributors also choose depends on the subject matter and the research questions and can range from dating, attribution or restoration results to questions of iconography, image and text relations and analyses of the context of origin. The chronological framework spans from the Middle Ages to the modern age.

The 72 contributions to this commemorative publication are to be seen as a sign of the authors' friendship and solidarity with Sebastian Schütze. His biographical stations are inscribed in this international and interdisciplinary network of colleagues at universities, research institutions and museums. After studying in Berlin, Rome, Cologne and Bonn, he received a doctoral scholarship at the Bibliotheca Hertziana in Rome for his studies on the Neapolitan painter Massimo Stanzione and spent numerous research stays in Naples. Already in these early years he laid the foundation for his deep and long-standing connection with Italy, his colleagues on site and Italian art and culture. After his habilitation on the art patronage of Maffeo Barberini, later Pope Urban VIII, at freie Universität Berlin, he was appointed interim professorship in Leipzig, Dresden, and Munster, and a research professorship at the Bibliotheca Hertziana.In2003, Sebastian Schütze was appointed to the Bader Chair for Southern Baroque Art in Kingston, Canada, and finally to the Chair of Modern Art History at the University of Vienna in 2009. Here he was head of the Institute of Art History and head of the doctoral program, since 2018 he has served as Dean of the Faculty of Historical and Cultural Studies. In 2016, the Austrian Academy of Sciences appointed him a w. member of the philosophical-historical class.

The importance that Sebastian Schütze attaches to exchange and dialogue can also be seen in his diverse scientific achievements, which can only be touched upon the conception of conferences, the publication of series and the implementation of study courses and exhibition projects. To name just a few examples: the conference series Dialogues - Reflections - Transformations initiated with Antonietta Terzoli, which has been held regularly in Vienna and Basel since 2014 and examines the interactions between art and literature; the series Perspektivenwechsel, which has been published since 2020. Collectors, collections and collection cultures in Vienna and Central Europe, which publishes the research results of the Vienna Center for the History of Collecting, which he founded, as well as the series Hermathena, in which the editors and the editor of thiscommemorative publication published their dissertations or habilitations; the study courses on hand drawing, which are published in cooperation with the Albertina, or those he regularly holds at the Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici in Naples, with whose founder Gerardo Marotta he had a deep friendship; and last but not least the numerous and extensive exhibitions, by Bernini Scultore e la nascita del barocco in Casa Borghese (Galleria Borghese 1998, with Anna Coliva) to Der Gõttliche: Hommage an Michelangelo (Bundeskunsthalle Bonn 2015, with Georg Satzinger) or Friedrich Nietzsche and the Artists of the New Weimar (Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada 2019).

Among the contributors to this publication are several (former) doctoral students and staff. Sebastian Schütze shared and discussed his ideas and broad knowledge with them in the lecture hall and on excursions in front of the original. This long-lasting connection is not only based on many findings in terms of content, but also on shared memories. For example, with the same passion and with the same precision in content as in front of the objects, important everyday topics such as the quality of the "pyre" were debated in Viennese coffee houses. His research also reflects his enthusiasm for new and different topics - such as Stefan George or William Blake. However, the center of Sebastian Schütze's research is Italy and the art of the early modern period - from Michelangelo, Caravaggio, and Bernini to Baroque painting in Naples.

This commemorative publication conveys a central idea of the ongoing exchange between the contributors and Sebastian Schütze. In terms of content and chronological breadth, it presents many new research results. In the layout of the individual contributions, quite a few authors were inspired by a new reading of Sebastian Schütze's fundamental writings… <>

Essay: Marc Mayer: Resilient Obscurity

One sunny afternoon, when I was about nine years old, I got myself wrapped-up in a play on television. I could not figure out what was going on, but it fascinated me. Three characters, two women and a man, were conversing in barely comprehensible sentences; I struggled to understand what the motivations for the words might be, and who these three people were to each other. They did not correspond to my experience of how adults interact.

Twenty minutes into it, my father entered the room and broke my concentration by asking, with exasperation: "Why are you watching that crap? You should be out playing!".

"I like it," was my meek response. He left the room shaking his head. I felt guilty and confused by the reprimand, but defiant. Why shouldn't I like it? I really did find it interesting, probably because it was barely comprehensible.

Recently, as I considered the cultural underpinnings of modernist art for a forthcoming lecture, this half-century old interaction came to mind. An odd memory to have harboured for so long, it seemed somehow connected to my observation that a familiar characteristic of modernist culture, a defining one of sorts, and of which that play was an example, is its difficulty.

Modern art, and its continuation under the euphemistic synonym "contemporary art," often relies on obscurity as a deliberate effect. Abstraction is the most notorious example, but Dadaism, Futurism, Surrealism, Reductivism, Conceptualism, and so much else - well into our own moment - are evidence enough that obscurity is a modernist convention in visual art. The same applies to modernist literature, theatre, dance, etc. Why?

After thinking about the various ways in which art can be obscure, and finding many, I concluded that we moderns must be addicted to obfuscation for its own sake. Searching further, it became increasingly clear to me that this reliance on obscurity is, in fact, more than a mere convention, but rather a richly developed and central feature of modernist culture. There must be a reason.

A set of plausible reasons eventually came to me, but my childhood fascination with that vanguard play showed me the most obvious one, and I believe the most important: pleasure. Many of us enjoy the mental effort required to understand the world, we love the strain of devising our own explanations for things as a form of psychic calisthenics. We are stimulated by interpretive resistance, which may be why the arts happily provide so much of it.

VENUS DE MILO, CA. 130 BC. MARBLE, 203 CM. PARIS, MUSEE DU LOUVRE, INV. N 527

Art is a safe place to be unknowing. Unlike the larger world, where not understanding can be dangerous, even fatal, culture lets us enjoy our ignorance without harm, by being the place where we can go to exercise our capacity to overcome it. In fact, art is so benign that, should we not succeed in understanding a given work, the only consequence we would suffer is the distraction of its other pleasures.

New art attracts sensualists who want to escape a world of exhausted clichés, of pat sense and predictable sequences, an audience happy to put in the mental work this kind of escape requires. The tenor of much art criticism illustrates this mentality well with overly familiar put-downs such as "derivative "one-liner," "obvious," "facile "deja-vu," etc. Now that skill has become a secondary concern, the main complaints are either about a lack of originality or a lack of obscurity.

In an attempt to explain the phenomenon, let me borrow a term from computer science. "Cognitive friction" is to be avoided in user interface design. But it is experienced as pleasure by the intellectually —or at least the aesthetically — ambitious who are avid to explore the inscrutable. Resistance to rapid assimilation will be known to scientists as inevitable because inherent to their subject: inscrutable nature. Such resistance may also explain science's appeal, aside from its principal goal of advancing knowledge. Labour-savers, we design the world and organise our lives to avoid cognitive friction. Should one regret the loss, science and art are there to restore it.

Many of us enjoy strenuous thinking as much as we might enjoy physical exertion; in both cases, the reward is elation. Problem solving, theory building, the fashioning of speculative constructs are great ways to spend a day. For scientists, obscurity is reality, but artists invent their own because cognitive friction is the point. When things are too familiar and predictable, for example rote aesthetic transactions or formulaic entertainments, aesthetes are quickly bored. They look for things that resist rapid assimilation because they experience boredom as a form of pain. They also know that, given an open mind and a taste for new sensations, such pain can be avoided through art's constantly evolving enterprise of beauty.

Before returning to the justifications for obscurity as a cultural value, let's sample the evidence that its modernist typology provides. I have identified the following five types, though sustained consideration may uncover more. Esoteric obscurity is an especially common and longstanding feature of art. For example, Bosch and Breughel both painted riddles for the literate. Having always played a pedagogical role — both as a teaching aid and to enjoy one's education — art enlists esoteric obscurity most successfully when it appeals to those trained in art history and theory, its guaranteed audience. The success of Canadian artist Jeff Wall has been based to a large extent on his occult references to art historical precedents in genre painting, history painting, still life, and other canonical forms of the Western tradition. His large backlit photographs nod to the cultures of film, theatre, literature and photography, making his work especially rich for a broadly sophisticated audience who will also enjoy his flirting with subjects as diverse as psychoanalysis, racism, capitalism, urbanism, the gender agon, eros, politics, history, and so on. Like many artists today, Wall relies on a broadly literate audience that is simulated by iconographic puzzles.

Similarly, the ongoing development of abstraction has a strong appeal to those familiar with the idiom and its history. Monochrome painting, a particularly well-tilled soil in the field of abstraction, is notoriously esoteric and typically attracts mockery from the uninitiated, who will invoke Hans Christian Andersen's naked emperor. But for the happy few whose education and experience permit them to enjoy its wit, ironies, politics, spirituality and, especially, its pure retinal pleasure, monochrome painting is one of art history's glories. But it remains obscure, even for its lovers, who must acquaint themselves with the artist's specific intentions, as these are surprisingly varied.

That we have successfully developed an artistic means to communicate emotionally between strangers, outside of time, and without resorting to symbols or even surface detail, is a cognitive achievement that leaps over languages and customs to ennoble the whole enterprise of abstraction. Separating the picture from the image, so to speak, is on par with splitting the atom as a feat of ratiocination, though it is not discussed in such terms. Those who find abstract painting exciting are, famously, in a small minority, which may be another of its charms.

In our modern art world where the evacuation of all forms of orthodoxy is a multi-generational project, any subject will do, and the more esoteric the better. Today, art can be about anything or nothing at all and take any form, or none. But the imperative to "make it strange as an artist once admitted to me, is a unifying principle.

Absurdity has been a familiar form of obscurity since the early 20th century. Dadaism, its initiator, seems quaint by comparison to art's subsequent absurdities. This forthrightly risible form of obscurity became standardised and strategic, not to mention increasingly humourless under Andre Breton's theory-laden Surrealism. Once spent, Surrealism dissolved into a tributary of mainstream abstraction, buoyed along by its Freudian undercurrent.

After a second World War that ended in a nuclear holocaust, artists looked back at their Dadaist forebears' reaction to their own cataclysm, and the absurd was ripe for revival. A first glimpse of it came through the apocalyptic, "all over" sensibility of Abstract Expressionism, the outright

obliteration of the image (Pollock) or its uninhibited violation (de Kooning). It then reemerged more explicitly through the post-abstract Neo-Dadaism of Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns. Pop art, which is fundamentally absurd, soon followed, along with Pop's more Dionysian manifestations in Europe. Performance art, a conservative idiom on the whole, ever faithful to its Dadaist roots, continues to lean heavily on the absurd to create interest. As the world becomes once again preposterous and unfortunate, artificial absurdity continues to appear virtuous and sane.

A taxidermy goat wearing a tire like a darkly ridiculous yoke, and covered in paint drips longer than its hair, has a pathos that struggles for our attention because it is undermined by its absurdity. In this famous work by Robert Rauschenberg, originality and aesthetic intelligence take up as much psychic space as pathos and stupidity for the perceiver who can enjoy it as a hybrid emotion locked in the amber of art. This is unlikely to be the case, however, for the general population of artistic outsiders who only have the work's pathos and stupidity available to them. Why would one buy such a thing, you might ask? Because it is so meaningfully ridiculous, the aficionado of the absurd might answer, being careful to avoid specifics.

Dadaism is conventionally framed today as an admirable form of dissent against the calamitous militarism that lead to the killing fields of World War I. For its mid-century manifestation, the target was the frenzied consumerism that followed World War II. Absurdist obscurity bookends the first half of the 20th century. In the initial instance, we might think of it as artists on strike, protesting the more authentic insanity of mass death by refusing to make sense. The strategy was employed the second time to feign the suicide of high art, annihilated by its assimilation to hegemonic consumer culture. That, to me, is what Andy Warhol's Brillo box means, if it means anything at all.

Using symbols and figures to achieve meaninglessness is quite hard to do. As we navigate our surroundings, our minds are always searching for recognizable patterns and familiar icons that correspond to our experience. Consciously or not, the mind keeps trying to decipher what it finds before it until sense, or a functional equivalent, is either revealed or constructed. Creating a work of art with recognizable symbols and figures that share no coherence and refuse to form a cogent narrative goes against our nature and our "will to signification," if you will permit me. As a referential equivalent to non-referential abstraction, figurative absurdity results from deliberate striving, rather than chance, though chance is a useful tool.

Absurdity may no longer define an artistic movement today, a time beyond movements, but its tropes, postures and dissimulated gravity still pop up in art like baffling mushrooms. The fragmentary approach is an effective and convenient means for producing obscurity and is, therefore, widespread. Withholding key information from the viewer incites conjecture that prolongs the cognitive process, with all that entails for the work's "use value" as pleasure. This approach was surely inspired by inadvertent precedents, such as the Venus de Milo and other sublime fragments, or relics of the non finito, which gain emotional power by being automatically intriguing: the mind wants a whole, so it imagines one. Programmatic fragmentation may originate with Caravaggio's elimination, or severe reduction, of the background in his paintings. Obscurity in baroque painting usually refers to the darkness of the scene, but we witness the migration toward its more recent second sense of "difficult to understand," as the trope of the blank background migrates through Caravaggio, David, Goya, Manet, Picasso, Mondrian, the "figure/ground" and "push/pull" problems of postwar abstraction and, ultimately, toward monochrome painting, where obscurity itself becomes the main event, however bright the colour.

When an object presented in the context of art withholds important details of its subject matter, obscurity will necessarily result. For the Caravaggisti, eliminating the background is withholding information to benefit the visibility of the foreground figures. They are, so to speak, "imposed" upon the viewer through a dramatic decontextualization. Can we think of monochrome painting as the

revenge of the background? Why not? Such a question reveals the interpretive play that mystifying fragments enable.

Perhaps the best known artist working in the fragmentary mode today is Gerhard Richter, with his highly influential "blur" procedure. By scraping or smearing the painted surface of otherwise conventional renderings, Richter compels the viewer to fill in the missing information in the mind, and engage with the object through its violation. Although Richter has blurred far more abstract paintings than figurative ones, the fact that he has practiced the same procedure on both can justify our suspicion about the authenticity of his abstractions. Both types of his aesthetically damaged pictures can only be reconstituted the same way, suggesting that they can be similarly "read," making them equivalent on a technicality. Are Richter's works in the idiom an embodiment of its spirit, or rather an illustration of abstraction as a subject? The notion, then, that Richter's work might be an earnest example of non-objectivity is hard to swallow. His recent blurred paintings, based on four photographs taken by an inmate of the death camp at Birkenau, give yet more substance to this suspicion. Stricto sensu, these pictures are abstract because of the way they are fragmented, but the whole project of abstraction has been steering us away from seeking occult images, as this restores representation. Richter's abstractions are unorthodox in this tradition, a form of archaism. Be that as it may, by taking the path of fragmentation he fascinates us uncomfortably with the novel retinal effects of his auto-vandalism to achieve a high classicism of modernist obscurity.

A sound work by Ceal Floyer removes all the lyrics sung by Elvis Presley in Love Me Tender, except for the words "me" and "you," which occur where they do in the original recording, leaving silence where they do not. After much effort, we might eventually recognize the voice and then the song, though now we know that the word "me" occurs far more frequently than the word "you," with the negative implications that has for the sincerity of Presley's love song. South African artist Candice Breitz similarly explores fragments of film history towards an analogous feminist critique.

Another example comes from French artist Renaud Bézy, in a video where he has removed the _characters and the dialogue of Disney animations. Only the cartoon backgrounds and the background music are left, creating a hybrid desolation of uncanny familiarity. Yet another approach comes from Cree painter Brenda Draney, who simply leaves her subject unpainted, giving us only the context to look at, in compositions made lopsided by missing information. But this approach to fragmentary obscurity more properly belongs to the next type.

Private obscurity withholds information about the subject in works that are also personal talismans for the artist. Although such works are technically sentimental, their inscrutability saves the artist from accusations of sentimentality, a cardinal sin in an orthodox modernism that sees itself in opposition to the kitsch of those cultural industries that exploit empathy.

Private obscurity is the more porous type, as it might incorporate the esoteric, the fragmentary, or the absurd. Draney, for example, withholds aspects of her pictures through fragmentation to underscore the personal nature of her subject, usually a private anecdote. It reminds me of redaction, perhaps of a human resources report where the principals and respondents are unnamed in compliance with privacy laws. Draney leaves a blank field, or raw canvas, where there should have been an identifiable figure or a significant object. As a result, the artist and the viewer become estranged.

A more extreme approach to private obscurity, similarly, resulting in estrangement, was taken by the late American painter Thomas Nozkowski. Although his works look for all the world like the sincerest of abstractions, they are perfectly legible to the artist as schematic mementos of an experience, of an anecdote, or of a fleeting emotion that he wished to preserve. For the viewer, these are scrupulously non-representational pictures, but for the artist they are the opposite.

Nozkowski orchestrates incompatible perspectives between artist and viewer. As they both face his painting, the difference between them is categorical because they are not seeing the same thing. He was careful throughout his career to avoid revealing his paintings' subjects, so this alienation was deliberate. In my mind, Nozkowski invented a moot instance of irresolvable opposition as an analogy of democracy, about which he was passionate. The beautiful paintings that result from instrumentalizing privacy in this way form a compelling, if abstract argument for democratic conciliation.

If we consider the reliance on personal history of the artists Joseph Beuys and Louise Bourgeois, we might find their work private and esoteric in equal measure. If you know the story that Beuys told of his wartime adventures, regardless of its veracity, you will understand why there is so much fat and felt in his work. What remains, however, is the job of justifying it for yourself as art. If you know about Louise Bourgeois' childhood, you will understand the large spiders and the great lengths of thread in her corpus. As Bourgeois was more conventionally skilled than Beuys, her artistry is also more evident.

Unlike with Nozkowski, where there are no insiders but himself, privacy is enlisted as a form of seduction for both Bourgeois and Beuys. Their knowing viewer — and it's easy to become one — is like an intimate acquainted with private anecdotes that illuminate murky iconographies. If you do not know the stories that these artists told about themselves, if you are not an intimate, you are left to squint at their work's opacity. Meanwhile, initiates marvel at genius overcoming trauma. Which brings me to the final type of obscurity on my list.

Cultural obscurity results when the references in a work belong to a non-mainstream, or non-Western culture unfamiliar to the viewer. In this case, the insider/outsider distinctions are just as stark as in the other forms of obscurity, but they tend more toward the inadvertent, where they are not compounded by contemporary art tropes. For example, an Anishnaabe artist does not necessarily intend to be obscure by referring to her people's creation myth, but that will be the result for those who are not familiar with it.

The growing prevalence of cultural obscurity in art, no doubt the result of identarian aesthetics, also reveals the new, non-dogmatic, non-prescriptive, post-colonial, ecumenical and inclusive spirit of the contemporary art world. Chronologically speaking, this form of obscurity is both the most recent and the most ancient, because cultural misunderstanding has always troubled humanity. As to which we should credit for this very positive development, the new inclusivity of the art world or a taste for cognitive friction that constantly needs replenishing, is an open question.

Feminist art, Queer art, Indigenous contemporary art (the qualification is crucial), art by African Americans and other diasporic practices, new art from various global cultures participating in the great mosaic of the art world, often make references that will not be readily available to a Western audience. If the viewer learns about such cultures - which brings its own pleasures - obscurity can become exclusivity, just as it does in the esoteric, absurdist, fragmentary and private modes.

With the advent of modernism, Westerners put aside the ethnic peculiarities of Europe, not to accommodate foreign sensibilities, but as cultural hygiene to salve Western disenchantment with its own heritage. Whether through philosophy or science, those who had lost faith in their inherited myths and traditions wanted to open the windows and let in fresh air. What would high culture look like if it bore no resemblance to what had come before? What if the very premise and purpose of art were replaced, improved, elevated? Modernists had intended to build a world governed by reason and evidence, but that world has yet to be achieved, because modernists had more than reason and evidence in their baggage. Unfortunately, the obscurity that qualifies so much modernist art has hindered artists from participating effectively in the all-important bourgeois dialectic that

determines the quality of life in liberal democracies and their client economies. Obscurity has a downside.

Emancipated by modernism, artists emphasized the new over the established, and made originality their goal. Having overpowered orthodoxy as a value, the imperative of originality created the ideal conditions for art to accommodate a rich diversity of practices. Clearly defined ideologies are hard to come by in artistic culture today, where ambiguity, ambivalence and especially obscurity join intellectual and aesthetic freedom as core values. Intentionally or not, modern art, and the reverence for originality that it shares with science, set up the conditions by which contemporary art was able to become an inclusive culture on a planetary scale. Both the intelligentsia and the market are now in sync in their enthusiasm for a global art world. And because such a world is also necessarily transcultural, we are now experiencing a great nourishing tide of obscurity.

Nevertheless, although an artist may be from China, Egypt, or Ghana, contemporary art lovers will be familiar with the tropes, tactics, conventions and trends learned in today's art schools, experienced in art museums and illustrated in art magazines, for the time being still predominantly in the West. Though the details of specific cultural references may elude the bulk of the audience, the form and intentions are familiar. Such details can be learned, perhaps by reading an insightful exhibition catalogue or an explanatory wall label, after a sufficient amount of time is spent in pleasant obliviousness.

For those of us familiar with modernist art and its contemporary extensions, a cross-cultural language can be intuited. But modernist aversion to artistic prescription has discouraged the development of a standardized grammar that can be learned outside of experience. Experience, then, is still the great determiner of who gets to be an artistic insider. Consequently, it also supports economic class distinction, as experience is expensive to obtain in art, unlike music or literature. If you do not live in a major art centre; or if you do not have the time and resources required to travel and build a repertoire of direct experience large enough to produce such intuition; or, more typically, if you come from a background where such experience and intuition is deemed irrelevant, modern art will be opaque to you and may feel symptomatic of the class struggle.

Which brings us back to the reasons for obscurity's ascendancy, beyond mere pleasure. If the ever-expanding education industry has shied away from establishing a standard aesthetic grammar for modern art, my guess is that the anti-academicism of its modernist foundations remains sturdy and determining. A violent reaction against the constraints of the aristocratic regime, bourgeois modernism produced a field that still wants neither compass nor map. Human nature being what it is, the insider/outsider dichotomy, a result of modernism's fundamental agonism, is well served by a field that loves obscurity for its own sake, and that uses it as both sword and shield. Perversely, the dichotomy is also very appealing if you oppose the ideal of liberal democracy's illusory classless society. A snob is happy to belong to an exclusive minority, alone in its understanding that much of modern art is not meant to be understood.

But let's try out a more practical and less politically tendentious perspective. To maintain its ancient noble status, art has had to distinguish itself within the modern world's visual field, comprised mostly of superficial decoration, advertising, signage, pictographic instructions, pornography, all meant to be assimilated immediately. Obscurity slows assimilation. Slowing down the viewer by troubling the synaptic network between eye and mind has been a fruitful strategy for art, a guarantee of its distinction and a good path to its continued elevation. Conveniently, it undergirds a market that rewards novelty, scarcity and the extended "use value" of the inscrutable object. A work that holds its mystery stands a better chance of holding its value. In a consumer economy, the rare and increasingly valuable thing is the attractive product that resists definitive consumption.

There is yet another reason why obscurity has had such appeal, one that may give it renewed vigour as a new wave of insurgent calls for social justice faces an energized populism, causing upheaval within liberal democracies. An important new battleground for the left is on questions of decorum, taste and etiquette where modernist art has a solid history of antagonism. Freedom of expression, sacrosanct to liberal democrats, seems as illusive as ever in a time when a wrong word, a stupid joke or "unwanted attention" can instantly transform a hero into a pariah. Just as taboo subject matter was encrypted in modernist literature — think of Proust, Faulkner, Joyce, Eliot, and Woolf — obscurity provides its own encryption and its own quiet resistance. If art is a safe place to be unknowing, obscurity makes it also a safe place for candour.

If the left has made a provisional truce with a vanguard culture that still wants to "épater le bourgeois," modernist art continues to resist invitations to be socially instrumental. Its association with "bourgeois decadence," from the point of view of the traditional left, may seem old hat for the moment, given what we know of art's dialectical agonism within bourgeois society. But it is not a stable peace, as the left regroups for a different kind of revolution, one that implicates' art museums for the first time in decades. Although he abandoned abstraction in favour of a socially engaged return to iconography, it is precisely Philip Guston's fidelity to modernist obscurity, the ambiguity of his message to all but his knowing audience, that has recently frightened art museum directors into postponing his retrospective.

The fate of modernist obscurity, like the fate of modernism itself, is anyone's guess. From my perspective, it still has psychology, precedence and its own relatively robust economy going for it. The day that artists find a way to make compelling and relevant works of art that do not rely on the methods of obscurity, they will have finally become postmodernists. <>

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