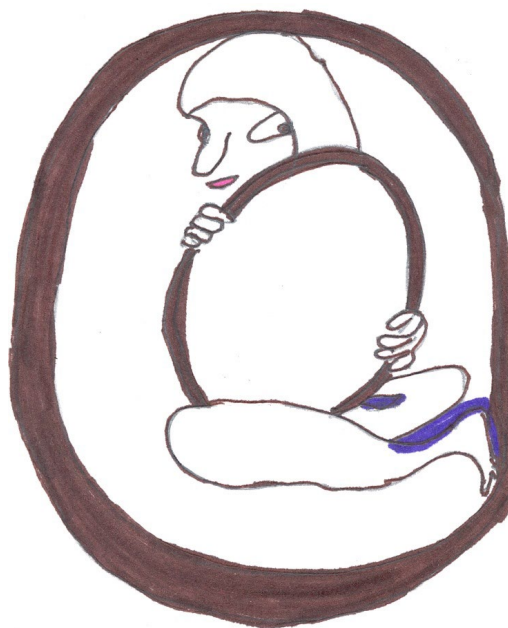


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# SCRIPTABLE

A Bispectral Review of Recent Books



Robert Tenor, editor  
6-15-2022

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## EDITORIAL

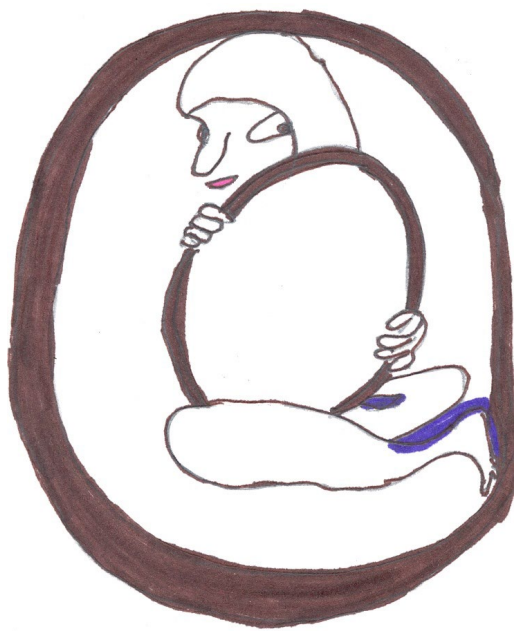
[Scriptable](#) is an irregular review of what was once called the belles-lettres, where we essay upon a wide assortment of current books and articles with an eye open for “the beautiful jumble of discordant congruencies” derived from the authors and titles under discussion. We cast a wide academic net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

With this number we move away from simple reportage of current scholarship to something more ambitious. The body of each issue includes editorial essays examining themes inspired by the works under consideration. The sum of our reviews are carefully pruned excerpts from the books themselves so as to preview the style and technicality of the text itself.

Our purpose is to inform and entertain. Through the review essays we hope to visit new and timeworn places through unsettled ideas in currency newly minted. Perhaps to see the outlandish as intimate and to show up the familiar as stranger than before thought. Each issue should surprise.



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## **WE ARE NOT ANIMALS: INDIGENOUS POLITICS OF SURVIVAL, REBELLION, AND RECONSTITUTION IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY CALIFORNIA** by Martin Rizzo-Martinez and Valentin Lopez [University of Nebraska Press, 9781496219626]

By examining historical records and drawing on oral histories and the work of anthropologists, archaeologists, ecologists, and psychologists, *We Are Not Animals* sets out to answer questions regarding who the Indigenous people in the Santa Cruz region were and how they survived through the nineteenth century. Between 1770 and 1900 the linguistically and culturally diverse Ohlone and Yokuts tribes adapted to and expressed themselves politically and culturally through three distinct colonial encounters with Spain, Mexico, and the United States. In **WE ARE NOT ANIMALS** Martin Rizzo-Martinez traces tribal, familial, and kinship networks through the missions' chancery registry records to reveal stories of individuals and families and shows how ethnic and tribal differences and politics shaped strategies of survival within the diverse population that came to live at Mission Santa

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Cruz.

**WE ARE NOT ANIMALS** illuminates the stories of Indigenous individuals and families to reveal how Indigenous politics informed each of their choices within a context of immense loss and violent disruption.

**Editorial Appraisal by Vincent Charles:** **WE ARE NOT ANIMALS** is a superb study of the different Native American peoples corralled at Spanish Mission Santa Cruz from 1791 to 1831, and how they endured and responded to their incredibly horrific treatment under the Spanish and succeeding Mexican (1821-1846/48) and American regimes in order to survive as distinct tribal peoples down to today. Martin Rizzo-Martinez is to be congratulated.

Santa Cruz, California, lies at the north end of Monterey Bay and is within the greater San Francisco Bay Area. Today the city of Santa Cruz, in Santa Cruz County, is the home of the University of California, Santa Cruz, whose mascot is the banana slug. Together with the county's redwood forests and inviting beaches, the area is a popular recreation locale. Indeed the city of Santa Cruz sports a seaside rollercoaster amusement park Santa Cruz owes its origin to the Spanish founding of Mission Santa Cruz by Franciscan priests in 1791 and to the founding of the nearby pueblo of Branciforte in 1797.

The highlight of both Native American and "White" histories of Santa Cruz has to be the assassination of the extremely sadistic Fr. Quintana in 1812 by some of his Native neophytes. It happened on the eve of Quintana's receiving a made-to-order steel tipped cat-o'-nine-tails with which he hoped to inflict even greater harm on his frequently and capriciously flogged Indian neophytes. The slaying of Fr. Quintana has been well known to serious students of the California mission era since the American half of the nineteenth century though some readers of **WE ARE NOT ANIMALS** may not have been previously aware of it.

Together with the killing of Quintana, Rizzo-Martinez' revelations about the cruelties and exploitiveness of the Spanish, Mexican, and American regimes will no doubt shock some readers. Thus, the tribal peoples were rounded up and herded to Mission Santa Cruz much like Native peoples everywhere in the State. The peoples at Santa Cruz have endured forced relocations, loss of tribal lands and Mexican land grants and, for the Yokuts of the San Joaquin Valley at Santa Cruz, loss of American reservation lands. The Native peoples at Santa Cruz have suffered severe population losses due to overcrowded housing, devastating illnesses, inhumane treatment by Spanish, Mexican, and American settlers, suicides, and murders. Yet the Ohlonean and Yokutsan connected to Santa Cruz have survived as distinct tribal ethnicities today. In order to recount this ignoble history of the "Whites" and the Tribal peoples' response, Rizzo-Martinez wrote neither a "bleeding heart" nor a "woke" book. Instead, he brought together statistical summaries from mission, American, and other records as well as extensive extracts from and citations of published and unpublished sources. Rizzo-Martinez' seemingly exhaustive summaries of cases are much of the "meat" of the 269-page narrative, 162 pages of notes, 37 pages of bibliography, 30 pages of statistical data (between) p 174-175) and 5 charts (pages 112, 113, 168, 169).

Like other new wave ethnohistorians in California, Rizzo-Martinez focuses on the Native peoples' relations with and survival under foreign invaders and dominators. Consequently, he gives equal or greater weight to Native testimony from published and unpublished sources (especially from John P. Harrington's field notes) as well as the family traditions of the Ohlonean Amah Mutsun Tribal Chair Valentin Lopez and Amah Mutsun Tribal Historian Ed Ketchum. The author's oral histories of the Ohlonean Awaswas (the tribe originally on the site of Santa Cruz) and Yokuts were taken from previously published and unpublished interviews. Rizzo-Martinez stressed that he was telling the

Natives' story by giving people and places their Ohlonean or Yokutean names followed by the Spanish or English names in parentheses. Unfortunately, he did not provide a pronunciation guide.

**WE ARE NOT ANIMALS** is a difficult book to read and to review. The narrative is densely packed with information, including unfamiliar place names, tribal names, settlement names, and personal names. Though the book promises to treat "the politics of survival, rebellion, and reconstitution," Rizzo-Martinez demonstrates how the people adapted to the everchanging non-Indian landscape by playing each administrative system to the best grim advantage. He does this through analytic methods that reveal the surprising strength and continuity of family ties. Both the narrative and endnotes are loaded with family-tree information and what in other contexts might seem gossipy details of relationships and such. This invaluable data on families makes the book a slow read. Casual readers might prefer to read the topic sentences and summaries which make the author's points. Moreover, the endnotes must be appreciated because many are short little essays. For examples, with respect to Native aggression toward oghish padres (p. 136), one end, note remarks:

Rumors of poisonings were common, and a few cases of successful poisonings are recorded, such as the poisoning of three padres at Mission San Miguel [near Salinas] in 1801, and the killing of Padre Jose Pedro Panto by his cook, Nazario, at Mission San Diego in November 1811 (p. 349n<sup>167</sup>, of 349n<sup>161-166</sup>).

**WE ARE NOT ANIMALS** is plainly written without obvious jargon. However, the word "Indigenous" is overworked though both Valentin Lopez and Ed Ketchum employed the word "Indian" without a patronizing or pejorative connotation (e.g. xiii, xi<sup>^</sup>, 259). The dangling participle, "Returning to the story of Asisara," (p. 194) should perhaps have been rewritten, "To return to the story of Asisara," (Lorenzo Asisara was an Ohlonean Awaswas whose oral history was recorded in the late nineteenth century). A typographic error in the Bibliography (p. 463) misprints the name of the author Stanger, Frank M. as "Stranger"—the work cited is by Stanger and Alan K. Brown, *Who Discovered the Golden Gate*, 1969. Otherwise Rizzo-Martinez book seems remarkably free of editorial infelicities.

All in all, **WE ARE NOT ANIMALS** is a must read for California specialists in several fields and areas of interest. If the general reader applies himself or herself to work through

Rizzo-Martinez' text, with its many quotations from Harrington's unpublished interviews with the Amah Mutsun, Maria Asencion Solorsano and from other Native accounts, he or she will come away with a much richer and better understanding of the human spirit. <>

## Review

"Deeply researched and fresh in conception, methodology, and breadth, **WE ARE NOT ANIMALS** is a major contribution to the study of Native California and the missions. . . . In a singular and exceptional way among historians, Martin Rizzo-Martinez identifies Native people by name, family, and tribe and he follows the survivors of the Amah Mutsun nation through the American genocide of the late nineteenth century."—Lisbeth Haas, professor of history at the University of California, Santa Cruz

"Rizzo-Martinez unearths Native voices from the archive to provide an overdue historical account of the Indigenous experience in Santa Cruz and surrounding region. By decentering colonial institutions like the missions and non-Native voices, Rizzo-Martinez effectively places Indigenous space and knowledge at the center of this study, a valuable model for future scholars of the Native experience in California."—Yve Chavez (Tongva), assistant professor of history of art and visual culture at the University of California, Santa Cruz

"Both heartbreaking and inspiring, **WE ARE NOT ANIMALS** is a history of destruction as well as of California Indian survival against great odds. Rizzo-Martinez has written a deeply researched study of Indigenous peoples in Santa Cruz and surrounding areas that improves our understanding of Native American experiences in California as a whole."—Benjamin

Madley, author of *An American Genocide: The United States and the California Indian Catastrophe, 1846–1873*

“**WE ARE NOT ANIMALS** is an important book in California mission studies, deploying established sources and a significant, frequently overlooked one—Confirmation records—to reveal Indian community building inside the mission to which Franciscans were oblivious. Rizzo-Martinez effectively demonstrates how Indians exploited the mission system for their own ends and carries the story through early California statehood, challenging previous interpretations that missionization had extinguished Indian culture. **WE ARE NOT ANIMALS** marks the arrival of a sophisticated scholar to the conversations about early California history.”—James A. Sandos, Farquhar Professor of the American Southwest, Emeritus, University of Redlands

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My name is Valentin Lopez, and I am the chair of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band. Our tribe is composed of the descendants of the Indigenous peoples taken to Missions San Juan Bautista and Santa Cruz in Central California.

The true history of California missions has never been told. In 1820 the last padre presidente of the California mission system, Friar Mariano Payeras, wrote to his superiors in Mexico City that Alta California had been "deserted and depopulated of Indians within a century of its discovery and conquest by the Spaniards." In his words the missionary priests had "baptized them, administered the sacraments to them and buried them." Payeras sought a better explanation that the Franciscans could use as an alibi to "shelter us from slander and sarcasm," when the terrible impacts of the missions in Alta California were looked back upon.

To this day, in elementary schools and mission museums throughout California, you will be told that the Indians came to the missions voluntarily—the Indians came to find a better life, the Indians came to learn agriculture, or the Indians came to find God. These are all lies.

Growing up, I learned from our tribal elders that Mission Santa Cruz was the most brutal of all twenty-one California missions and that the life expectancy after arriving at the mission was less than two years. I heard stories of a sadistic priest who enjoyed whipping and torturing the Indians, oftentimes bringing the Indians to near death. I learned later that his name was Friar Andres

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Quintana. As a youth, I heard that the Indians strangled and killed this priest, crushing his testicles in the process. We believed there was a very specific payback message in this act.

The Spanish and Franciscans believed Indian culture and spirituality had nothing of value to offer. They acted as if Indians did not have souls and therefore were not human beings. Because of this, when the Indians were enslaved, whipped, raped, and killed, it wasn't a sin. Approximately thirty tribes were taken to Mission Santa Cruz. and to my knowledge my lineage is the only one that has survived to the present day.

As our tribe continues a process of truth telling, we uncover lost details of our family histories and stories. Recently, I learned that although I have ancestors who lived at Mission Santa Cruz and another ancestor is recognized as the last speaker of the Awaswas language. they do not descend from Awaswas territory (the traditional territory of the Indians who lived in the vicinity of Santa Cruz). Upon learning that our tribe may not have direct ties to Awaswas territory, we have made great effort to be transparent about this new information.

Not only has the true history of the California mission period never been told; the true history of the Mexican and American periods in California has never been told either. All three periods of brutal colonization included efforts to destroy and dominate California Indian culture, spirituality, environments, and humanity. In 1900 the population of California Indians had decreased by over 96 percent from the time of first contact. Many tribes completely disappeared.

Often when I'm speaking to the public about our tribe, I'll ask: "How were our ancestors supposed to teach their children to be happy, to know how to love, to have confidence and optimism? How could our ancestors teach their children to fulfill their sacred obligation to take care of Mother Earth and all living things? How could they learn their ceremonies, learn how to take care of their food, medicine, and basketry plants when every day was a struggle for their survival?"

During mission times our ancestors couldn't teach these sacred and self-esteem-building qualities to their children. Parents were often forcibly separated from their children and threatened with violence, restricting important intergenerational relationships. These conditions continued for over one hundred years and through many generations. As a consequence, our people have suffered from historic trauma, which has resulted in addiction, suicide, depression, poverty, and incarceration.

In 2011 our tribe began holding bimonthly wellness meetings to address this trauma. We have learned at our meetings that to heal from historic trauma, it's important that the truth of our tragic history be told. For this reason our tribe is immensely grateful to Dr. Martin Rizzo-Martinez for his research on Mission Santa Cruz, his doctoral work, and this book, *We Are Not Animals*. We appreciate that Martin worked closely with our tribal historian, Ed Ketchum, to incorporate key additional information from our tribal oral histories into this text.

Martin shows how historians can play an important role in telling truthful history, supporting Native communities, and contributing to the healing process of a tribe that has suffered generations of historic trauma.

Our tribe is appalled by the way the State of California and the Catholic Church ignore true history, glorifying and honoring devastating falsehoods while promoting the missions as idyllic tourist destinations for economic gain. Today many restaurants, hotels, museums, and other enterprises in California benefit from these harmful narratives.

Throughout California there are many symbols that are intended to celebrate the mission period, such as the ubiquitous El Camino Real mission bell markers and statues of Junipero Serra, the founder of the California mission system. To our tribal citizens these symbols are constant

reminders of the near-total extermination of our ancestors in an attempt to erase our Native culture, spirituality, and environments. As our tribe speaks out against these symbols of destruction, domination, and genocide and advocates for their removal from public displays, Martin has stood alongside us in support.

Over the strong objections of numerous California tribes, including ours, the Catholic Church canonized Junipero Serra in 2015. By granting sainthood to Serra, the church effectively declared that the actions Serra took to destroy and dominate Indigenous culture, spirituality, and environments were saintly and worthy of emulation by those who want entry into heaven. As the accounts in this book clearly demonstrate, the behavior and ideology of those who founded and presided over the missions was anything but saintly.

Ascension Solorsano, an important leader of our tribe who passed away in 1929, had a saying that went, "A lie is a lie until the truth arrives." It is time for the truth of mission history to be told.

\*\*\*

### How They Killed a Serpent That Lived in the Santa Cruz Mountains

There was a snake in the Santa Cruz Mountains, and there was a redwood tree, and it already had the tree smooth, smooth from climbing up that tree so much to get sight of people. That snake did not eat people a few at a time but he got them all in a bunch. Ah, but the Indians were smart to make their defenses, you will see. It used to climb up and it just stayed there spying, and when it saw many people there far away in the plains occupied with their harvests of seeds and acorns or whatever they could find, it gave a very loud whistle and down at once it came and it went dragging itself quick as the devil to where they were, and it surrounded them and caught them all in the loop, and squeezed them and ate them up.

That animal lived in the sea. And there it was for many years just killing, killing the people and they could not do anything to it, and it already was finishing them off.

Now just see, the story is not going to be long. The people got to thinking how to escape and how they might kill it (the snake). Then they set the women to making baskets, large enough to cover up a hole which would hold a man. And that animal that used to come forth had its time to come forth, I do not remember but think it was in the morning when it used to come out. And then the men were removing the trees and clearing the ground, so that it would be like a clear and smooth plain, and the women making the baskets, and the men clearing the ground, and when they had already cleared away everything well, they started making holes that they could get into and not be seen. And when they had already finished the baskets and the holes, then the men went to get into the holes, and every one carried his basket and placed it beside the hole. And others of the men went to hide themselves in the woods around about there. They knew at what time the snake would come out. And when he ascended the tree he gave a whistle, and down he came thither he went where the people were. The men were standing beside the holes, so that the snake would see them, waiting for it to come to eat them up. And the rest of the men were hidden in the woods, behind the trees, ready to help those that were standing by the holes and baskets. And those that were standing there beside the holes had their weapons and those [who] were in the woods also had their weapons. And when the snake came and surrounded them, the men who were beside the holes all got into the holes, and covered themselves over with the baskets and the snake came and surrounded them, and crushed all the baskets to pieces, and the men who were in the woods came jumping out with their bows and knives and they all attacked it, and those who were inside the holes were also stabbing it from below, and some of them brought strong tobacco and they were throwing handfuls of tobacco into its mouth when it would open its mouth. Well, they killed it.

Well, when they killed that snake, when the Indians came gathering together from everywhere, for they were afraid that that snake would resuscitate the same as One Leg resuscitated. And they cut it all to pieces, and all of them ate it, they ate it up among themselves, they did not give it to the ants, and thus it was that the Indians of Santa Cruz put an end to that snake. And it did not come to life again.

When I first read "How They Killed a Serpent That Lived in the Santa Cruz Mountains," I interpreted the story as a possible reference to Indigenous collaboration against the threat of Spanish colonialism and disruption. After sharing my doctoral work with Amah Mutsun tribal historian Ed Ketchum, the great-grandson of Solórzano, he was quick to point out that this story predated Spanish colonial occupation and more likely spoke to a conflict from long ago, a "conflict between the snake clan and other clans that dominated the Santa Cruz Mountain area." Of course, this makes much more sense and speaks to the existing Indigenous politics and histories that long predate the colonial histories of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. My initial reading of this story made the common mistake of centering the story with the Spanish, interpreting the story to be a response to colonial powers. I was seeing Indigenous histories as a reaction to others, instead of recognizing that Indigenous people's actions, responses, and motivations were informed by their own histories and politics, which stretch back over millennia. With his critique and shared perspective on this story, Ketchum helped to point out my misinterpretation and to remind me of the larger focus of this study.

This is a book about Indigenous politics. It is about the politics of survival, resistance, rebellion, and perseverance through the nineteenth century, focusing on the stories and perspectives of Indigenous tribes, families, and individuals from the region that is today called Santa Cruz County. While the Indigenous people discussed in these chapters clearly struggled with the steady onslaught of disruption, relocation, and at times genocidal colonial policies that included militaristic engagement by Spanish, Mexican, and U.S. soldiers, they persevered and made decisions informed by their own histories, values, and cultural perspectives. This book aims to tell this history from Indigenous perspectives, privileging the voices of Indigenous people, found in oral histories along with other sources, rather than those of the colonists who for far too long have held center stage in historical studies of California. In doing so, the chapters of this book examine this history with an emphasis on stories of rebellion, resistance, and, ultimately, survival, all of which meant different things for a diversity of Indigenous tribes, families, and perspectives.

The key to writing this book has been listening. The stories that I am writing about in this book are not my own stories or that of my family. As I am a historian who does not trace his lineage back to the Indigenous people of this study, it is absolutely imperative that I listen and learn from locale descendants. Listening to contemporary Native people like Ketchum, Arab Mutsun tribal chair Valentin Lopez, and others helps me better understand the importance of this history today and how these historical issues and struggles continue to inform ongoing battles to protect sacred spaces and advocate for the tribe. This listening includes centering the oral histories of Mission Santa Cruz survivor Lorenzo Asisara, who gave three interviews in the 1870-5 and 1880s. Asisara's stories are among the very few Indigenous voices recorded from someone who lived in a California mission, and his stories convey traumas but emphasize moments of rebellion and resistance. This book draws on the interviews of Maria Ascención Solórzano, recorded by John P. Harrington in 1930. Solórzano's stories are used throughout this book to give insight into historical events and dynamics. The multigenerational oral histories of Asisara, Ketchum, Lopez, and Solórzano are all crucial sources that inform this study, and I put these stories in dialogue with archival sources to shed light on Indigenous perspectives of this history and to counterbalance the colonial archives. These oral histories focus on stories of trauma and disruption and yet highlight Indigenous responses and



rebellions, acts of resistance and perseverance. Following the lead of these stories, this book does the same.

My methodology also includes listening critically to non-Native sources. The most important of these are the thousands of baptismal, godparentage, marriage, confirmation, and burial records that were written and kept by the Franciscan missionaries but heavily informed by Native peoples. I argue that these chancery records indeed constitute an Indigenous archive: the information contained within them illuminates important values like kinship and family ties and reveals clues about larger dynamics and inner workings. While the Franciscan missionaries technically may have physically written these documents, the individual records were informed by the Indigenous peoples who supplied the *padres* with the information to record. For this study I built my own database to include thousands of records relating to Indigenous people from Santa Cruz and neighboring communities, enabling me to follow patterns of movement, kinship, and tribal relations that transcend mission boundaries.

Drawing on my database of these records, I have been able to make connections between individuals, families, kinship networks, and tribes. These stories challenge the narratives left by the settler colonial societies that have predominantly written the histories of California. By interconnecting the data from these records with stories and information given in the Spanish, Mexican, and U.S. archives, along with the previously mentioned oral histories, I have been able to reconstruct stories and to recognize connections across mission communities. The Franciscan sacramental records are crucial to any study of Indigenous California. This book helps to explore the boundaries of these records, as throughout I suggest new ways of reading them. There is still much more that can be done with these records, new stories and connections that will be illuminated by historians in the coming years.

By centering on the perspectives of local Indigenous people, this book seeks to explore how they understood these times. I grapple with questions such as: How did they make sense of their circumstances and situations? How did they understand the changing world around them? How did their long histories and knowledge inform their decisions and choices? To answer these questions, I followed the lead of scholars, many of them Indigenous, calling for decolonizing methodologies. This endeavor includes the privileging of Indigenous voices, focusing on Indigenous categories and epistemologies, as well as understanding the fundamental differences in worldview and culture between local Indigenous people and the colonizing occupying society. Such an approach requires recognizing that Indigenous oral histories describe a different world altogether than the one experienced by the colonizers who wrote the vast majority of the early accounts of this period. While both colonizers and Indigenous peoples inhabited the same physical space, the colonizing perspective, informed by the long Spanish history of colonial relations throughout the hemisphere, failed to recognize the existing Indigenous landscape. To write a history that does not repeat the same colonial projections requires a constant diligence in questioning and challenging colonial assumptions, much in the way that Ketchum offered in his ongoing and generous critique and feedback. This approach results in a retelling of the California mission myth, this time from the perspective of Indigenous peoples, although the scope of this book extends well beyond the mission era. In order to accomplish this retelling, my methodological approach also draws on insights from disciplines that are better equipped to address these categories, including archaeology, anthropology, ecology, and psychology.

My research is informed by works of ecologists who have focused on understanding Native land-management practices, often referred to as Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), arguing for a deeper understanding of the impact of geographic and ecological reorganization on Native networks of knowledge. Similarly, important questions about historical and transgenerational trauma help lend

understanding to the impact of colonial violence and disruption. Colonial occupation of California involved a process of corporal and psychological violence perpetrated against Indigenous people. Contemporary studies suggest that these kinds of traumas literally reshape the body and brain, causing disruptions that often pass to subsequent generations and help explain incidences of addiction, depression, detachment, violence, and other coping mechanisms. Disciplines such as archaeology and anthropology can allow for a closer understanding of Indigenous practices and culture than historical sources may afford." Right now is an exciting time in the field, as a new wave of archaeologists have been articulating a more dynamic understanding of mission communities. My work is in dialogue with many of the exciting new studies in archaeology, such as the work of Tim Schneider and Lee Panich, studies that have focused on the "archaeology of persistence." These scholars argue for a more fluid and plural understanding of ethnicity and culture, one that recognizes that ethnicity is "dynamic and continually in transformation in relation to ever-changing social conditions." These types of studies help us approach the archives with a sensitivity to the Indigenous world inhabited at the time of Spanish colonization and occupation...

The first chapter of this book examines the initial movement of local Indigenous people into Mission Santa Cruz. By first tracing out the Indigenous landscape of the region, I found that preexisting alliances and rivalries helped to inform reasons for relocation to Mission Santa Cruz. I argue that in this time of little choice, a diversity of Native peoples made decisions of vital importance for themselves, their families, and their kin. Indigenous families and leaders responded to Spanish colonialism in diverse ways. Leaders from the rival Aptos and Uypi tribes vied for power and standing within the mission community, while the northern-lying Quiroste, the largest and strongest of the local tribes, offered shelter and formed alliances with fugitives. This pan-tribal group, led by leaders such as Ochole and Charquin, attacked the mission two years after its founding. This Quiroste-led rebellion was one of very few direct attacks on a mission during this period. Indigenous leaders made their choices based on preexisting political dynamics. Chapter 1 ends in 1798, the last year of significant baptism of local Awaswas speakers. In response to the Quiroste-led attack, new padres arrived with harsher, more aggressive methods of conversion. Within a few years padres and soldiers had relocated the vast majority of local tribes to the mission.

Chapter 2 reveals the formation of hybrid political, social, gender, and economic roles within the expanding and diversifying mission community between 1798 and 1810. In these years Spanish soldiers extended their colonial campaign by inducting Mutsun-speaking Ohlone tribes from farther east. These tribes felt the impact of ecological, economic, and political disruption by Spanish colonial settlements and responded to these changes in a variety of ways. The Ausaima actively challenged the Spanish and the Native youth who came of age during these years, many of whom became leaders within the mission and worked in collaboration with the missionaries. This was a period of increasing conflict, as many of these villagers challenged Spanish relocations, engaging in small-scale warfare, raids on cattle and livestock, and other acts of resistance. Those who joined the mission blended Spanish and Indigenous economic, spiritual, social, and political practices. They became sacristan (sextons), pajes (pages), and padrinos (godparents); through godparentage they built and expanded kinship relations. Some became musicians, weavers, masons, carpenters, laborers, farmers, shoemakers, tailors, or cooks. Indigenous leaders continued to exert influence, often through elected mission alcaldes (mayors). This chapter ends in 1810, when the last of the large groups of Mutsun people came to the mission.

The 1812 assassination of Padre Andres Quintana, the only successful assassination of a padre in the Northern California missions, is the subject of chapter 3. My research reveals that this incident was much more than an isolated moment of rebellion. At the center of this story is an Indigenous woman, Yaquenonsat, a spiritual and political leader from Mutsun territory. She brought with her the strategy she had learned from inland tribes. Through marriage she joined herself and her Sumus



people with a kinship group of Awaswas-speaking Ohlone, which included some of the first families that had arrived in the earliest days of the mission. The assassination was a response to the specific cruelties of Padre Quintana. This close examination of the families and tribes involved reveals the persistence of female leadership and patterns of interconnection between Indigenous communities both within neighboring missions and outside. Overall, this chapter reveals how local Indigenous people developed and communicated strategies of resistance across the greater Bay Area.

Newly arrived Yokuts leaders filled the vacuum left after the arrest of the assassination conspirators. This transition and the impact of these Yokuts tribal people is the focus of chapter 4. This chapter covers the years between 1810 and 1834, a time of Indigenous fugitives, horse thieves, cattle raiders, and military recovery excursions into Yokuts territories. California transitioned politically to Mexican governance during this time, which led to consequences for the mission and Indigenous people. Arriving Yokuts joined Awaswas- and Mutsun-speaking Ohlone but carved out their own political and social roles within the mission. Some of these Yokuts, such as Chief Malimin (Coletto) and his sons, worked closely with the padres, tracking down fugitives and supervising others. Indigenous people made choices regarding their interactions with the padres. And yet they made these choices within a larger context of social, psychological, and corporal domination by the padres, as the succession of abusive padres continued. Furthermore, while some of these incoming men received a degree of power within the mission community, women continued to be abused by certain padres.

Secularization and emancipation, which began in the early 1830s, is the focus of chapter 5. In Santa Cruz, despite Mexican policies abolishing racial categories and establishing Indigenous citizenship, rights for Indigenous people were slow in coming. It wasn't until 1839 that a few Indigenous members of the mission received small plots of land. Following emancipation, two distinct communities formed in lands adjacent to the mission. The political shifts discussed in chapter 4 helped shape the formation of these two Indigenous communities, as the Yokuts leaders and their kin received the Potrero—the lands behind the mission that would in later years become known as the local reservation. The Sayanta man Geronimo Chugiut and his Awaswas-speaking kin lived in the resourcerich Westside of Santa Cruz, the second community that emerged. The 1840s were a decade when some former mission residents gained small parcels of land, a limited degree of citizenship, and partial entry into the larger economic and social world of the local Californios.

Indigenous survival through the early years of U.S. statehood is the focus of chapters 6 and 7. As California became a U.S. state, in 1850, Indigenous people first became a minority of the overall local population. As Santa Cruz grew into an industrial city, more and more people moved into the area, eclipsing the couple hundred Indigenous survivors. Under American political rule, the social category of Indian collapsed to envelop Californios and Indigenous people in one singular underclass, excluded from legal and human rights and targeted by lynching and persecution. Chapter 6 focuses on the changing status of Indians in the era of U.S. occupation and the contrast between genocidal policies and the fascination of early ethnographers in celebrating the so-called vanishing Indian. Chapter 7 looks at the Potrero, the last remaining "reservation" on former mission lands. The Potrero remained an Indigenous space until the early 1880s, and this chapter traces the stories of families that survived through this era and moved into places like Watsonville to survive beyond the occupation of Potrero lands by incoming colonizers. In Santa Cruz, Native families responded to these threats with a variety of survival strategies—including passing as Mexican, relocation, arson, searching out nearby Native communities, and continuing to draw on traditional spiritual songs, dances, and sweat lodges for healing and strength.

Ultimately, this book offers new methodological approaches to the study of Native California, innovations that could similarly speak to studies of colonization, early nationalism, borderlands

studies, and Indigenous studies. My research reveals a dynamic Indigenous world that existed beyond the gaze or understanding of the missionaries, soldiers, and explorers who settled and colonized the region. Indigenous leaders and families negotiated new alliances and kinship networks, engaged in disputes or conflicts based on long-standing rivalries, and otherwise learned about, shared with, and engaged with other Indigenous peoples. This dynamic world of Indigenous politics and negotiation helped shape the history and development of Santa Cruz as it grew into a city. Despite the complex web of Indigenous politics that helped shape this history, today it remains barely visible, most notably commemorated in town and street names such as Aptos, Soquel, and Zayante. Meanwhile, contemporary descendants of these Indigenous families remain on the peripheries of U.S. society. My book seeks to challenge this erasure by revealing their rich and important Indigenous history, overlooked for far too long. This is a story of the strength and resiliency of these families, who persevered and innovated in order to survive and carry on their traditions.

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The twenty-first century has the potential to be one of revitalized Native American presence in Santa Cruz, the greater San Francisco Bay Area, throughout California, and beyond. The canonization of Junipero Serra in 2015, while celebrating the California mission era, also invigorated an already growing sense of Indigenous Californian pride and identity. In the fall of that year, the San Fernando-based Tataviam woman Caroline Ward and her son, Kagen Holland, embarked on a "780-mile pilgrimage to each of the twenty-one California Missions, to honor the Indigenous ancestors who suffered and perished in the Mission system and assert California Indian rejection of sainthood for Junipero Serra." Along the way they met with Indigenous Californian leaders, elders, and community members, the vast majority of whom enthusiastically supported the group's message. At each mission they held ceremonies and shared stories of the ancestors, fostered by the offerings of diverse members of regional Indigenous communities who joined the walkers. The gatherings testified to the fact that Native Californians endured, persevered, and remain. The pilgrimage has inspired ongoing conversations and communications across the state between the diverse contemporary Indigenous Californian communities that share a common history of survival and trauma from the last 250-plus years. Today we are fortunate to have more and more Indigenous academics and new approaches to the archives that embrace Indigenous epistemologies, categories, and methodologies as well as methods drawn from a variety of fields ranging from anthropology to genocide studies to medical history. These new studies have the potential to help bring this history to light and, most importantly, support the efforts of contemporary Indigenous Californian communities. It is my hope that by illuminating these important histories and recognizing the strength and tenacity of the Indigenous families that fought against great odds in times of tremendous loss and upheaval, we can all learn to better understand the history of these lands and peoples, learn to listen to and honor the descendants of these families, and ultimately to recognize that the incredible work being done today by contemporary Indigenous Californian communities is a testament to the strength and ingenuity of their ancestors. <>

## **AFTER LOCKDOWN: A METAMORPHOSIS by Bruno Latour, translated by and Julie Rose [Polity, 9781509550029]**

After the harrowing experience of the pandemic and lockdown, both states and individuals have been searching for ways to exit the crisis, many hoping to return as soon as possible to 'the world as it was before the pandemic'. But there is another way to learn the lessons of this ordeal: as inhabitants of the earth, we may not be able to exit lockdown so easily after all, since the global health crisis is embedded in another larger and more serious crisis – that brought about by the New Climate Regime. Learning to live in lockdown might be an opportunity to be seized: a dress-

rehearsal for the climate mutation, an opportunity to understand at last where we – inhabitants of the earth – live, what kind of place 'earth' is and how we will be able to orient ourselves and exist in this world in the years to come. We might finally be able to explore the land in which we live, together with all other living beings, begin to understand the true nature of the climate mutation we are living through and discover what kind of freedom is possible – a freedom differently situated and differently understood.

In this sequel to his bestselling book **DOWN TO EARTH**, Bruno Latour provides a compass for this necessary re-orientation of our lives, outlining the metaphysics of confinement and deconfinement with which we will all be obliged to come to terms by the strange times in which we are living.

## Review

"astonishing meditation" **New York Times**

"In *After Lockdown*, the French philosopher and anthropologist Bruno Latour takes a more radical stance. With the current pandemic we experience a dress-rehearsal for what climate change has in store, he thinks. So, we'd better learn to re-orient ourselves and take stock of our lives. For that, we need a new compass, an entirely different cosmology, he claims – different, that is, from the metaphysics which provides the basic conceptual framework of most modern thought." **The Montreal Review**

"In *After Lockdown: A Metamorphosis*, Bruno Latour explores how the experience of lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic has led us to better understand our connections with other living beings, in ways that might be conducive to confronting our climate crisis. This book will be of interest to anyone wanting to explore the philosophical meanings of lockdowns, Gaia theories and climate politics." **LSE Review of Books**

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## Scattering in All Directions

It's really weird, I know, to want to draw lessons from this repeat lockdown to the point of turning it into an almost metaphysical experience. And yet, it is indeed the physical — meta-, infra-, para- — that we're dealing with, because this ordeal has forced us to acknowledge that we don't yet know where we've been locked-down; that we don't feel the consistency, the resistance, the physiology, the resonance, the combining, the overlap, the properties or materiality of the things that surround us, the same way we used to do. While the Moderns hoped to change times, now they're obliged to re-learn how to situate themselves in space. Only two years ago, we organised seminars to try to probe the sources of insensitivity to the climate issue. Now, everyone knows that it is indeed an

issue; but that doesn't mean we know how to react to it. This is because, behind the political question — 'What can we do? How can we get out of this?' — another question has cropped up: 'Where the hell are we?' Thanks to the lockdown and even to these horrible masks that swallow up our faces and suffocate us, we've come to feel that behind the political crisis, a cosmological crisis has erupted. We never have encountered an 'inert thing', no more in the city, where everything is the work of living things, than in the country, where everything preserves traces of the action of living things.

This is not the first time this has happened, of course. The future industrial nations went through many mutations of the same order, especially at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. That's when those nations were dragged out of the old finite cosmos, where they felt like they were lying around confined, before being sent hurtling into the infinite Universe outlined by the violent seizure of the 'New World', a violence intensified by the stupefying discoveries made by scientists from Copernicus to Newton. Everything had to be overhauled — the law, politics, architecture, poetry, music, government and, of course, the sciences — to cope with this initial metamorphosis. And to accept the idea that the earth, having become a planet among others, had started turning. Ever since Galileo, the idea had indeed been that we were going to live in another world: the Universe, transferred, grafted, transplanted on to earth. But Earth is made of quite different matter. Yet another world revealed beneath the other world. Will history close in on itself once more? It's a history full of pitfalls. How can we curl up in this particular history without losing the plot?

The world is turning, once more, today, but this time on and by itself, and we find ourselves again in the middle of it, slotted in, confined in it, stuck in the critical zone, without being in any way able to make the same great gesture of liberation. I feel more like a load anymore. Following the logic of lockdown, they're all about envelopment. How can we hang on to the idea of liberation if we have to accept slotting into, engaging in such contests? It's easy to understand the temptation to go back to being old-fashioned humans and to stick to the previous metamorphosis, the one offered by the 'Great Discoveries' celebrating escape to the infinite cosmos.

And yet — this is what's so amazing — we're all already there. We've all already mutated without realising, since the political horizon, what's known as the 'international order', is completely defined, explicitly and quite openly, by the challenge of maintaining the envelope in which present history unfolds, in a sphere, in a bubble, between limits, the limits defined for the moment by the famous two-degree rise in global temperature. The New Climate Regime is in fact a new political regime. You wouldn't think so, looking at national politics, and yet global politics has already tipped over to this other world that the confined have had a foretaste of and the deconfined are discovering with alarm. It's a world they will never leave, curved, circumscribed, held together by a sort of membrane, tent, sky, yes, atmosphere, conditioned air, which they'll have to live inside, among agencies that will never again take the form of a landscape of 'inert things'.

Amazing lag: while international politics has already shifted radically, the scientific source of this understanding of soil remains obscure. More than obscure: almost unutterable. And yet, why make those famous 'two degrees' the goal to be obtained by every global, national, local or personal decision, if the proof were not already surreptitiously accepted that Earth is indeed the hazardous product of a machinery of living things that has till now provided conditions of liveability and that we sense, through thousands of vague experiences, is today undermined by our actions? For us to be so scared of damaging it, we must have accepted as obvious fact the existence of a sort of fabulous 'thermostat' whose dial 'humanity' — that unlikely actor! — has access to in order to regulate it. A double feedback loop, the first involving living beings able to create their own conditions of existence, into which the second feedback loop is slotted: the action of these living beings among

others that are so close and so different, friends and enemies, industrialised humans, on those same conditions of liveability. Double lockdown, double envelopment, double muddle.

Earth, or Gaia, is already organising the political horizon while its scientific existence is unknown, scorned or denied and its metaphysical consequences remain invisible. Drawing a parallel between the earth that turns in Galileo's sense and the earth that turns on itself in the sense meant by James Lovelock and Lynn Margulis, as I try to do in a hundred different ways with Frederique Ait-Touati, means creating a bit of a scandal every time. For once, official policy — the famous climate accords — is ahead of scientific mindsets. People go on behaving as if it were a mere stroke of luck that organisms 'adapt' to their environment, as if they hadn't provided the latter for themselves, by making it favourable when it wasn't. And, consequently, as if they couldn't, in their turn, make it favourable or unfavourable depending on the action of these living beings among others that are human beings — living beings much too much in a hurry. It's not surprising that common sense is in tatters.

They're asking us to act as if we were living with Earth, when they're doing everything they can to see that we move out of it. Bit of a contradictory order! Regime crisis, indeed, if what we mean by that is that it's all about a planetary regime.

Earth exercises an authority that thwarts, disrupts, contests the modes of sovereignty of the nation-states that organised the carving up of land in the modern era. Oh no, it's not a matter of a sovereignty from above that's swooped down and globalised those of the states into a single incontestable power, a sort of ersatz 'global government'. It's that Earth is not global. Its mode of behaving, of expansion, of contamination has scarcely changed since the first bacteria succeeded in covering our ancestral planet with a film a few centimetres thick. This film has got thicker, bigger, more spread out, but always step by step, so that after four and a half billion years, it has still not exceeded the few kilometres of the critical zone. This particular contamination, this viral form of behaviour, simply can't be accommodated in the dazzling emblems of power imagined by the empires. No palace, pyramid, codex, prison, colonnade, dome or globe. No religion. No deification.

And yet, there is certainly the exercise, multifaceted and multiscaled, of that form of power that devolves on those who can describe themselves, collectively, as *autonomes* and *autochthones*. Autotrophs can only describe themselves, strictly speaking, as being from Gaia, the planet we can't overshoot and can never leave. In that sense, then, it's sovereign. But this sovereignty comes from below and through step-by-step concatenation. In spite of the presence of forms of the globe that always slip into its representation and are all borrowed from human empires, Earth is in no way englobing. We are confined to it but it's not a prison, it's just that we're rolled up in it. Freeing ourselves doesn't mean getting out of it. It means exploring its implications, folds, overlaps, entanglements.

There's no doubt that this extension of Gaia obliges us to divide up the forms of sovereignty that the states once monopolised. As if Gaia peeled them off, one after the other, so as to better redistribute them. Nothing surprising about that, since the delineation of political beings depends on the old cosmology, the one that held sway in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in the days of Bodin and Hobbs. That's precisely the scale — in kilometres — that the nation-state tried to establish once and for all by squaring out the planet — in the old sense of a planetary body seen from above — through a cobbling together of countries in conflict or committed to fragile alliances. It's this localisation from above that lockdown has allowed every one of us to contest.

Well, terrestrials employ a different scale, that of connected lifeforms, which obliges them to constantly thwart, and, so, call into question, for each subject, the relationship between the small and the big, the demarcated and the interlinked, the swift and the slow. Since nothing involving Earth

keeps inside state borders, and the international covers only a minuscule part of the stakes, the change in regime forces us to figure out what boils down to protection, to justice, to the police, or to trade, without necessarily condensing this within a national enclosure. All conflicts between Extractors and Menders are over such a redistribution of powers. Territories in desperate need of recognition are always on both sides of every border. Overshooting the limit of the notion of a limit is the new way of breaking free.

Curiously, in its way of proceeding from case to case, the law most closely resembles these forms of progressive and fragile universalisation. What, Earth's Law, the law of Gaia, the proper noun? Yes, a law that has always existed, which historians and anthropologists find traces of everywhere, but which has been ignored because it doesn't resemble either 'natural law' — 'nature' never having offered terrestrials a model — or the law of empires. A weak law, then, but one that is genuinely sovereign, the law that imposes limits on the notions of limits, the *nomos* of all the others. Motherland of law? Sanctissima Tellus, still impossible to recognise, to establish, but already present everywhere, from the moment terrestrials are no longer 'outside' but inside what overshoots them and continues to provide for them.

But, then, in wanting to celebrate this lockdown, in striving to place us under the sovereignty of Gaia, admit that you [vous] want to put an end to our history, yes, be honest and come out with it, to take our breath away, and even, to put it more brutally, castrate us. Where is innovation? Where is creativity? How are we going to recover luxury, comfort, prosperity? How are we going to go on celebrating that cherished word, freedom?

The Menders are tempted to reply: 'But who told you [vous] that terrestrials aren't also looking to prosper? Who says that we, too, don't want to be free, free at last to leave the place you've tried to lock us down in? If there's something we industrialised humans share with Gaia, it's not nature but artifice, the capacity to invent, the capacity not to obey laws other than the ones we've

made for ourselves. Strangely, it's through technology that we best capture this inventive, scattered, modest, yes, modest, power that is Gaia's. Earth is not green, it's not primitive, it's not intact, it's not "natural". It's artificial through and through. We can feel ourselves vibrating with it in the city every bit as much as in the country, in a laboratory every bit as much as in the jungle. Nothing in the original conditions made its extension necessary, inevitable. Nothing in the current conditions make its continuation necessary, inevitable. It's in every innovation, in the details of every structure, of every machine, of every device, that Earth's intensity is most clearly revealed. For eons lifeforms turned only just a few of the original conditions to their advantage. The ingenuity of human beings keeps this whole process going, by mobilising more and more combinations of atoms, by going further and further down Mendeleev's Periodic Table. That doesn't make this ingenuity an enemy, quite the opposite. Innovation and artifice are what makes the world go around. Injustice and crime stem from the carefree attitude that makes people feel they can ignore the limits but not learn how to turn them round, because that's something that bacteria, lichens, plants, trees, forests, ants, baboons, wolves and even Vinciane Despret's octopus friends have been able to do just as well.'

So where does it lie, then, this sickness that has paralysed our capacities for invention by orienting them in a single direction offshore? Obviously, it lies in this strange perversion that strives to orient invention towards a single goal by overshooting the limits so we can be hurtled out of this world instead of turning those limits round; or, even more perverse, that strives to set up heaven on earth. Two forms. The first is the pseudo-religious one of exiting this world, the other the pseudo-secular one of introducing heaven on earth. That was Ivan Illich's terrible warning: 'the corruption of the best is the worst'. That's not how Gaia was extended, prolonged, complicated, established. It's because Gaia wasn't seeking any goal that it ended up partly regulating itself. It opens out, breaks up, disperses. By forcing us to forge ahead, by dreaming we'll become post-humans, by imagining we're



about to live 'like gods', can't you [vows] see that you're depriving us of the sole power of reorientation there is: groping, testing, going back over our failures, exploring? In the old world, it might have made sense to forge ahead, to make our way towards some Omega Point. But if we've tipped over into the new world, gone back inside living conditions whose remains we're obliged to mend, then the most important movement is to be able to scatter in all directions. If only we had the time.

So, you've [vows] landed, you've crashed, you've extricated yourself from ground zero, you're advancing, masked, your voice barely audible: like Gregor's, like mine, it's a sort of mumbling. 'Where am I?' What to do? Go straight ahead, as Descartes advised those lost in a forest? No! You should scatter as much as you can, fan Out, explore all your capacities for survival, conspire, as hard as you can, with the agencies that have made the places you've landed on habitable. Under the canopy of the heavens, now heavy again, other humans mingled with other materials form other peoples with other living things. They are freeing themselves at last. They're coming out of lockdown. They're being metamorphosed. <>

## **POLICE, PROVOCATION, POLITICS:** **COUNTERINSURGENCY IN ISTANBUL** by Deniz Yonucu [Series: Police/Worlds: Studies in Security, Crime, and Governance, Cornell University Press, 9781501762154]

In **POLICE, PROVOCATION, POLITICS**, Deniz Yonucu presents a counterintuitive analysis of contemporary policing practices, focusing particular attention on the incitement of counterviolence, perpetual conflict, and ethnosectarian discord by the state security apparatus.

Situating Turkish policing within a global context and combining archival work and oral history narratives with ethnographic research, Yonucu demonstrates how counterinsurgency strategies from the Cold War and decolonial eras continue to inform contemporary urban policing in Istanbul. Shedding light on counterinsurgency's affect-and-emotion-generating divisive techniques and urban dimensions, Yonucu shows how counterinsurgent policing strategies work to intervene in the organization of political dissent in a way that both counters existing alignments among dissident populations and prevents emergent ones.

Yonucu suggests that in the places where racialized and dissident populations live, provocations of counterviolence and conflict by state security agents as well as their containment of both cannot be considered disruptions of social order. Instead, they can only be conceptualized as forms of governance and policing designed to manage actual or potential rebellious populations.

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Growing up in a working-class neighborhood of Istanbul in the 1980s, I often heard stories about the socialist movement of the 1970s; about the strikes organized in the factories near us; and, just before the coup of 1980, about the clashes on our streets between revolutionaries and Turkish nationalists. These stories were told quietly and behind closed doors as tales from a very distant past, as if all the neighborhood workers who had organized mass strikes and factory occupations, taken part in demonstrations, and filled up the ranks of the revolutionary organizations had nothing to do with our current neighbors. Those must have been different people living in the neighborhood in the 1970s, I thought; they must all have moved away. As a child I could feel the fear in the air whenever adults would speak of those years. Later, when I became a teenager, I heard frequent minilectures from adults in the neighborhood about the dangers of politics. For them, even talk of politics could put one in danger—best stay clear of it altogether.

When in 1994 I began attending high school in another neighborhood, I was surprised to discover that there were people in Turkey who believed that the revolutionary struggle was still alive, and they considered themselves to be part of the struggle. These were my Alevi schoolmates and their university student sisters and brothers, from predominately Alevi-populated working-class neighborhoods. My friends described for me the barricades, the checkpoints, the house raids, and the armored military vehicles patrolling their neighborhoods. Listening to their stories, I understood that the urban experience in these areas was radically different from the one I had witnessed in my own predominantly Sunni Turkish-populated working-class neighborhood.

In the winter of 1995, a high school Alevi friend took me to her neighborhood. Like my own neighborhood, the streets were muddy, and the houses were either makeshift cement block shanties (*gecekondus*) or incomplete apartment buildings. The main difference was that in her neighborhood, every single wall was spray-painted with slogans: “Long live the united struggle of the Turkish and Kurdish peoples,” “Long live the revolution and socialism,” “The murderous state will pay the price,” “The people’s justice will call [the government] to account.” My friend took me to a café where she hung out regularly with her friends. While drinking tea together that day, I listened to high school students debating the possible paths to revolution. In my subsequent visits to my friend’s neighborhood, I often found myself listening to and participating in heated conversations on the difference between democratic revolution and socialist revolution, the disputes between Rosa Luxemburg and Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, the possibility of the establishment of a free and socialist Kurdistan, and philosophical debates on Marxism, historical materialism, and dialectics. We were listening to popular Turkish and Kurdish revolutionary music bands of the time, such as Grup Yorum, Grup Kızılırmak, Grup Özgürlük Türküsü, or Koma Dengê Azadî, whose lyrics promised that the victory of the working classes and the Kurdish liberation was at hand. At the time, my Sunni Turk working-class peers were listening to popular American music from MTV—Vanilla Ice, Meat Loaf, New Kids on the Block—or to Turkish pop and sad Turkish arabesk songs that depicted the misery of life in working-class neighborhoods. Some were developing an interest in religion, others in drugs.

Although my high school friends and I were optimistic about the future in those years, the 1990s, like the present, were dark times in Turkey. Kidnappings of revolutionary leftist and pro-Kurdish activists, disappearances, torture, and deaths in custody were common both in Northern Kurdistan (also known as southeast Turkey) and Istanbul. When we were still in high school, some of my



friends were imprisoned, others were forced to leave the country, and many experienced firsthand various forms of police violence. Yet, such intimidating methods were not effective in suppressing the dissent. I remember how shocked and fearful I was in June 1995 when I learned that a number of my friends from high school had joined thousands of others at the funeral of Sibel Yalçın, an eighteen- year- old revolutionary militant killed by the police after taking part in an armed action that resulted in the killing of a policeman. I also cannot forget my shock that year when I saw hundreds of young people dancing and chanting *Rojbas, gerilla rojbas* (Good days, guerrilla good days) in Kurmanji Kurdish, during a concert I attended with my high school friends at Abdi İpekçi Sport Hall, a large Istanbul stadium near my own neighborhood. While the people in my neighborhood were afraid to discuss the old revolutionary days of the 1970s in public, thousands at that stadium that night were listening to dissident music bands and chanting their support for Kurdish guerrillas fighting against the Turkish state. The enormous gulf between the attitudes of the people in my neighborhood who, once upon a time had played an active role in the leftist working- class movement, and the Kurdish and Alevi working classes who filled that concert hall with exuberant revolutionary fervor was beyond my comprehension.

After my visits to my Alevi high school friend's neighborhood in the early to mid-1990s, the next time I went to another such neighborhood was in March 1998, when I went to the Gazi neighborhood to participate in an anniversary demonstration organized to protest the killings of twenty-two people by state security forces three years earlier. A friend from Gazi told me that the entrance to the neighborhood would be closed during the day of the protest and that I should go there the night before the event. I remember asking myself, "How could the entrance to a neighborhood be closed? It's not as though it has gates." Following the suggestion of my friend, I went there the night before the protest and stayed with his family. I still remember the dinner conversation about what the police would do the next day. Listening to his family members talk about the police as a violent enemy ready to attack the people, I realized that the next day would be an exceptional one for me.

I will never forget what I saw when I stepped out of the house the next morning. Large numbers of masked policemen from special operation units were standing on the rooftops of the buildings, pointing their rifles downward toward the streets. Masked policemen with heavy weapons were standing at the street entrances. The presence of these faceless black figures told us that the only law in Gazi that day was the law of the Police— the untouchable, godlike side of the law that has the right to decide to kill or let live. I was full of fear and thought I might easily die that day. The police were there at that anniversary protest of the killing of Gazi residents to remind us that death was never far away; instead, it was an imminent possibility. I overheard that there had already been clashes between the police and people who had wanted to enter the neighborhood. Watching a military vehicle chasing a group of youth, I understood how the entrance of a neighborhood could be closed. I saw the gates of the neighborhood and witnessed its armed gatekeepers. I wanted to run away, to get out of the neighborhood as fast as I could. But there were thousands in the streets, walking calmly despite the threatening presence of the state security forces. I felt embarrassed by my fear.

Two years later, in 2000, I traveled to Mardin, a city in Northern Kurdistan, to conduct research for my bachelor's thesis in sociology. The entrances and exits to the Mardin streets inhabited by dispossessed Kurds were guarded by black- masked and armed policemen from the special operation units. I spent hours and days with Kurdish women talking about their lives and various forms of violence that they had experienced. Listening to the stories of these Kurdish women while those threatening men were outside, I again felt both afraid and embarrassed by my fear. I remembered what I had witnessed in Gazi in 1998 and how I had felt there. I was convinced that the Turkish ruling

elites were actively and relentlessly waging war against Turkey's dispossessed and racialized Alevi and Kurdish populations.

What I witnessed more than two decades ago in the Alevi working-class neighborhoods of Istanbul and in Northern Kurdistan has haunted me ever since. It is that story of the systematic police repression and fearless political resistance of Turkey's Alevis and Kurds that I now feel obliged to write.

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## The Space and Psyche

In this book, I show how provocative counterorganization operates on the ground in Istanbul's predominantly Alevi-populated working-class neighborhoods. I pay special attention to its spatial and affective dynamics and their effects on dissident identities and practices. If the population is the main target of the counterinsurgency, its two main axes are space and the psyche. Security is a two-way sociospatial phenomenon that is at once produced and reproduced in and through sociospatial relations, processes, and practices and that itself produces, shapes, and transforms space. As Eyal Weizman has demonstrated in his work on the Israeli security state, counterinsurgency, instead of destroying what security agents perceive as a "hostile space," reorganizes it in line with its counterorganization aims. At the same time and in relation to this reorganization, it aims to transform political subjectivities and practices within the targeted space.

This book traces the transformation of Devrimova from the late 1970s when it was a sanctuary space built by and for the country's racialized, hence most vulnerable, workers into a low-intensity conflict zone and a sectarian enclave since the mid-1990s. I illustrate how counterinsurgency and its provocative dimensions have become manifest and operate in this space with the aim of countering and reorganizing dissident activities and subjectivities. Police forces' hit-and-run tactics, the targeting of Alevi spaces and bodies, gang and drug dealing activities in the neighborhoods, the selective targeting of the most community minded revolutionaries by the anti-terror laws and violent interpellations—which I define as calls to a specific subject position and a specific identification made through performative acts of state or state-backed violence—work to incite defensive counterviolence, exaggerate sectarian cleavages, and contain revolutionary activity and violence in the neighborhoods.

Known as a "dirty war", counterinsurgency and its elusive security strategies rely very heavily on shadowy intelligence agents: undercover police, agents provocateurs, spies, and informants. The infiltration of such agents into dissident groups and communities and the coercion of individuals into collusion undoubtedly intervene in, shape, and inform dissident practices and subjectivities. Yet, counterinsurgency's elusive practices and its so-called "psychological warfare" also entail various affect-and-emotion-generating strategies employed by state security forces and the mass media. To separate dissident groups from their base of supporters, to drive a wedge between and among dissident communities and isolate them from the so-called passive majority, counterinsurgency relies on what Joseph Masco calls "affective infrastructures": "historically produced, shared, and officially constituted, sanctioned, and promoted feelings that are deployed as instruments for coordinating citizens as members of a national security state." In his work on the links between the Cold War and the War on Terror in the United States, Masco argues that the official sanctioning and promotion of the effects of fear, anger, and terror by ruling elites are critical to how affective infrastructures produce and maintain a docile public. Indeed, in this book, feelings of fear, terror, rage, and insecurity play an important role. But in this book, rather than the production of docility, I am interested in the ways in which affect-and-emotion-generating provocative counter-organizational strategies work to effect a broad range of counterorganizational aims: the strengthening of already existing ethnosectarian and ethnonational cleavages in Turkey, the mobilization of left-wing groups

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against one another, the creation of intergenerational conflict within working- class Alevi communities, the militarization of revolutionary youth, the continuation of low- intensity conflict in the neighborhoods, and, last but not least, the effective colonization of the political space through policing.

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### Culture-Centric Warfare and Ethnographic Refusal

Ethnographic insights into racialized and dissident communities can wind up serving the ends of the policing of such communities. As indicated in NATO's 2011 Allied Joint Doctrine for Counterinsurgency, counterinsurgency's "culture-centric warfare" (Gregory 2008) requires "intimate knowledge" of those dissident communities being policed and an ethnographic "close reading" (Kilcullen 2007, 8) of their local cultures. In parallel with counterinsurgency's recent "cultural turn," the police in Turkey also began to take a special interest in anthropological studies. A significant number of Turkish police officers have studied anthropology and completed their PhDs in anthropology departments in Turkey or in Europe and the United States within the last decade. Alongside urban ethnography's "historically fraught practice" (Ralph 2015, 442) in reproducing "colonial tropes" (449) and further stigmatizing the racialized urban poor, counterinsurgency's ever-growing interest in anthropology makes ethical questions all the more important for anthropologists who work with and among racialized and dispossessed populations who suffer from overt and covert forms of police violence.<sup>41</sup> Bearing such concerns in mind, in this book, I deliberately refrain from providing detailed ethnographic information and intimate knowledge of the local culture and people that might potentially aid in the policing of the neighborhoods. In other words, I engage in an ethnographic refusal, an ethnographic calculus of "what you need to know and what I refuse to write". My focus is instead on the structural violence, state security practices, and their colonial legacies that lead both to the criminalization of the racialized Alevi and Kurdish urban working classes and to their involvement in violence.

### Organization of the Book

The first chapter, "The Possibility of Politics: People's Committees, Sanctuary Spaces, and Dissensus," historicizes the establishment in the 1970s of Devrimova and other such neighborhoods by revolutionaries as sanctuary spaces for socialist workers. Treating Devrimova's short yet oft-recalled experience of local self-governance, this chapter elaborates on the Rancièrian concept of politics as antithetical to policing. It demonstrates how the people's committee experience was an active "world-building practice" that allowed Devrimovans to come together "in action and speech" to open up political space for transformative disagreements. This experience helped many Devrimovans fashion themselves as political actors capable of challenging their ascribed roles in the policed distribution of the sensible), including by mounting challenges to gender and class hierarchies. The chapter also illustrates how the Alevi cultural archive of oppression and resistance, as well as historical Alevi practices of informal lawmaking, helped vernacularize communist politics among working- class Alevi communities in 1970s Turkey. Finally, it shows how Cold War counterinsurgency strategies informed Turkey's war on communism.

The first half of chapter 2, "Gazas of Istanbul": Threatening Alliances and Militarized Spatial Control," examines the leftist revival and reemergence of outlawed revolutionary groups, some of which became allies of the PKK, at the end of the 1980s and the early 1990s. It illustrates how the mutually constitutive relationship between the experience of absolute injustice, the desire for justice, and the urge for revenge was effective in galvanizing sympathy among working- class Alevis and Kurds for revolutionary organizations. The second half of the chapter examines the spatial dimensions of counterinsurgency techniques used by the Turkish state in response to this leftist revival.

By highlighting the parallels between the militarized spatial control in Northern Kurdistan and the dissident in working-class neighborhoods of Istanbul, this chapter also illustrates the colonial “boomerang effect” of Turkish state’s spatial counterinsurgency techniques.

Chapter 3, “Provocative Counterorganization: Violent Interpellation, Low-Intensity Conflict, Ethnosectarian Enclaves” opens with the Gazi incidents of 1995 when seventeen people were killed and hundreds wounded as a result of police and military violence in the predominantly Alevi-populated working-class neighborhood of Gazi. Rather than being merely a singular spectacular performance of state violence, the Gazi incidents constituted a “critical event” that gave rise to “new modes of action” and new forms of political agency, both in and beyond the neighborhoods. Paving the way for the “bottom-up reorganization of political forces”, the Gazi incident marked the beginning of a new counterinsurgency strategy in Istanbul that combined overt repressive state violence with urban-centered and affect-and-emotion-generating provocative counterorganization techniques in an attempt to quell growing left-wing mobilization and subvert the Turkish and Kurdish left-wing alignment, which was becoming more cohesive at the time. Informed mainly by the British counterinsurgency in Northern Ireland and the French counterinsurgency in Algeria and using various affective security strategies, these new techniques provoked ethnosectarian cleavages, turned dissident Alevi and Kurdish communities against one another, contained counterviolence in the neighborhoods, marginalized revolutionary organizations in the eyes of their constituency, further racialized Alevis and Kurds as “unruly” people, and resulted in the transformation of these urban spaces into low-intensity conflict zones and ethnosectarian enclaves.

Chapter 4, “Good Vigilantism, Bad Vigilantism: Crime, Community Justice, Mimetic Policing, and the Antiterror Law,” charts the rise by the early 2000s of petty crime, drug dealing, and gang activities in Devrimova and other neighborhoods, shedding light on the repressive and provocative aspects of the newly expanded antiterror law. The chapter elucidates the ways in which, by selectively targeting the most peaceful and cooperative among the revolutionaries, the expanded antiterror law effectively intervened in local politics and space, reconfiguring political space and activity at the local level and continuing the confinement of violence within the neighborhoods. More specifically, it demonstrates the role of the antiterror law, as well as the conspicuous absences and presences of security forces in generating vigilantism in the neighborhoods and then transforming it from a public, participatory, and unarmed form of informal justice to a clandestine, exclusive, and armed one that mimics official policing practices.

Chapter 5, “Inspirational Hauntings: Undercover Police and the Spirits of Solidarity and Resistance,” tackles the affective power of martyrs to inspire a radical refusal of docility and complicity. In Devrimova, the panoptic gaze of the undercover police, the antiterror laws, and police violence do not always manage to compel Devrimovans into a position of compliance. Many Devrimovans—not only revolutionary youth but also others—publicly refuse to collaborate when asked to work as informants. Some openly and defiantly champion outlawed revolutionary groups that have been labeled terrorist organizations. Others—in particular, young men—still engage in public performances of rage. These responses provide ethnographically grounded insight into why, despite its use of extreme forms of state violence, the Turkish ruling elite has since the 1990s managed neither to suppress pro-Kurdish and left-wing dissent nor to eradicate sympathy for revolutionary activism. This chapter demonstrates how what I call inspirational hauntings—the hauntings of past resistance and of rebellious and defiant subjects who seep into the present and serve as encouraging, emboldening political, spiritual, and ethical resources—raise questions related to ethical self-formation (à la Foucault 1988) and inspire many Devrimovans to take an oppositional stance against the Turkish security state, thereby freeing them from the immediacy of fear in the present. The final chapter, “Gezi Uprising: The Long Summer of Solidarity and Resistance and the Great Divide,” addresses the much-cherished yet ephemeral coming together in solidarity that occurred during the

Gezi uprising of 2013, highlighting the parallels between counterinsurgency practices applied during the Gazi incidents of 1995 and those during the Gezi uprising of 2013. It argues that the violence discharged in predominantly Alevis working-class spaces and on working-class Alevis during the Gezi uprisings exposed the continuing significance of these neighborhoods as “spaces of intervention” in the ruling elite’s attempts to counter existing or emerging forms of alignments within Turkey’s left-wing dissident block. This anti-Alevi violence, unleashed at the height of the nationwide uprising, proved to be an effective police intervention in reorganizing and partitioning anti-AKP dissent. Together with the racializing anti-Alevi official and media discourses, this violence triggered historical Alevis fears of massacres, generated an atmosphere of insecurity, and facilitated defensive counterviolence and internal ethno-sectarian conflict in the neighborhoods. It was this combination of strategies and impacts that was effective in colonizing political space in the neighborhoods and effectively dividing and fragmenting anti-AKP dissent along ethno-sectarian and class lines.

The book’s epilogue, “Policing as the Generation of (Dis)Order,” concludes that policing is not only about maintaining social order by managing disorder but also about generating disorder. Generating disorder through what I call provocative counterorganization enables ruling elites to intervene in the organization of dissent in a way that counters existing assemblages and alignments among actual or potentially dissident populations and prevents those that are emergent. Police attempts to maintain order by generating and managing disorder is in fact an enduring legacy of the Cold War counterinsurgency doctrine of low-intensity conflict, which is itself informed by the colonial school of warfare. The epilogue suggests that without taking into account the provocative and partitioning dimensions of counterinsurgent policing as a technique not only of governance but also of anti-politics, it is impossible to fully grasp the violence of dissident, non-state actors. <>

## **UKRAINE’S REVOLT, RUSSIA’S REVENGE by Christopher M. Smith [Brookings Institution Press, 9780815739241]**

**“This firsthand account of contemporary history is key to understanding Russia’s latest assault on its neighbor.”—USA Today**

### **An eyewitness account by a U.S. diplomat of Russia’s brazen attempt to undo the democratic revolution in Ukraine**

Told from the perspective of a U.S. diplomat in Kyiv, this book is the true story of Ukraine’s anti-corruption revolution in 2013–14, Russia’s intervention and invasion of that nation, and the limited role played by the United States. It puts into a readable narrative the previously unpublished reporting by seasoned U.S. diplomatic and military professionals, a wealth of information on Ukrainian high-level and street-level politics, a broad analysis of the international context, and vivid descriptions of people and places in Ukraine during the EuroMaidan Revolution. The book also counters Russia’s disinformation narratives about the revolution and America’s role in it.

While focusing on a single country during a dramatic three-year period, the book’s universal themes—among them, truth versus lies, democracy versus autocracy—possess a broader urgency for our times. That urgency burns particularly hot for the United States and all other countries that are the targets of Russia’s cyber warfare and other forms of political skullduggery.

From his posting in U.S. Embassy Kyiv (2012–14), the author observed and reported first-hand on the EuroMaidan Revolution that wrested power from corrupt pro-Kremlin Ukrainian autocrat Viktor Yanukovich.

The book also details Russia's attempt to abort the Ukrainian revolution through threats, economic pressure, lies, and intimidation. When all of that failed, the Kremlin exacted revenge by annexing Ukraine's territory of Crimea and fomenting and sustaining a hybrid war in eastern Ukraine that has killed more than 13,000 people and continues to this day.

**UKRAINE'S REVOLT, RUSSIA'S REVENGE** is based on the author's own observations and the multitude of reports of his Embassy colleagues who were eyewitnesses to a crucial event in contemporary history.

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The 2013 anti-corruption revolution that saw the ouster of Ukraine's venal president set the trajectory for today's clash between the United States and Russia over the future of democracy globally. A bloody war still tortures eastern Ukraine while the threat of further Russian military intervention looms. Those seeking to understand the seismic events that eventually included a U.S. impeachment inquiry must start by understanding the Euromaidan Revolution and its moral meaning for the Ukrainian people and the world.

Ukraine's Revolt, Russia's Revenge, told from the perspective of a U.S. diplomat who was based in Kyiv at the height of the revolution, puts into a readable narrative previously unpublished reporting by seasoned U.S. diplomatic and military professionals. The book is rich with information on Ukrainian highlevel and street-level politics, a broad analysis of the international context, and vivid descriptions of people and places in Ukraine during the Euromaidan Revolution. In laying out the facts, the book also counters Russia's disinformation narratives about the revolution and America's role in it.

While focusing on a single country during a dramatic three-year period, the book's universal themes—chief among them, truth versus lies and democracy versus autocracy—possess a broader urgency for our times. That urgency burns particularly hot for the United States and all other countries that are the targets of attacks on the democratic norms supporting our way of life.

From his posting at the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv from 2012 to 2014, Chris Smith and his colleagues observed and reported firsthand on the Euromaidan Revolution that flipped the balance of power in Ukraine and changed the trajectory of international politics in ways that are still unfolding.

The book also details Russia's attempts to abort the Ukrainian revolution through threats, economic pressure, lies, and intimidation. When all of that failed, the Kremlin exacted revenge by annexing Ukraine's territory of Crimea and by fomenting and sustaining a hybrid war in eastern Ukraine that has killed more than 13,000 people and continues to this day.

Smith concludes that the events in Ukraine proved the necessity of "values-based foreign policy," both for the rest of the world and for the United States itself.

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One motivation compelled me to write this book. I was never asked by the State Department to take on this work, and my management and colleagues in the US Foreign Service had mixed reactions when I told them about it, ranging from high enthusiasm to cautious skepticism. In short, I was frustrated by the constant lies and distortions about the work of US Embassy Kyiv during the 2013–2014 Euromaidan Revolution—and these lies were coming from the Russian state apparatus. Russian government statements and high-volume, confident Russian media invective constantly implored publics worldwide to believe that the US Embassy was the secret but decisive force behind the Ukrainian protest movement, plotting to thwart Russia’s interests in its own backyard in some sort of geopolitical maneuver. Their distorted mirror presented the Ukrainians as pawns, legitimate Russian interests as innocent targets, and the United States as a hostile interloper with motivations somewhere between a satanic jackal and a cartoonish horror movie villain.

None of this was true, and it congealed into a foundational lie upon which propagandists built fresh new sedimentary layers of deceit. Today in Russia, the falsehood that the United States had some pivotal role in supporting, funding, or even creating Euromaidan as a cynical maneuver against Russia is treated as established truth beyond question. Stacked on top of this were mistruths about Ukraine being run by “fascists,” separatists in eastern Ukraine being local and organic, and much, much more. But having served there at the time in US Embassy Kyiv, I was shocked to realize that many people worldwide believed these crude propaganda hooks. I wanted a way to tell the story of what those at the embassy witnessed and what we did during that time. Russian propaganda organs pressed their disinformation lines constantly, but after the events passed into history, the United States largely remained silent. Because of this, the United States started to lose ground to loudly screamed falsehoods from Russia. I felt that someone needed to give voice to the true story.

I then realized that I had a great asset for telling the real story. The vast majority of the narrative in these pages comes from a single source: the unpublished email archive of US Embassy Kyiv. This archive includes hundreds of thousands of unclassified messages of the “KyivTaskForce” group, a sprawling collective that blasted out messages related to nearly every aspect of the crisis and the US government’s response. Material in this book that is not otherwise attributed comes from this primary source. As a courtesy, in some cases I have used a pseudonym in place of a person’s real name.

While the classified system may also contain a few interesting data points, as the thrust of the US effort in Ukraine was overt, the unclassified archive is the most important way to tell the story in a way that has never been publicly told before. Several other sources were also extremely helpful. My colleague Joseph Rozenshtein’s interviews with US Embassy Kyiv staff members following those fateful events were quite valuable. I also interviewed others to gain clarity on what they had experienced.

Turning hundreds of thousands of emails into a readable narrative took time, and in my case, a bit of luck. In between Foreign Service assignments in Washington and Guangzhou, I had six months before my language training began. I approached the State Department’s Office of the Historian and asked if they could give me a desk and a computer during that time while I attempted to do

something I had never done before and am unlikely to do again—write a book. They gave me what I asked for and so much more, namely the advice of professional historians who helped me to create a useful and engaging narrative out of very raw material. I began in the summer of 2016, and I completed the rough draft by the end of that year. I feel compelled to note that future developments such as US-Ukraine affairs becoming the heart of an American presidential impeachment inquiry would have been completely unbelievable to me as I drafted this text.

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February 21, 2014. A cold, tense night in Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine. The main stage in Maidan Square. For three months Maidan has been the epicenter of a popular rebellion against Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych, who heads a corrupt and increasingly autocratic government. Arseniy Yatsenyuk, Oleh Tyahnybok, and Vitali Klitschko, the three main leaders of the political opposition, make their way to the stage through a crowd of thousands to announce details of a deal for political reorganization and reform that they have just struck with the embattled president.

Just the day before, the mounting tension inside Kyiv and throughout Ukraine had reached its brutal climax in a massacre relentlessly cheered on by the Russian media and government. Russia's Prime Minister Medvedev crudely questioned Yanukovych's manhood, declaring that he was nothing more than a "foot rag" if he hesitated to spill protester blood. Government forces, including expert riflemen, their guns equipped with sniper sights, backed by thuggish pro- government auxiliaries, fired on demonstrators in Kyiv. Many were shot in the back. Sixty- seven were killed, 184 wounded by gunfire. Now the mood in the capital is blacker than the northern winter night. Justice for the dead and a change of regime is what people in Maidan Square demand, not political compromise with a detested and discredited national leader.

As the opposition leaders mount the stage, they are met by jeers, catcalls, and booing. The crowd passes several open caskets of yesterday's victims overhead, their corpses brought to the stage accompanied by chants that Yanukovych must go. Volodymyr Parasyuk, a commander of the popular self- defense forces, a young man from Lviv in his mid- 20s, grabs the microphone and gives an impassioned speech expressing the mood of the crowd. "Our kinsmen have been shot and our leaders shake hands with this killer. This is shameful. Tomorrow, by 10 o'clock, he has to be gone."

Yatsenyuk and Tyahnybok leave the stage, and Klitschko, the six- foot- sixinch former world heavyweight boxing champion turned politician, retakes the microphone. Responding to Parasyuk, he apologizes for shaking Yanukovych's hand after signing the agreement. "If that is the will of Maidan," he says, "I am willing to explore other ways to remove Yanukovych from power." He adds that despite his having sided with the protesters for the past three months, this is the first time they have not listened to him. His attempt at contrition fails. A Hromadske TV journalist confronts the towering Klitschko on stage, calling opposition leaders "betrayers of Euromaidan" and accuses them of signing the agreement without approval of the Maidan Council as previously agreed.

Amid the impassioned screams for Yanukovych's resignation, no one on Maidan or, for that matter in the diplomatic community, yet knows the truth. Yanukovych, the man with a brand new internationally praised agreement that has re- legitimized his rule for the next nine months, is already on the run. He has already been shipping his valuables and cash from Kyiv for days. Yanukovych is not just going, he is gone. <>

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Some days, sitting on Navy Hill across the road from the Foggy Bottom State Department “mothership” in the Office of the Historian, I felt as though I was reliving events while reviewing the endless stream of archived emails. I would return to my home and family in suburban Maryland while I was still mentally back on the streets of Kyiv surrounded by tire fires and confusion, armed only with an aging US government–issued BlackBerry and a diplomatic passport. That was the worthwhile price of truthfully recounting what we lived through.

Everyone involved has a story, some certainly better than mine. But mine is the one I had to tell. If this book places into context what the Euromaidan Revolution meant to those Ukrainians who were engaged in it; if it undoes some of the damage done by slanderous propaganda about these events; if it informs people about the actual work of the Foreign Service; and if it explains the injustices inflicted upon Ukraine by its more powerful neighbor after 2013, then I’m humbly honored to be a part of telling this story. <>

## **DIVINATION ON STAGE: PROPHETIC BODY SIGNS IN EARLY MODERN THEATRE IN SPAIN AND EUROPE by Folke Gernert [De Gruyter, 9783110695748] Open Source**

Magicians, necromancers and astrologers are assiduous characters in the European golden age theatre. This book deals with dramatic characters who act as physiognomists or palm readers in the fictional world and analyses the fictionalisation of physiognomic lore as a practice of divination in early modern Romance theatre from Pietro Aretino and Giordano Bruno to Lope de Vega, Calderón de la Barca and Thomas Corneille.

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Your face, my thane, is a book where men  
May read strange matters (Macbeth)

Theatre and, especially, comedy, which aims at *imitationem vitae* and *speculum consuetudinis* according to the definition Donato puts into Cicero's mouth, is the literary genre which best reflects contemporary attitudes towards the occult arts and science. As a matter of fact, sorcerers, necromancer and astrologers are regular characters in the European and Spanish theatre of the Golden Age. Italy's *commedia erudita*, which provides a new theatrical model in the 16th century, introduces in Ariosto's *Il negromante* the prototype of the cheating magician which was to become highly successful. Whereas much scholarly attention has been paid to magic and astrology' in the theatre, less attention has been paid to the reading of body signs, moles and lines on the forehead and hand.

Most of modern studies on the textualization of physiognomic theories in fiction deal with the narrative literature of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, with particular emphasis on the impact of Lavater. It was above all nineteenth-century realism and its link with approaches from the natural sciences that made researchers interested in the role of physiognomy in the construction of literary characters. The most obvious and most studied case is that of Balzac, Lavater's reader, who repeatedly used these theories, especially when describing the physiognomy of marginalised and criminal individuals. Perez Galdos' interest in physiognomic studies is similar to that of the author of the *Comédie humaine* in Spain. The most studied medieval author with a view to the fictionalization of physiognomy is perhaps Geoffrey Chaucer, followed by the Archpriest of Gita. Regarding the Catalan Middle Ages, we have a well-documented study by Carre that disproves the claims of some researchers concerning the minor importance of physiognomy in medieval narrative. On the other hand, there are very few works dedicated to lyric poetry which, due to its own unoriginal nature, lends itself — as Rodler argues — less to the textualization of physiognomic theories.

With the exception of some isolated allusions to Rabelais and Montaigne, the fictionalization of physiognomy 16th and 17th century literature has not yet received due attention. As far as Spanish literature is concerned, some studies on physiognomy in *Celestina* or authors such as Cervantes, Quevedo and Gracian have been published since Caro Baroja's seminal study.

As far as theatre is concerned, studies on the textualization of physiognomy and chiromancy are rather rare notwithstanding the performative potential of physiognomics which Baumbach insightfully speaks of:

Not only can physiognomic reading be performed, but a specific physiognomy can arise from performance: the 'true' face can be 'masked' by fake expressions, which subvert the natural correspondence between the outer form and inner being. With a heightened awareness of its performative and manipulative aspects, physiognomy moves from the *liber mundi* to the *theatrum mundi*, which makes it accessible to a broader spectrum of disciplines, such as ethics, communication, linguistics, and philosophy, and allows its successful re-entry into the sciences.

The most widely researched author regarding the theatricalization of physiognomic theory and practice is undoubtedly William Shakespeare. Despite the many explicit allusions to physiognomy and chiromancy in Moliere's theatre (*Le manage force*, *L'amour medicine* or *L'Avare*), scholars have paid relatively little attention to this subject in the work of the French playwright. As far as Spanish theatre is concerned, little research has been done on the subject. This book intends to fill this void. It is focused on the analysis of the different forms of interpretation of the human body on the Spanish stage in the Romanic context of the 16th and 17th centuries.

To be able to analyse the reading of body signs in Spanish theatre, it is essential to find out what physiognomic and chiromantic studies were circulating in Spain and were, therefore, available to Spanish playwrights. This entails reviewing the history of physiognomy from the perspective of the history of the (scientific) book and of reading and studying both the different translations of each physiognomist and the dissemination of the manuals in print. It is obvious that texts written in Spanish or translated into Spanish were read in Spain and the number of editions allows us to assess the degree of diffusion they may have had. In the case of manuals in Greek, Latin, French and Italian, printed outside Spain, the panorama of their diffusion is less evident. In the first chapter I will give an overview of the history of physiognomy and chiromancy in order to contextualise the analysis of the plays and their (pseudo)scientific underpinnings historically.

There's no art

To find the mind's construction in the face (*Macbeth*)

The starting point of my study was a revision of the ancient and medieval physiognomic manuals that shared the European book market in the Golden Age with an enormous number of recently created books on disciplines that were considered to be attached to the aforementioned physiognomy, linked to the reading of the body and the hand. It was necessary to determine in some detail which were the different ancient and medieval texts - from Aristotle to Michael Scott - dedicated to the interpretation of body signs in order to trace their diffusion - both in the original Greek and Latin and in the different vernacular translations - in early modern times and thus document the surprising continuity of classical and medieval physiognomic thought. Its knowledge and use lasted longer than one might think; and this is because in spite of the advent of the Cartesian dualist concept, which with the separation of body (*res extensa*) and soul (*res cogitans*) invalidates the conceptual basis said semiotic practices, the legibility of the human body did not cease to be an attractive idea for most of the 17th century. Those materials provided me with a documentary basis to be able to rethink the way in which the golden theatre represents the human body and the extent to which the external aspect of a character is indicative of its interiority and therefore meaningful. A large number of authors from different fields (in the first instance theologians, but also jurists and many scholars with

an academic background in medicine) were determined to condemn or defend physiognomy and to differentiate it from palmistry and metoposcopy. The complex casuistry in which these authors explain themselves is by no means homogeneous, although some arguments such as free will are quite frequently repeated. The controversy about the legitimacy and validity of the reading of the body is also developed on stage where a wide variety of positions are orchestrated. The physiognomists and chiromancers that swarm through the golden theatre draw the attention of the spectators to the complexity of the textual (and extratextual) world, but also to the instability of the knowledge they embody. The characters who are bearers of occult knowledge often become spokesmen for the scepticism of their creators and, as the post-Tridentine struggle against any kind of deterministic approach becomes more insistent, they are increasingly instrumentalised in the fight against heterodoxy; in this sense, the defence of Catholic orthodoxy on the stage reaches its peak in the Calderonian theatre. Physiognomic determinism had to clash with don Pedro's obstinacy in repeatedly staging the dogma of free will with images of great dramatic and aesthetic force. <>

## **THE ALCHEMY OF LIGHT: GEOMETRY AND OPTICS IN LATE RENAISSANCE ALCHEMICAL ILLUSTRATION** by Urszula Szulakowska [Series: *Symbola et Emblemata*, Brill, 9789004116900]

This study concerns the late Renaissance metaphysics of light in its adoption to a Paracelsian alchemical context by John Dee, Heinrich Khunrath, Michael Maier and Robert Fludd. Their alchemical theosophy is contextualised within Protestant reformism of the 1590s to 1620s, specifically that of Valentin Weigel and Johannes Arndt. This results in a re-assessment of the Rosicrucian movement which challenges the existing historiography and problematises the character of the movement. The volume includes fifty illustrations from alchemical treatises of the period, the emphasis being placed on Khunrath's *Amphiteatrum Sapientiae Aeternae* (1595-1609). In an innovative manner, the study investigates these images using analytical tools drawn from semiotics, structuralism and post-structuralism. This method yields an unusual interpretation of the geometry, optical diagrams and spatial structures employed in such alchemical engravings.

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In the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the alchemical references to the celestial spheres and the light of the sun as the agents of God's will involved one fundamental issue. Where was divinity located, within, or without, the human soul and in what manner could the alchemist align himself with that infinite source of power in order to command human affairs? Paracelsus had offered, what appeared to be, the surest resolution to the conflict between an authoritarian external deity and the individual impulses of its subject by positing a cosmic order in which each unit formed a part of the astral body of the demi-urge Anthropos. In this theosophical model, the alchemist through his empathetic understanding of the heavenly spheres could, simultaneously, affect the course of the physical world.

Paracelsian alchemy, thus, muted the distinction between physical and psychic chemistry. Amplified by the luministic cosmogenesis of the cabbalah, in Dee's theories in the 1560s an image of the magus began to emerge whose intellectual light mirrored, not only that of the stars and the sun, but of God's own radiance. In a separate development, Weigel appropriated Paracelsian theosophy to make the same point, phrased in Christian terms, in which Christ became the essential light of the soul, the real nature of each human-being, with the consequence that spiritual wisdom became an innate human faculty, rather than the gift of the Lutheran sacraments. Khunrath merged Dee's image of the illuminated magus with Weigel's alchemical Christ to create an "alchemy of light" which, henceforward, prioritised the inner transformation of the alchemist above that of his chemicals.

In the history of alchemy, perhaps the most important change in its central concepts occurs in the period from the late 1550s to the early 1600s in which appeared Dee's and Khunrath's Paracelsian treatises on the use of astral magic and light-rays in the alchemical process. The interesting aspect of their work is that they were still advocating practical work, as well as contemplative practices involving visual imagery. This is an important point which modern scholarship, influenced by nineteenth century theosophy and Jungian psychology, tends to under-estimate. Most of the authors who have written popularised interpretations of Renaissance alchemical illustration have rarely bothered to read the dense accompanying texts, still less have they attempted to place the visual images in any historical context. Whereas it is true, as previously described, that the pictures were becoming transmuting philosopher's stones in their own right, nevertheless, alchemists such as Dee, Khunrath, Maier and Fludd still involved themselves in practical work. In this, they were, admittedly, seeking a short-cut, setting-up their mirrors and lenses in order to trap God's own divine virtues in their chemicals, through the rays from the stars, a task more suited to their refined image of themselves as philosophers, than the grimy baking and boiling of the medieval alchemists. Even so, their texts reveal that they knew their chemistry and that each specific symbol and phrase represented, as in Fludd's writings, not only a "spiritual" process, but, usually, a practical equivalent.

Historians of chemistry are well-aware of the continuation of practical alchemy into the eighteenth century, the example of Newton's work being only the most famous, but, on the other hand, they have tended to disregard the visual imagery as if this were mere decoration. Hence, between the extremes of the twentieth century theosophists who will not read the texts and the historians of science who will not read the visual imagery, the "alchemy of light" has diminished in significance, since only the study of both the visual and the literary documentation, as well as knowledge of its political context, can reveal the considerable importance of this alchemical concept in the late Renaissance.

The present work has taken an extended historical view of the evolution of Paracelsian astral and solar theurgy and its deployment by German theosophists in the late sixteenth century, as well as by some of their Rosicrucian followers. Such a lengthy overview has necessitated too brief a mention of

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much important contextual history, nor has it been possible to provide an extensive analysis of specific theories. Further study is required to validate many of the suggestions concerning cross-influences and contradictions between the circles of the sixteenth century pietists and hermeticists. Some of this will be possible only when the substantial writings of alchemists, such as Khunrath and Fludd, are provided with a definitive study, followed by modern editions of their works. Moreover, there remains archival work to be undertaken in the hope that manuscript sources will emerge supplying more conclusive evidence about the political affiliations of these alchemists. Above all, it is hoped that future scholars will be prepared to undertake a detailed analysis of the visual illustrations which merit considerably more scrutiny than has been possible in the present study. <>

## **INTO THE DARK NIGHT AND BACK: THE MYSTICAL WRITINGS OF JEAN-JOSEPH SURIN** edited by Moshe Sluhovsky, translated by Patricia M. Ranum, [Jesuit Studies, Brill, 9789004387645]

The French mystic Jean-Joseph Surin (1600–65) was the chief exorcist during the infamous demonic possession in Loudun in 1634–37. During the exorcism, a demon entered Surin's own soul, and the exorcist became demoniac. He spent the following eighteen years of his life mute and paralyzed. All the while his troubled mind conversed with God, and he composed hymns and poems that tried to comprehend his agony. Surin left detailed descriptions of the dramatic events that shaped his life and fascinated his fellow Jesuits. But Surin was also an author of spiritual texts, a spiritual director of souls, a poet, and a prolific correspondent. This volume is the first to offer English readers a comprehensive selection of Surin's mystical writings.

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Jean-Joseph Surin (1600–65), a French Jesuit and mystic, is mostly known today for his involvement in the exorcism of Mother Superior Jeanne des Anges (1602–65). Des Anges was the prioress of the Ursuline convent at Loudun and the main protagonist of the most celebrated case of demonic possession in early modern Europe. In his efforts to exorcise the prioress, Surin developed an original exorcismal technique that brought about des Anges's deliverance from her demons; yet it also attached the demons to Surin himself. Surin spent the following eighteen years of his life in a state of mutism and mental incapacity. While des Anges embarked on a new career as a renowned mystic, Surin was locked up in a small room, paralyzed and tormented by demons, often doubting God and his own salvation. The drama of the exorcist-turned-demoniac became a cause célèbre



among French savants, as well as among fellow Jesuits. While a lively discussion about the causes of Surin's diabolic possession and his mental stability was raging among French intellectuals, Jesuits were embarrassed by the events. For many of them, Surin's dénouement became an example of what was wrong with the growing attraction of some Jesuits to new mystical and contemplative trends that had been gaining popularity and adherents among early seventeenth-century Catholics since the last years of the previous century.

For many observers, the tragedy that befell Surin was not a personal drama but a horrifying example of the pitfalls that await participants of false spirituality and unauthorized techniques of devotion.

Surin, however, was neither just a practicing exorcist-turned-energumen nor a wayward mystic. Both before and after the events in Loudun, he was an active member of the Society of Jesus who heard confessions, participated in missions, and dispensed spiritual advice. And like many Jesuits of his time, he was concurrently pursuing what was referred to in the seventeenth century as the interior life, the quest for spiritual growth through meditation and spiritual exercises. Before his assignment to Loudun, Surin's trajectory resembled that of his peers and nothing distinguished him from other members of the Society of Jesus. Like other young novices and brothers, he was assigned religious duties, cultivated a network of teachers, friends, and colleagues, and started directing souls, mostly women in religion. He wrote very little, mostly letters to family members and a few female advisees. But in Loudun he got to play a major role in a dramatic, even cosmic battle, between God and the devil. God won, employing Surin as his instrument. The young Jesuit was recording the events as they unfolded, writing letters and starting to compose a treatise on the significance of the occurrences. But then, on 1638, he fell prey to the demons and collapsed. It was only after a long hiatus due to this mental breakdown that Surin reemerged in the late 1650s and renewed his spiritual work with abundant energy. In the last years of his life, he wrote numerous poems and religious hymns, a long catechism, spiritual instructional dialogues, and a number of treatises in which he tried to make sense of the dramatic episodes of his life and of what he called the other life. While in some of Surin's works we encounter original interrogations of major themes of early modern Catholic spirituality, among them divine love and the interior life, others (most of his poetry, for example) are banal, even tedious. Some parts of his mystical reflections engaged in innovative ways with the challenges of discerning personal experiences, others (such as his catechism or the fourth section of his treatise on experiential science) echo his tertianship mentor Louis Lallemant's (1578–1635) own reflections on the same issues.

This collection offers, for the first time in English, complete translations of Surin's most important treatises, namely *The Triumph of Divine Love over the Powers of Hell* and *The Experimental Science of the Things of the Other Life*. In addition, we have included translations of some of his letters, especially those that shed light on Surin's unique method of exorcism and his spiritual direction of women. Last but not least, while they are not of the highest literary quality, Surin's poems reflect the penetration of Carmelite spirituality into France during this country's "century of saints." Together, this collection offers English readers an opportunity to encounter one of the more intriguing personalities of the Society of Jesus and of the seventeenth century.

Although Surin has never ceased to fascinate, different historical periods have found him interesting for different reasons. During his lifetime, it was his tragic fate that drew people's attention to him and to his writings, and in the eighteenth century, his spiritual dialogues and poems, perhaps the least original of his works, as well as a thoroughly censored version of his catechism, were used as edifying texts. The medicalization of psychopathology and the conflicts between church and state led nineteenth-century scholars to publish editions of the treatises in which he reported his encounters with demons. The goal of these publications was often to ridicule and attack the Catholic Church and its misdiagnosis of insanity as demonic interventions. For the twentieth century, Surin's writings

offer both a rare first-person description of psychic disintegration and a prime example of the dogmatic struggles in the Society of Jesus (as well as in other religious orders) over matters of obedience and individualism, infused and acquired contemplation, and the discernment of spirits.

The first sections of this short introduction to Surin's life and work follow the mystic's life until the dramatic events at Loudun. The hiatus in his life is metaphorically reproduced in this introduction with two sections that, rather than proceeding chronologically, are devoted to discussions of Surin's mystical practices and to scholars' interpretations of his experiences and writings. It only then describes the mystic's immense productivity in the last years of his life. Surin, we propose, was both a typical representative of his age and an exception. Few had fallen from grace as deeply as he did, and very few have left us with detailed descriptions of the abyss. In his letters, mostly to his female confidantes, Surin revealed all, exposed his soul and his heart, warts and all. And yet, repeating the lament of the prophet Isaiah (24:16), he insisted that his more important secrets must remain hidden: "Secretum meum mihi, Secretum meum mihi." And, indeed, Surin was, has been, and remains a mystery.

### Before Loudun: 1600–37

Jean-Joseph Surin (né Jean de Seurin) was born in Bordeaux in 1600 to a family of parlementaires—people connected with the legal profession in the city. His mother was involved in charitable works and was affiliated with the Carmelites, an order she later joined. As in other parts of France in the seventeenth century, which came to be known as the "century of saints," Bordeaux witnessed a spiritual Catholic revival between 1600 and 1620. The number of religious houses in the city doubled, including monasteries and convents of new or recently reformed orders, among them the Capuchins, Minims, Ursulines, and the discalced Carmelites. Surin grew up, then, in an environment of intense Catholic spirituality, imbued with a sense of triumphalism and recovery following half a century of Protestant ascendancy and devastating civil wars.

In Bordeaux, there was a large Spanish community that included among its members numerous devotees of the recently deceased Spanish mystics Teresa of Ávila (1515–82) and John of the Cross (1542–91). Surin's earliest exposure to spiritual matters took place during his conversations with the Spanish Mother Isabelle des Anges (1565–1644), prioress of the recently established Carmelite convent in Bordeaux, to whose convent young Surin used to escape on weekends. Carmelite Spanish spirituality was to shape not just Surin himself but French, and especially Aquitaine, spirituality in the 1620s and 1630s. In fact, Michel de Certeau (1925–86), the most important scholar of Surin and the man who did the most to revive interest in him in the twentieth century, argued that Surin should be viewed as a major French interpreter of Teresa of Ávila and of John of the Cross. From Teresa of Ávila's spirituality, Surin acquired not only the central role assigned to individual experiences but also the linguistic technique of disclaiming his own personal voice and agency while speaking in the first person, and from her he borrowed much of the vocabulary of passivity. Surin remained attached to Teresa of Ávila throughout his life. From Isabelle des Anges, he once received a relic of the Spanish saint, and, many years later, it was on October 15, Teresa's feast day, that he experienced the most intense depression during his illness and tried to jump from his window. From Teresa, but even more so from John of the Cross, Surin acquired the metaphors he uses to describe meeting divine love through the dark night of self-annihilation. John of the Cross's major writings were translated into French in the 1610s at the initiative of Isabelle des Anges, the same prioress of the Carmelites in Bordeaux whom Surin himself claimed as his first spiritual director.

But Surin was also shaped by the suspicion and even dismissal of Teresa's experiential mysticism. Since his own spiritual experiences, as we shall see, also fell under a cloud, he felt the need to distance his experiences from the femininity of the Carmelite and her followers. His experiences, he



insisted, were not the fashionable fancies (goûts) or the emotionalism of “little women” (femmelettes). “Several speculative thinkers and savants scorn this, and they compare it to the tears and tenderness of certain women. It is something very different, for these are spiritual experiences, real and efficacious experiences that assure the soul and that demonstrate God and divine things to the soul,” he argued.<sup>8</sup> Surin’s protestation notwithstanding, his fragile physical health in his youth, his mental breakdown at the height of his career, and his intense and emotional attachments to his female confidantes set him apart from many Jesuits, and even they, not to mention enemies of the order, often found his manners perplexing.

Surin began his education at the Bordelais Collège de la Madeleine. Writing many years later, he repeatedly recalled the difficulties he experienced at the time. He felt “constrictions” (serrements) and isolation, frequently going through severe periods of fatigue and illness. In 1616, he started his novitiate with the Jesuits in Bordeaux. The Society of Jesus in Aquitaine was divided at the time between two tendencies. Since the last quarter of the previous century, leading Jesuits had been advocating a spiritual reform of the order. The “spiritualist” approach was shaped by new schools of contemplation, especially the recent, or recently translated, innovations of Teresa of Ávila, John of the Cross, Catherine of Siena (1347–80), and John of Ruusbroec (1293/94–1381). In Bordeaux, an internal report sent to the Jesuit headquarters in Rome complained that due to their small number, the brothers did not have enough time to pursue “interior exercises” because of too many “exterior” social and educational obligations. But while the province of Aquitaine was at the forefront of the spiritual reform effort, an opposite tendency, which enjoyed the support of at least two Jesuit superior generals in Rome, Everard Mercurian (1514–80, in office 1573–80) and Claudio Acquaviva (1543–1615, in office 1581–1615), emphasized activism in the world over interior and spiritual pursuits and warned against “illusions” that result from contemplation.<sup>9</sup> Surin, like much of his cohort of young Jesuits in Aquitaine, was very much attracted by the “mystical” tendency. In fact, already as a student, he experienced powerful spiritual encounters. One weekend, which he spent in the Carmelite convent, as was his habit, he underwent an “infusion of light” that “filled his soul and possessed it without any effort on his part.”<sup>10</sup> All of his following spiritual experiences, he wrote much later in life, were nothing but “reminiscences” of this early encounter with the divine. His pursuit of spiritual and mystical experiences was treated as suspect by his superiors, who instructed his teachers to keep an eye on the young novice and make sure that he remained within the bounds of orthodox Jesuit spirituality.

In 1619, Surin started to study philosophy in the Jesuit college of La Flèche, the best Jesuit collège in France, where he stayed for four years. In 1623–25, he studied theology at the Collège de Clermont in Paris, followed by two additional years of theology in Bordeaux, then two years back in Paris (1627–28). It is plausible that his transfer to Paris was due to an attempt to break apart the mystically inclined group of Aquitaine Jesuits. Be that it as it may, he was ordained to the ministry in 1626, and finished his novitiate in 1629 in Rouen, where Lallemant was responsible for the tertianship. He was then assigned to become a priest and a preacher, first in Bordeaux and then in Saintonge. In the latter place, the very heart of the Huguenot stronghold in southwestern France, he was involved, among other activities, in reconverting Calvinists.

## Combating the Devil

The dramatic event that was to reshape the entirety of Surin’s life started in 1632, when the small community of seventeen Ursuline nuns in Loudun became possessed by demons. During exorcisms, conducted mostly by Capuchins, it was revealed that Urbain Grandier (1590–1634), cure of the local parish of Saint-Pierre-du-Marché, had put spells on the nuns and had brought about their possession. Grandier was known as a womanizer. This fact did not prevent (or, perhaps, even encouraged) the prioress Jeanne des Anges from trying to recruit him as a confessor. He declined, and by so doing antagonized both the prioress and other nuns. Since his behavior had already gained him additional

enemies in town, it was not surprising that a large number of accusations against him surfaced. On August 18, 1633, Grandier was found guilty of witchcraft, black magic, and inflicting demonic possession. He was burned alive at the stake the very same day. The nuns, however, remained possessed. Since the Capuchins failed to deliver the nuns from their demons, Cardinal Richelieu (1585–1642), the French prime minister, intervened personally in the affair, and ordered that the Jesuits take over the exorcism. Surin and an additional six Jesuits and two Carmelites were assigned to the job. Surin saw his new responsibility as divinely ordained and, significantly, chose to walk all the way to Loudun, turning it into a pilgrimage to a holy site. He arrived there shortly before Christmas, 1634.

While exorcism was a major drama of combat between forces of good and evil, the medieval church had not developed a set of prescribed practices and adjurations to be used during the ceremony. Traditional rites of exorcism included readings from scripture, invocation of saints, and recitations of holy names and of established formulae that had demonstrated their efficacy against demons in the past. The verbal part of exorcism was accompanied by physical acts, including touching the possessed individual with the stole, spraying holy water, and, often, beating the possessed body to inflict pain on the possessing entity within it. While often conducted in private, during the religious conflicts of sixteenth-century France, exorcism became a major means of religious propaganda, even a theater. Many exorcisms in the second half of the sixteenth century and the early seventeenth century took place in public, with hundreds and at times thousands of eyewitnesses present, something the Catholic Church condemned in theory but encouraged in practice. This was especially the case in Loudun, a city divided between Protestants and Catholics, where the theatrical representation of the struggle between good and evil attracted the attention of many thousands of visitors from all over France and from as far away as England and Italy.

During the exorcism, Surin wrote a large number of letters explaining what he was doing. He later incorporated many of them into his *The Triumph of Divine Love over the Powers of Hell* (*Triomphe de l'amour divin sur les puissances de l'enfer*), a book he started writing in 1636 but did not complete until after his recovery in the 1650s. From the letters and the *Triumph*, we can reconstruct Surin's exorcismal theology and practices. It was even before his arrival that Surin "formed an idea about God's plan. He would tranquilly and patiently apply himself to relieving the souls he would be given, by inculcating into them the maxims of the interior life. And through these maxims, rather than by another way, he would put the demons into an extreme rage" (*Triumph*, chapter I). Persuading the possessed soul to devote itself to prayer and penitence was a better way to combat the devil than the existing apparatus of exorcism, he believed. The way to do it was to talk to the possessed woman about the virtues of the interior life and about divine love: "I shall speak of God and his love into the possessed woman's ears. And if I can make my words enter her heart, I shall win a soul to God," he explained. He wanted "to obtain from God the deliverance of these souls, having first earned his mercy by a total subjection of these souls to God's graces and power" (*Triumph*, chapter I). In her own autobiography, prioress Jeanne des Anges recalled that Surin whispered Psalms and talked in praise of contemplation.

In fact, Surin put to use a method he knew well, namely spiritual direction in its Jesuit mode. In his *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius of Loyola (c.1491–1556) emphasized the importance of spiritual direction as a means to advance in the spiritual route. The director should maintain constant dialogical relations with the person being directed, guarding him or her against deviations from the right way, while assigning specific spiritual exercises according to the practitioner's progress.<sup>15</sup> Just like spiritual direction, which enables the practitioner to gather interior energies and insights to combat exterior distractions and to overcome temptations, Surin believed that cultivating Mother Jeanne des Anges's interiority would enable her to surrender her soul to God and to eject the possessing demons, which would be tormented by their encounter with God's infinite love within the prioress's

soul. Surin's method, then, was based on the cultivation of the soul by adjusting it to complete conformity with God's love and by reducing the soul's activity to monitoring the movements of grace within it. This practice was a transfer, to the realm of demonic possession, of the techniques of discernment of spirits that were commonly used to comprehend divine possession.

While Surin called his method of exorcism an "invention" and a "novelty," it was not, in fact, totally unknown before.<sup>16</sup> Whispering into the ear of demoniacs is mentioned by medieval manuals for exorcists and by a number of Italian exorcists who practiced in the second half of the sixteenth century. Among others, it was recommended by the most prolific and famous Italian exorcist of the period, Girolamo Menghi (1529–1609), in his *The Devil's Scourge* (*Flagellum daemonum*). Alas, we have no way of knowing whether Surin was familiar with this exorcismal practice. But there was much more to Surin's new method. Surin relied on intimate exchanges not only between the exorcist and the energumen but also on the cultivation of combative exchanges with the devil himself. His murmurs were addressed to the mother superior but also to the Evil One. He whispered devotional songs that he himself composed, sung to popular melodies, praising God and Divine Love. But he was whispering adjurations, thus harassing and molesting the demon. The hymns (of poor quality, one must admit), Surin explained, were not merely edifying in and of themselves; they also encouraged the possessed prioress to overcome Satan's hold over her, to surrender herself not to the possessing entity but to Divine Love. And last but not least, the hymns disturbed and annoyed the demons, who were forced to listen to them and recognize the truth contained therein. This new method of harassing demons until they, rather than the energumen, would be exhausted, was a risky technique, as Surin was to realize when he, too, collapsed.

While the first stages of the exorcism were successful, the demons soon organized a counter-attack. Already in January 1635, Surin himself started suffering from demonic obsessions. Serpents started moving in his body and later ran amok within it, preventing him from eating or sleeping. Images of beautiful women appeared in front of his eyes at all hours of the day and night, and soon after, he started cursing God, murmuring incomprehensible sounds, and rolling on the ground, as if possessed by demons. Unsurprisingly, when writing about it later in his life, he quoted the third-century *Life of Saint Anthony the Great* (251–356), thus comparing his trials to those of the saint whose torments by demons came to symbolize both the dangers of, and triumph over, diabolic powers.

His fellow exorcists determined that Jeanne des Anges's demon probably jumped from the prioress's body into his. When he first heard that he was possessed, Surin was delighted. He had already prayed to God to transfer the prioress's demon into his body, and now God fulfilled his wish. Like the possessed nuns, who sacrificed themselves every day in this demonic Calvary in Loudun, he, too, now had the opportunity to imitate Jesus Christ and suffer like him. Little did he know at the time that his agony was going to last many years, or that the experience would serve as a foundational experience for a new mystical theology.

One could argue that in his eighteen-year long retreat into infantile aphasia, Surin embodied the challenges that confronted early modern Catholic mysticism. Inclined by his exposure to Carmelite Spanish mysticism to pursue radical forms of abnegation and to encounter the mysterious secrets of the other world but wishing to obey his order's active apostolic mission and its efforts to distance itself from accusations of *alumbradismo*, Surin found himself paralyzed and mute. Was it a "fall, or rather a voluntary and desired descent into alterity," as Katherine Dauge-Roth proposed? Be it what it may, Surin found himself "a ship without a rudder" that "easily goes aground against the sand banks or gets wrecked."

### Surin's Spirituality under Suspicion

Surin, as has been indicated above, was one of the young Jesuits of southwest France who were shaped by the new spiritual trends, mostly Carmelites, coming from Spain. As early as the mid-

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1630s, he promoted and taught self-negation and a complete surrender to the divine plan for the individual. As important as personal and unmediated experiences were for the Spanish Carmelites, both Teresa of Ávila and John of the Cross also taught complete obedience to authority and to the teachings of the church. Only obedience prevents an individual from falling into the abyss of illusions. Surin concurred, following an axiom that was both Carmelite and Jesuit. But like his Iberian predecessors, and like many other spiritually inclined people of his generation, his balancing act of finding the exact relationship between experience and teachings was a struggle that put him under suspicion.

Equally problematic was the tension between passivity and activity. In an early letter of October 1633 to his (biological) father, Surin lamented the years in which he had tried to cultivate his mastery over himself. He now congratulated himself, instead, for acquiring the ability to be “indifferent to all occurrences” and to accept with tranquility (accoiser) whatever happens to him. “A soul, accustomed to resignation [...] and to interior obedience to God,” overcomes its torments by its own exterior imperfections. This comprehension of the benefits of passivity and detachment was also promoted by him in his spiritual direction. Thus, Jeanne des Anges wrote to an abbot that in one of his exercises during her possession, Surin assigned her no instructions whatsoever, wishing her to “present herself before God in complete simplicity to accept or suffer whatever he wishes.” She found immense freedom in this exercise, she went on to say. This technique, too, derived from Ignatius’s Spiritual Exercises, but it could have involved, or was interpreted as potentially involving, passive acceptance of bodily temptations. It could also encourage vainglory and a hubris of unmediated connection with God. As such, self-negation was both a goal and a danger. Nevertheless, Surin promoted this passivity. Life should be lived in a state of “eternal death” toward the world and oneself, he argued, because only such death creates the space within the soul for the divine presence to access. Surin’s adversaries who had been suspicious of his spiritual experiences were not about to miss the risky connotations of his method. Letters and reports were rushed to Rome, detailing all the ways in which Surin’s mysticism was nothing but a new version of the specter that has been haunting early modern Catholic mysticism all along, what was later to be named quietism. Superior General Muzio Vitelleschi (1563–1645, in office 1615–45) was warned of, and in turn warned provincials to pay close attention to, Surin’s directional writings and his dialogues with women. Specifically, Surin was accused in 1639 of inciting female followers to quietistic indifference toward acts of penance. He was allegedly leading women to renounce prayers, reject obedience, and instead believe that they enjoy unmediated divine grace. Surin’s teaching resembled “illumism,” alumbadismo, neoterici (innovations), and “abandonment.” Saying whatever crosses his lips, he leads numerous silly women (femmelettes) astray, all the while suffering himself from mental deficiencies. Surin, obviously, came to represent for some members of his own order the dangers of all that was supposed to have been blocked already by Mercurian and Acquaviva’s censorial initiatives. The dramatic transformation from exorcist to energumen further reinforced the sense that Surin’s physical fragility, constant agitation, and suspected (too Spanish?) spirituality were an embarrassment. For many Jesuits, Surin’s dénouement after 1637 became the most edifying example of what was wrong with the growing attraction of some Jesuits to the mystical and contemplative trends that had been gaining popularity and adherents for the previous fifty years.

For Surin, however, Loudun was proof that the more mystically oriented wing of the order was right. The demon, he said, was a “torch that illuminates the darkness” (Science, 129). When he later set down to write his lessons from the encounters with the devil, Surin did not shy away from presenting Satan as a theologian. He had often put theological questions to the devil, he recalled. One of these matters was the benefits of infused prayer, a focus of debate at the time not only among the Jesuits, as pointed out above, but in all religious orders. Having Satan admit his fear of, and resistance to, infused prayer added a testimony from the other life of the legitimacy and value of the practice.

## Making Sense of the Incomprehensible

It is therefore not surprising that much of the scholarly literature on Surin focuses on him as a typical example of the tensions and conflicts that tore apart seventeenth-century spirituality. De Certeau placed him within the setting of the Society of Jesus's struggle to unify its message and to distance itself from accusations of alumbadismo and "new spirituality." To de Certeau, we owe the growing interest in Surin the man but also in the crisis of mysticism in seventeenth-century Jesuit spirituality. Following de Certeau, Mino Bergamo used Surin to argue that the language of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century mysticism developed a new "anatomy of the soul," of mapping new interior territories of the heart and the soul, in which the mystical pursuit takes place. Others, among them Sophie Houdard, have connected Surin and his spirituality to the struggle of early modern male orders to distance themselves from "feminine" methods of spirituality, modes of experience and comportment that came to be viewed as too emotional, melancholic, and unmanly. Nicholas Paige has added a new dimension to contemporary work on Surin by focusing on the incoherent structures of Surin's autobiographical texts. Indeed, as Patricia M. Ranum points out in her translations of the *Triumph and the Science*, Surin often shifts from first to third person, and at times it is not even clear whether, when talking about an undefined "he," he is talking about himself, God, or the devil. Paige connects this incoherence to larger seventeenth-century attempts to invent new ways of speaking and writing about the self and its experience. "Under what form can one write about something defined as new if the codes that will assure its reception do not yet exist?" he asked. Patrick Goujon, following de Certeau and Houdard, as well as Bergamo and Paige, agrees, and emphasizes Surin's struggle with developing a language that can describe the indescribability and incommunicability of mystical experiences.

Significantly, Surin conducted his exorcism-cum-spiritual direction in Latin and not in French. Did Jeanne des Anges understand his Latin? A hagiographical seventeenth-century record of her life tells us that she was only four or five years old when she acquired a good knowledge of Latin. But, when during her exorcism, she answered in French to questions that were being put to her in Latin, it was clear to all present that it was the demons, rather than the prioress herself, who were comprehending the foreign language. If, in fact, Jeanne des Anges did not understand Surin's instructions, it could be argued that Surin retained an element of traditional adjuration of demons in his new technique of conducting exorcism as a form of spiritual direction of demons. Like traditional adjurations, Surin's method overcame linguistic barriers, communicating directly with the demons in the language they know best. Interestingly, when still a young boy, Surin himself had experienced an uncanny ability to comprehend spiritual messages across a language barrier. His earliest spiritual dialogue was with Mother Isabelle des Anges, the prioress of the Carmelite convent in Bordeaux. The mother's French was poor and Surin's Spanish non-existent, yet they maintained a conversation that led him to his first and most important spiritual experience.

Surin and the demons who possessed the mother superior similarly maintained a dialogue that lasted three years. In fact, conversing and dialoguing were Surin's preferred method of interaction and instruction, and toward the end of his life he composed a collection of *Spiritual Dialogues*. He conversed face to face not only with the prioress of Loudun and the demon within her but also in his previous exchanges with Isabelle des Anges. In addition, Surin wrote thousands of letters, of which seven hundred have survived. They are talkative, even chatty. He was always more confident when addressing women, who were the addressees of most of his surviving letters. Like most letters by most spiritual directors, his letters were both private and public. He informed a large circle of devout women about what was transpiring with him, Jeanne des Anges, and the demons; and he often asked these devout women to circulate his letters to other individual nuns or entire monastic communities. In return, he used spiritual letters from devout women as one of the means to exorcise demons. He read such letters out loud to the demons, thus "molesting" them.



## After Loudun

Surin's involvement with the possession at Loudun came to an abrupt end in 1638, when he fell victim to the demon and became incapacitated. During his possession, Surin felt that he had two souls within him:

I cannot explain to you what happened in me during this time and how that spirit unites itself with mine without depriving me either of my senses or of the liberty of soul, and becoming nevertheless as another myself [un autre moi-même], and as if I had two souls, one of which is dispossessed of its body and the use of its organs, and stands aside, watching the doing of the one that has inserted itself. These two spirits do battles with each other in the field that is the body; and the soul itself is as if divided and, by one part of itself, is the subject of diabolical impressions, and, by the other, the subject of movements that are its own or that God gives it.

During the following eighteen years (1637–55), he was kept in a small room in the college of the Madeleine in Bordeaux in a state of mutism, and most of the time he could not talk, write, or walk. He felt himself possessed both by God and Satan, and while one gave him “extraordinary graces” in the shape of ecstasies, the other was pushing him into the abyss of solitude and self-doubt, where he contemplated and even tried to put an end to his life. More than once during these terrible years, his demon led him to doubt the teaching of the Catholic Church concerning such fundamental issues as the real presence of God in the Eucharist or even whether the created world was the work of God or Satan. At other times, he realized that Jeanne des Anges's possession, and later his own, were divine graces that enabled him to experience, rather than to learn, the mysteries of God's love and to live through, rather than meditate on, the agonies of Christ.

During this long period in incapacitation, though, it seems that Surin's mind never ceased to converse with God. Once his condition started to improve in 1654, he immediately renewed his correspondence, at first dictating letters and after 1660 also writing them himself. As words poured out of him, Surin's style became more and more erratic. His sentences, as Patricia M. Ranum indicates, became run-on ramblings, with many new sentences and even paragraphs starting with “and's,” as if pausing was dangerous. During the later part of his illness, he again started to compose hymns that he then compiled upon his recovery. Published as *Spiritual Hymns* (*Cantiques spirituels*), the first edition saw the light of day in 1655, and numerous editions followed during the seventeenth century.<sup>33</sup> His unoriginal catechism was published two years later, but most of Surin's energy in the remaining years of his life was devoted to trying to make sense of his experiences of the “double possession” and to comprehend what this unique experience can teach us about things of the other life. His *Experimental Science of the Things of the Other Life* (*Science expérimentale des choses de l'autre vie*) was composed in 1663, and he finally completed *Le triomphe de l'amour divin*, which he had started before his breakdown. Both are included in this collection. But Surin also wrote a few didactic and systematic guides on how to advance spiritually, books that were to become very popular in the following two centuries. There is very little in his *Spiritual Guide for Perfection* (*Guide spirituel pour la perfection*) that differs from Lallemant's *Spiritual Doctrine*. The *Spiritual Dialogues* in which Christian Perfection is explained for all sorts of people (*Dialogues spirituels où la perfection chrétienne est expliquée pour toutes sortes de personnes*) of 1655–57 (first published 1700) are similarly unoriginal and presented a systematic discussion of the stages of mystical growth and of the difficulties to be confronted in the process. Surin encourages his readers to read the masters of “the knowledge of mystical occurrences” (“la science des choses mystiques”) and mentions by name Alonso Rodríguez (1526–1616), whose *Practice of Christian and Religious Perfection* was one of the most—if not the most—popular spiritual guide of the second half of the seventeenth century. But he also mentions the thirteenth-century Bonaventure (1221–74), the Italian Jesuit Achille Gagliardi (1537–1607), and of course Teresa of Ávila and John of the Cross. These spiritual guides, as we recall, were deemed suspicious by Superior Generals Mercurian and



Acquaviva but were rehabilitated by Vitelleschi. The Guide and the Dialogues are edifying texts, the Guide even Scholastic in its methodic exploration of very precise spiritual experiences. At the same time, there is a clear defense here of the legitimacy of the spirituality he had pursued and experienced his entire life. In fact, *La science expérimentale* of 1663 and *Important Questions* regarding the Spiritual Life: On Godly Love (*Questions importantes à la vie spirituelle: Sur l'amour de Dieu*), written 1658–64, as well as Surin's finally completed record of Jeanne des Anges's dramatic possession and exorcism, present, I would argue, a silent defiance of those who challenged the orthodoxy of his practices. Toward the very end of his life, he went back in these works to address and defend the mystical inclinations of his youthful years. Then, as we remember, the radical individualism of the Bordelais Jesuits aroused suspicion and reprimand from the superior generals themselves. But a lifetime of mystical experiences has taught him, he implicitly insisted now, that the spirituality of the Jesuits of Aquitaine had been orthodox all along. While others read about mystical experiences, Surin's knowledge was experiential. It was acquired through mental chaos and the complete disintegration of the self. But Surin manages to turn his mental breakdown into a coherent narrative and, more importantly, a teaching aid, a first-person dramatic exploration of the descent into the abyss and the ascent from it. <>

## **SEXTUS, MONTAIGNE, HUME: PYRRHONIZERS** by Brian C. Ribeiro Series: Brill Studies in Skepticism, Brill, 9789004465398

This work invites us to view the Pyrrhonist tradition as involving all those who share a commitment to the activity of Pyrrhonizing and develops fresh, provocative readings of Sextus, Montaigne, and Hume as radical Pyrrhonizing skeptics: From the aspirationalism of Sextan Pyrrhonism, to Montaigne's skeptical fideism and his unusual approach to the writing process, to the vexing interpretive issues surrounding Hume's skepticism, each figure offers us new insights into what it can mean to Pyrrhonize.

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## **Excerpt: A Constructive Tradition**

Right from the beginning, Western philosophy has embodied an ambitious set of aspirations. Those thinkers who came to call themselves philosophers aspired to attain not merely true and useful opinions, but stable and lasting knowledge: philosophers aspired not merely to possess the truth but also to be aware that it was truth which they possessed. Moreover, the truth which philosophers aspired to possess was itself a manifold thing—they wanted the truth about themselves, the truth

about the nonhuman world, even the truth about the gods and the more-than-human world (if such there be). Almost all of the philosophers of Western antiquity—Greeks, Hellenistics, and Romans alike—sought to possess these truths because they believed that such truths were in some way necessary for human flourishing. More specifically, many ancient philosophies (though not all, as we shall see) were inclined to hold that natural human life is unsatisfactory in various ways. Prior to, or without, conversion to philosophy, such untended human life can be deeply problematic—humans are ignorant of important truths, impulsive in their actions, unregulated in their emotions, and so on. Thankfully, as the story goes, the unsatisfactory state of untended human life can be remedied (at least to some considerable extent) by turning to philosophy. And how, precisely, can philosophy lead a seeker to human flourishing? Here, if we ignore the skeptics and just a few others, the ancients approach something like a clear consensus: the philosopher must become wise. Only knowledge gained and put to use can save us from the unsatisfactoriness into which we are born. Thus, as the old proverb holds, knowledge is power. Perhaps only the philosophical sage (i.e., only the wise person) can be truly free, or self-controlled, or happy, since one needs knowledge in order to attain these things, and ignorance is our natural condition.<sup>1</sup> Over time, different schools of thought emerged, and these schools articulated different claims concerning these basic and existentially-pressing concepts—knowledge, freedom, self-control, happiness. One central motif, found throughout the ancient texts and among many of the different schools, was the idea that the philosophical life helped the philosopher to become as much like the gods as possible.<sup>2</sup> If the gods are always wise, free, and happy, then the philosophical sage, being also wise, free, and happy, is indeed very god-like, and thus philosophy's constructive impulse finds a pleasing end in our (near) apotheosis.

## A Critical Tradition

Obviously, this grand constructive project did not proceed unquestioned. From our earliest extant records, we find some philosophers expressing doubts about whether human beings can actually achieve the lofty aims of philosophy and accomplish the self-transformation from natural human life to glorious sagehood. Indeed, it is clear that alongside the constructive impulse in philosophy, there is a critical impulse as well.

Not all of the philosophers who exercise their critical impulse count as skeptics. Diogenes the Cynic, e.g., is no skeptic, but he is clearly a more critical than a constructive philosopher. However, what made the skeptics unique was that they turned the critical impulse into their whole endeavor: To question, to press, to problematize and challenge, to practice (as Sextus puts it) the skeptical ability (ph 1.8–9).<sup>4</sup> There were two ancient schools of skepticism, the Academic and the Pyrrhonian. Cicero is our main textual source for knowledge of the former; Sextus is our main textual source for the latter. In this book, I will be primarily concerned with the Pyrrhonist approach to skepticism, deriving from Sextus, which I take to be a form of radical skepticism based upon the skeptical ability to problematize and cast doubt upon all open-to-dispute matters brought under scrutiny during inquiry (ph 1.8–9, 19–20, 200, 202–203). The exercising of this skeptical ability, I will dub Pyrrhonizing (verb form), and this also makes room for the verbal adjective form, e.g. Pyrrhonizing tradition. Pyrrhonizers—being radical skeptics—reject the contention of mitigated Academic probabilism which asserts that, while certain knowledge may elude us, we can nonetheless discover probable or verisimilitudinous (i.e., truth-like) views and that these views, while amounting to less than knowledge, should be understood as possessing some form of positive epistemic status.<sup>7</sup> Thus, what makes Pyrrhonizers radical skeptics, in my view, is not that they have succeeded in the (perhaps psychologically impossible) attempt to suspend judgment on all matters of investigation, but rather that, qua radical skeptics, they relentlessly, ruthlessly inquire and, crucially, they make no claim, concerning any beliefs they may hold, that those beliefs enjoy any positive epistemic status.

Now part of what unites the various critical philosophers together—including both the Academic skeptics and the Pyrrhonists—and which distinguishes them from their more constructive counterparts is their rejection of the idea that human flourishing requires us to become sage-like and even god-like. Whereas Plato and the Stoics would have us become like unto the gods, this other, more critical group sometimes found its exemplars in much more humble creatures—like dogs, mice, pigs, and young children.<sup>8</sup> But of course these kinds of creatures are not wise; their lives have not been transformed by the attainment of knowledge. So how could such creatures serve as models or ideals for us?

### Surveying the Scope of Reason's Reach

One might put the point this way for a start: To the extent that humans are entirely reason-governed beings, philosophical reflection—when it's clear, focused, sufficiently sustained, and so on—offers us the prospect of living reason-transformed lives. Thus, the constructive philosophers needed to assume a very positive and optimistic view of reason's ability to transform human life. After all, for them, human reason is what redeems us from the unsatisfactoriness of our untended, pre-philosophical lives: Reason (taken in a very broad sense) is the means by which we pursue philosophy. To whatever extent our minds contain elements that are not subject to reason, then reason's transformative power would be limited to that extent.

Thus, the constructive tradition, taking an optimistic view of our responsiveness to reason, holds that we can transform our lives and live the good life by growing in knowledge and wisdom. At the limit, constructive philosophers in antiquity even suggested we could become—in all but the duration of our existence—like the very gods. On the other side, the critical philosophers tended to set their sights much lower. This would suggest that the critical philosophers doubted that the available means were adequate. The tool or instrument we must use is philosophical reasoning. Maybe philosophical reasoning cannot produce the right kinds of insights or arguments, or maybe it can, but our minds won't respond to those insights or arguments in a rational way. The great tradition of skeptical philosophy raises both of these worries. On the one hand, the skeptics question whether reason-based philosophical inquiry can deliver the goods we would like (e.g., knowledge or wisdom that could help us to find true freedom or happiness). And, on the other hand, the skeptics find that even the very skeptical reasonings they pursue sometimes fail to have, so to speak, their expected effect. An ideally rational inquirer who was persuaded by a skeptical argument that targeted some belief *p* of his would be expected to suspend judgment concerning *p*. Yet, as it turns out, human minds do not always respond in that way.

So, one form of the skeptical challenge asks whether philosophical reasoning can deliver the goods (the insights, the arguments). This form of the skeptical challenge is the form that is most widely discussed, because from the perspective of a constructive philosopher, the skeptic is seen as offering a set of puzzles to be solved on the way to fully establishing some constructive view. The second form of the skeptical challenge instead raises the worry that, no matter what form our philosophical reasoning takes, we may find that we are not completely reason-governed beings. There may be some "other" within us. On the whole, I think it's fair to say that this second form of the skeptical challenge emerges rather slowly within the skeptical tradition. The earliest skeptics who we will consider seem to have implicitly taken the scope of reason's kingdom quite broad, while nonetheless acknowledging that its kingdom was not entirely unbounded. I think this is true of Sextus and Cicero, though, given my intended focus on Pyrrhonism, I will have much less to say about Cicero. Nonetheless, when I say that (e.g.) Sextus seems to implicitly assume a much more optimistic view of our reason-responsiveness than (e.g.) Hume does, I don't mean to suggest that Sextus is as optimistic as Plato or the Stoics. On the contrary, both Sextus and Cicero clearly acknowledge some limits on this score. Later skeptical philosophers, however, pressed their scruples about reason's

kingdom much further by claiming to find larger and larger tracts of the human mind to be beyond the bounds of reason's sway.

### Axiological Questions for the Critical Tradition

The constructive tradition suggests that a tantalizing array of goods can accrue to those who pursue philosophy with diligence and dedication. This leaves open the question of whether philosophizing in the critical spirit can likewise lead us to various good or desirable things. In other words, the critical philosophers must ask themselves, being cut off from the knowledge and wisdom the constructive philosophers had posited, and being responsive to reason's demands only to the extent we are, are we still capable of living flourishing lives, or would any such flourishing require us to possess resources or dispositions we do not seem to possess?

Really, then, we have two kinds of questions to pursue here. First, there is a set of questions to explore about our responsiveness to reason, or the nature and extent of epistemic agency. Can Pyrrhonizing inquiry reveal that there are forces within us that are not reason-governed? And if there are forces within us that are not reason-governed, what lessons can this teach us about our seemingly natural aspirations to cognitive self-mastery? Second, there is a set of axiological questions. If Pyrrhonizing inquiry reveals that human life is far from being neatly reason-governed, is a good life still possible for us? The constructive philosophers are offering the wise, free, and happy gods as models for us to aspire to. And so far all we've seen the critical philosophers offer us as models of good living are nonhuman animals and young children. What goods, if any, might the skeptical philosopher find to result from his skeptical investigations? We will be considering several possible answers to this question in the pages to come.

### Setting the Focus

It will no doubt appear surprising to some readers that a book on skepticism should propose to focus on questions of our responsiveness to reason or axiological questions about the goods resulting from skeptical inquiry, rather than on more straightforwardly epistemological questions of knowledge and justification, or questions concerning the finer points of skeptical-argument analysis. Let me try to explain my approach. While I deal with historical and substantive issues about some particular skeptical arguments in this book, that is not my principal interest. For one thing, such works already exist.<sup>9</sup> For another, one can hardly hold out much hope for the skeptical conversion of constructive philosophers to be achieved by rehashing, perhaps with new bells and whistles, the standard skeptical arguments everyone is already familiar with. Indeed, I would go so far as to suggest that there's something almost paradoxical about this predicament: If everyone—or nearly everyone—finds these standard skeptical arguments so unpersuasive—and certainly the number of professed skeptics has always been very small—then why have these skeptical arguments enjoyed such long-lasting fame and devoted attention? It might even be generally agreed that radical skepticism may be the most argumentatively powerful of all the philosophical views which have almost no adherents. To be sure, the dismay this has caused is evident in the annals of the skeptical tradition. Hume was neither the first nor the last skeptical philosopher to feel “affrighted and confounded with that forelorn solitude, in which I am plac'd in my philosophy.” In such “forelorn solitude,” one can scarcely help but feel like “some strange uncouth monster” (ibid.). And more than two centuries later, in our own time, Peter Unger tells us frankly that “being a sceptic usually means walking a lonely road.”

Seen from the perspective of the Western tradition as a whole, radical skepticism seems to be both perennially attractive and stimulating (on the one hand) and yet pervasively repulsive (on the other). Of course, many of us—even many anti-skeptics—have felt the pull of skepticism, even if only briefly or episodically. But what explains the repulsion that skepticism also excites? I would suggest that we have already seen several plausible explanations. First, skeptical inquiry makes a bid to show that

philosophical reasoning cannot deliver the goods (i.e., the constructive insights and arguments). This was the first form of the skeptical challenge we discussed before. Second, unless we are such that in every case where some skeptical reasoning which strikes us as persuasive, it leads us to suspend judgment, then we will be forced to accept that we are not entirely reason-governed beings. And the greater the extent of the non-rational “other” revealed to be within us, the greater the extent to which we must reconceive ourselves. This was the second form of the skeptical challenge we discussed above. Lastly, the constructive tradition had offered up an array of goods which it claimed could only be gained via the acquisition of knowledge and wisdom. So, if we find ourselves siding with the skeptics and unable to lay claim to knowledge and wisdom, then we won’t enjoy the conferred-by-knowledge-and-wisdom goods either. All three of these points could be called skeptical challenges or threats.

For present purposes, then, while I think there is considerable philosophical interest in interrogating the fine details of particular skeptical arguments, I will not spend much time doing that here. Instead, I propose to explore the Pyrrhonizing tradition of skeptical inquiry and to connect that tradition up with questions of doxastic control and the good life, in the hope that these connections (if plausibly established) will help us understand not simply what Pyrrhonizing skepticism is, but why Pyrrhonizing skepticism matters.

### Sextus, Montaigne, and Hume

By considering the skeptical investigations of several different Pyrrhonizing skeptics we will be afforded the chance to consider several different ways in which a skeptic might answer the questions we have been raising. To what extent are we reason-responsive beings? What goods might the skeptical approach to philosophy generate? Sextus, Montaigne, and Hume each answer these questions in different ways.

My project here is to articulate, develop, and support interpretations of Sextus, Montaigne, and Hume as Pyrrhonizing skeptics. Nonetheless, I do not deny the possibility of other readings of these figures, and although I do seek to make the skeptical readings I offer appear as plausible and attractive as I can, defeating alternative less-than-radically-skeptical lines of interpretation of each figure has not been my primary concern. Neither has it been my primary concern to exhaustively engage with the vast secondary literatures on each of my three figures, though I have done as much of that as the nature of my project admits. Rather, since all three of these figures can be, and very often have been, read as radical skeptics, I propose herein to take up that reading of them and see how far it can be taken. At least in the case of Hume, I will argue that there are definite limits to the textual viability of any successful interpretation. Even so, I will propose a novel way in which we can find a Skeptical-Hume in the texts of Hume. Those who prefer other, less radically skeptical readings of Sextus, Montaigne, or Hume can view the present work as working out (what I hope are) plausible readings of each figure to be used as targets for scholarly discussion and critique.

Developing readings of Sextus, Montaigne, and Hume as radical Pyrrhonizing skeptics will also allow me to put those readings to work in exploring other topics. One question our three skeptical philosophers all face, either implicitly or explicitly, concerns the extent to which we are responsive to skeptical arguments and reasonings. This is a matter on which their views disagree, so we are able to consider several versions of (what I will argue in Chapter 2 to be) their shared approach to skeptical inquiry. Further, each of our three figures sees skeptical inquiry as connected to certain good or desirable things that may come from sustained engagement with skeptical philosophizing, things such as mental tranquility, an inward search for mindful attention to the self, or the development of intellectual modesty.

I begin in Chapter 1 by developing an account of epistemic akrasia, arguing that we can be sure it exists. The relation of epistemic akrasia to radical skepticism—and other seemingly impossible-to-

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digest views—is discussed, and this serves to set the stage for us to take our first look at all three figures in Chapter 2. Chapter 2 introduces the concept of skeptical cartography as a metaphor for comparing the similarity of method and the differences of result in the skeptical Pyrrhonianizing of Sextus, Montaigne, and Hume. Once this general picture is in place, I next further extend and develop the radically skeptical readings of Sextus (in Chapter 3) and Montaigne (in Chapter 4). In Chapter 5, I ask what Hume might have said about Montaigne's acceptance of faith, and I suggest some intriguing possibilities. I then return to the issue of epistemic akrasia from Chapter 1. I articulate the issue in Hume's terms and offer a sketch of an account of (what I call) rational self-control (rsc), a form of doxastic control or responsiveness to reason. I argue that Hume is very pessimistic about the extent of such rsc. Next, in Chapter 6, I offer my take on Hume qua radical skeptic, just as I had done for Sextus and Montaigne (in Chapters 3 and 4, respectively). As will become clear, Hume presents by far the most problematic of our three figures. I will argue for a fairly radical interpretive view, viz. the view recently defended by Karánn Durland, which holds that it is impossible to develop any fully satisfying and consistent reading of the entirety of Hume's works. In light of this, I propose a new way of trying to emancipate a Skeptical-Hume from the pages of Hume. The viability of trying to disentangle a Skeptical-Hume from (what I will later call) the great Humean tapestry is then put to the test in Chapter 7, where I argue that Skeptical-Hume spent his entire writing career seeking to discover some stable and lasting effect that skepticism might have on the skeptical inquirer. I think he eventually found such an effect in the account he develops of the skeptic's intellectual modesty. Finally, in Chapter 8, I look back at the several goods which earlier chapters suggested might be connected to radical skepticism and I seek to offer some perspectives and comparisons regarding these goods, including the drawing of some connections to ongoing contemporary debates. <>

## **THOREAU'S PEDAGOGY OF AWAKENING by Clodomir Barros de Andrade [Hamilton Books, 9780761872726]**

The book is a poetic and philosophic meditation on Thoreau's work, highlighting a "Pedagogy of awakening", that is, a path towards a non-dual and enlightening experience with Nature, a possible answer to the need of addressing the urgency and necessity of our troubled times. The urgency stems from a series of crises that humankind is now facing—epidemiological, environmental, social, political, economic; however, all those crises, as many have already observed, might be better understood as different faces, or different modes, of the same underlying crisis: the Anthropocene crisis, that is, the crisis whose ultimate origins lay at our feet, triggered by the way we, humans, inhabit—and impact—this world. It seems consensual that humankind has never faced such a terrible array of combined crises that, for the first time in history, puts our very survival as a species in danger. A dense fog has alighted on this small and beautiful blue planet, and one can only hope that the pains and suffering we have been through for so long are the pangs of a childbirth—a new beginning, a new promise—, and not the gaspings of a sclerotic organism that is on the brink of its final collapse. Thence, the necessity. The necessity of a new way of inhabiting this world. And I believe that an excellent guide to teach us how to do so is Henry David Thoreau.

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This book has a double root: urgency and necessity. The urgency stems from a series of crises that humankind is now facing—epidemiological, environmental, social, political, economic; however, all those crises, as many have already observed, might be better understood as different faces, or different modes, of the same underlying crisis: the Anthropocene crisis, that is, the crisis whose ultimate origins lay at our feet, triggered by the way we, humans, inhabit—and impact—this world. It seems consensual that humankind has never faced such a terrible array of combined crises that, for the first time in history, puts our very survival as a species in danger. A dense fog has alighted on this small and beautiful blue planet, and one can only hope that the pains and suffering we have been through for so long are the pangs of a childbirth—a new beginning, a new promise—and not the gaspings of a sclerotic organism that is on the brink of its final collapse. Thence, the necessity. The necessity of a new way of inhabiting this world. And I believe that an excellent guide to teach us how to do so is Henry David Thoreau.

Living right in the middle of the Industrial Revolution and the imperial expansion of the U.S., Thoreau saw, in his own time, and in a truly prophetic way, where things were heading. Political demagoguery, the corruption of democracy, economic and spiritual slavery and natural overexploitation: sounds familiar? Those were the components of the crisis he himself witnessed first-hand and of the potential catastrophe that loomed ahead. And he did see it coming two hundred years ago. In fact, he saw it so clearly that he started writing a series of texts that, in one way or another, pointed to his utmost endeavor and hope: the need of awakening his contemporaries, blissfully asleep in religious and moral dogmas, jingoism and consumerism. As he famously states in *Walden*, he wanted to crow, like a chanticleer: "I do not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to brag as lustily as chanticleer in the morning, standing on his roost, if only to wake my neighbors up."

Thus, this book is about the possibility of exploring new paths on this ancient Earth, trying to fill in new clearings in an old forest: a way of learning, or better still, relearning some things which were forgotten along the way, in fact, it is an attempt of sauntering on a trail towards awakening: a pedagogy of awakening, following in the footsteps Thoreau's philosophical imagination. In other words, a pedagogy towards a new way of inhabiting the Earth. To try to listen, with Thoreau, to the forgotten and silenced voices of the woods, the brooks, the animals—humans or otherwise—that live outside the domesticated fences of our society and, as far as possible, to lend them our voices as well, for it seems that we have lost the ability to listen to anything but our own voices.

However, like every great pedagogue, more than advancing a set of new "truths," Thoreau seems to be much more interested in learning how to learn and the limits of learning, as when he quotes Confucius: "To know that we know what we know, and that we do not know what we do not know, that is true knowledge." This new learning, though, is in fact an old one, and if one considers this new learning a pedagogy, one might, first and foremost, call it an opening, and a listening, and a looking, to the myriad voices and sights that are always and everywhere inviting us to the adventure of self-knowledge or, as I shall underline along this book, to the adventure of realizing our most profound and archaic belonging: Nature. To do so, however, implies an archeological and genealogical effort from our part. Archeological because of millennia of ideological and cultural debris that has been piling up over that most archaic experience of our true belonging, Nature. It seems we must, first and foremost, unearth the tracks before we start trailing them for, in the Western world, our Judeo-Christian, Greek and Modern European spiritual and intellectual heritages have taken pains to take us the other way around, extracting us from Her bosom. We have been

taught that we are superior, supernatural beings, either because of a soul, or because of reason. This distorted outlook, I believe, lies at the origin of our most radical misunderstanding about ourselves. It was only because of our immemorable myopia that truth about ourselves could have been seen somewhere out of or above Nature.

This quest is also genealogical because, as we shall see, one of the main tenets of the referred pedagogy of awakening involves an anamnestic process to retrieve, not only our lost experience of belonging radically to Nature, but the possibility of understanding humankind as only one of the infinite modes through which Nature becomes conscious of Herself. Such lost consciousness might be read, and indeed it was, in a religious manner in the works of Thoreau. In fact, this lost connection to Nature points to the possibility of a new religare—a new reconnection, a new pride and joy: a new religion? As Thoreau famously said, "we ARE nature," and this new religare may translate his other famous dictum: "I suppose that what in other men is religion is in me love of nature." Is this love of Nature, this physiophilia, then, to become a new religion, a new faith? Are we, at last, fated to become "faithful to the Earth," as Nietzsche exhorts the new humanity that is yet to come to be? Is it possible that every single religare, from now on, will have to be, necessarily, a renaturare, i.e., shall our relationship with the sacred, henceforth, be mediated by a return to Nature? Is the radical green turn that every religious tradition on Earth is taking a sign that heralds a new dawn? Is our philosophical outlook and spirituality greening?

Be that as it may, it is also fair, I guess, to state at the very outset of our promenade through Thoreau's landscapes that this book is, in a certain way, the chronicle of a failure. Although I shall endeavor to present Thoreau as a philosopher-pedagogue and a poetical thinker, that is, someone whose meditations utilize not only reasoned arguments but also values the many important possibilities offered by myths, images and the whole plethora of rhetorical devices, there must be no doubt that our efforts here can only be a groping of the polyhedric and fluid membranes of his thought. Thoreau's imagination is a forest, and we must be aware that we are going to be able to saunter along and explore only some of the trails he opens for us. Indeed, this book intends to be a dialogue between Thoreau, philosophy and poetry. A poetical meditation about Thoreau's thought and poetry and the way he might help us in dwelling authentically on this world. In fact, I shall try to avoid as much as possible the plural and fertile scholarship on Thoreau, in the belief that Thoreau is the best interpreter of his own words. In this light, our main effort shall be to try to vanish, as much as possible, inside his words.

But to carry on the "root" analogy a little further, I also must say that the roots of this essay spread wide, deep and, like an Indian fig-tree (*Ficus religiosa*), upwards also, but most importantly, backwards as well. This monograph is, in fact, a thankful recognition to Thoreau, who, among others, has been an extraordinary walking companion in my promenade through life. Written in words of light, Thoreau's works have always had the peculiar power of making me trip over epiphanies; academically, they have always fascinated me for evincing such a rich kaleidoscope of fluid borders between Philosophy, Literature, Mythology, Natural Studies, History and Religion. Such multiplicity notwithstanding, very few would deny that Nature is the center around which his thought gravitates. The mosaic of his opera—where poetry, prose, dialogue, journal, scientific essay and travelogue are clearly modes of a primal drive to expressing and actualizing his profound love of nature—is also a testimony to his creative geniality, whose unfoldings in contemporary Politics, Literature, Philosophy, Environmentalism and Comparative Religion are some of the fields in which his original contributions are only now coming to be fully appraised. We are still in the process of discovering Thoreau. Moreover, well beyond his undeniable literary, philosophical and naturalist contributions, and echoing a venerable tradition that goes all the way back to ancient Greece, among Stoics, Epicureans and those magnificent archaic thinkers usually referred to as Presocratics, I believe that if we follow closely Thoreau's poetic meditations, we may be able to see how, according to him, a careful and

tender familiarity with and the study of Nature—or living according to Nature (physeos homologoumenos), to underscore the epistemological/ethical nexus that translates into Stoicism's classical formula—is an irreplaceable prerequisite to creating the conditions of possibility to reach that ecstatic serenity so much sought after throughout the history of Western philosophical therapeutic traditions of self-care. From this perspective, Thoreau's sapiential drive seems to be a modalization of the Western philosophical tradition that postulates the nexus between wisdom and Nature's study/contemplation, also in keeping with Spinoza's immanent or panentheistic rational soteriology's goal of "intellectual love of god or nature" (deus sive natura), or in the ancient Greeks' concepts of "happiness"/"serenity" (eudaimonia, euthymia, apatheia and ataraxia), all of them indebted to the thesis that Nature (physis) is not only the origin (arche) of reality, but that her study and contemplation are at the genesis of a sapiential process that, ideally, could lead humans towards not only to wisdom, but to a non-dual experience that can be very well be called mystical, as we shall see further on. As Holderlin, another lover of Greece—and Nature, puts it in his own inimitable way, describing the vertigo of that experience of non-duality with Nature:

"To be one with all—that is the life of the divinity, that is the heaven of man. To be one with all that lives, to return in blessed self-oblivion into the All of nature, that is the summit of thoughts and joys, that is the holy mountain height, the place of eternal repose, where the midday loses its swelter and the thunder its voice and the boiling sea resembles the billowing field of grain."

That, I guess, might sum up Thoreau's approach as well.

Therefore, I shall argue along the course of this stream of reflections, that the careful study of and a loving proximity to Nature, physiophilia, humankind included—since according to Thoreau we are part and parcel of entire—is the one true key therapeutic process, in the Greek sense, that opens the door both to the awakening of the highest creative potentials of human beings, as well as to the way to achieving that eudaimonic serenity. Furthermore, to pursue such a course seems promising as well, I believe, insofar as to rely on how the study and love of Nature in Thoreau, in its many unfoldings, might contribute to exploring the possibility of reflecting about and imagine pathways where overcoming West's nihilistic legacy of metaphysics might be possible. In other words, one of the aims of this work is to inquire how Thoreau's art and thought might help us to indicate ways in which we may overcome the lack of meaning and perspectives inaugurated—according at least to a large section of Western post-modern thought—by the realization of the death of God, the collapse of metaphysics (the belief in "something beyond nature") and their attending nihilistic corollaries, maybe some of the most important of Western modernity's eventful heralds, while, at the same time, reinstating, once again, "the earth/nature" (physis) and faithfulness towards them.

But I anticipate myself; let me start at the very beginning, at the very root of this book. I was born and raised in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, or, as the local Amerindian inhabitants used to call it, Pindorama, "the land of the Palm Trees," a place where the lace of the sea breezes softly caresses the golden meeting of the blue sky and the green canopy of the wooded mountains, enthralling all and sundry. More specifically, I was born and grew up in Tijuca, the neighborhood where Floresta da Tijuca is located—"Tijuca's Forest," the largest urban forest in the world. As a matter of fact, Floresta da Tijuca was my backyard, the building where I used to live having been built on one of its slopes, Floresta stretching upward for miles and miles of native exuberant flora and magnificent fauna. It was there that I started reading—and immediately fell in love—with Thoreau. First, in an anarchist reader that included Civil Disobedience, then, Walden: I would spend the better half of a day inside Floresta, walking, reading and bathing in its superb brooks and waterfalls: sauntering, I should say. My profound admiration for Thoreau's sapiential project of living in communion with Nature impelled me to move to the mountains of Nova Friburgo, a town two and a half hours away from Rio, high up in the High Altitude Atlantic Rain Forest, where I actively participated and helped to build my first

house. Not, of course, almost alone and skillfully like Thoreau, but being a clumsy help for those who seemed—only seemed—to know what they were doing. Just like Thoreau, I was exceedingly proud of my simple cottage, then. It is true, though, that it was not a perfectly built house—which I partially ascribe to substance abuse during the construction, however, it was an "authentic building," as Thoreau affirms every construction should be; besides, it was seated on a very high mountain, at the top of Cascatinha, "Little Waterfall," overlooking the town and hanging poetically from the mountain. After some time, though, with the arrival of our daughter, me and my wife had to leave it and moved into another house in the woods of Mury, Nova Friburgo, where we now live. In fact, most of this essay grew from notes that I took in my long walks on the trails that criss cross Parque Nacional dos Tres Picos ("Three Peaks National Park"), along Rio das Flores ("Flowers River") and Rio Bonito ("Beautiful River"), both of which feed Rio Macae ("Macae River"), which flows into the Atlantic Ocean, in an area of splendid beaches called Região dos Lagos. Thus, this book, like a mountain brook, is the sediment of many waters and crags, forests and clouds, flowers, animals and the earth; it is a strange mix of inspiration, transpiration and imagination. So, may the muses—who have lent me the words—bless it.

Albeit this work's focus on Thoreau, it is, nonetheless, a sequel to my basic philosophical interests, namely, the non-dualistic traditions of immanence, both in its Eastern avatars (Mahayana Buddhism, Advaita Vedanta and Daoism) as well as in its Western's modulations (Greek religion, Presocratics, Stoicism, Spinoza, ^^^derlin); thus, this work is deeply embedded in my continued attempt to explore the philosophical possibilities of a naturalistic, immanent, non-metaphysical perspective, which I shall call along this essay, somewhat loosely, panentheistic. By panentheism, here, I mean the philosophical perspective that understands the myriad processes, phenomena and beings as an interdependent web of modes of a single Being, what the Greeks would have called toholon ("the Whole"), to pan ("the All"), or, better still, in its enlarged, radical, original sense, Physis—Nature.

Thus, this book might be better understood as an attempt at a poetical reflection over the possibilities of a non-dual "Philosophy of Nature," that is, an endeavor to underscore, utilizing Thoreau's profound intuitions, the apparently forgotten fact that we are Nature, indeed, that we are, actually, "Nature-f^rgotten-of-Herself-in-us," to embrace a relatively radical non-anthropocentric perspective. Hence, my belief that many of our existential pains are corollaries of humankind's distance from Nature, the forgetfulness of our original ontological natural condition, which is masked by the many superimposed layers of cultural and social domesticating processes. Therefore, instead of proposing a "human-forgotten-of-Nature-view," I shall try to meditate on the potentially rich possibilities of understanding Philosophy—and the Sciences—as a natural, anamnestic, non-teleological process of Nature towards Self-consciousness, understanding the vascularization of consciousness in Nature, particularly in humankind, one of Nature's many epiphenomenal conscious modes, as an optimal window of opportunity for Her anamnestic process to take place. Philosophy being understood, here, therefore, as a pedagogy towards awakening from that oblivion of our natural condition. To put it simply, I believe we, this enlarged family of multifarious beings, are just masks and mirrors through which Nature manifests and explores Herself.

I will also try to advance, along the way, the thesis that Thoreau is fundamentally committed to a certain type of cognitive or philosophical endeavor that I shall call here, somewhat loosely too, Philosophica Naturalis, a multivalent, plural and perspectival outlook on reality, a lost art that came into existence at the very birth of Western culture, twenty-seven centuries ago on the shores of Jonia, Greece, with our wise forefathers, the archaic Greek thinkers who used to be called "Presocratics," and stretched up well into the nineteenth century, when academic specialization drew a fatal blow to that most noble and forgotten art. Thus, by Philosophic Naturalis, Natural Philosophy, I shall understand the interdependent, plural and holistic" study of Nature through the natural sciences and humanities as well, somewhat blurring the problematic borders of "hardcore"

nature studies, literature and philosophy. Moreover, it is important to acknowledge the fact that Natural Philosophy pedagogy refuses to analyze a certain phenomenon in isolation and through only one perspective, mindful of the fact that to understand the part one must look at the whole, and that to understand the whole, one is supposed to understand the part, utilizing observation, imagination, scientific methodology, mythology, philosophy and poetry as well. Sadly, we seem to have irremediably lost an art that started, as far as we know, with Thales of Miletus and died away with Goethe, Alexander von Humboldt and Thoreau being two of their last adepts.

Moreover, I shall argue, as Ethel Seybold and Kevin Van Anglen have done more aptly before me, that Thoreau can be better understood—and savoured, through his "classicism," more specifically, his philhellenism, his love of everything Greek: myth, Philosophy, Art. Also, and most importantly, the Greeks' basic outlook on existence: realism and naturalism. Ancient Greece, that enchanted land blessed and inhabited by the Gods, was always Thoreau's ultimate criterion of truth and beauty. But maybe some clearings about what I am calling Thoreau's hellenic perspective are in order here.

Thoreau's love and admiration for everything Greek is well known. Such "Greekness," both methodologically as well as to the scope of his many interests, can be detected in innumerable places along his works and in a myriad of perspectives as well; right now, however, to make just a single point, that shall further on multiply in a plethora of different micro and macroscopic instances, I'd like to exemplify Thoreau's hellenic approach in his constant search for the genesis of things and phenomena: the seed, the unifying arche ("origin") of beings and processes, be it of an apple, a forest or Nature Herself; such a genealogical search also materializes in the quest for the original vigor, the sap, the marrow of existence, in a very particular experiencing of personal, natural and cultural phenomena. Such genealogical or genetic phenomenology, to be explored later on, may be also exemplified and subdivided in some interdependent and correlated, but autonomous fields, for a better understanding of this archaic relational grid: (i) ontologically, Thoreau's careful researches on the fundamentally paradigmatic micro-macro patterns of Nature, that infinite womb of beings and processes; in this sense, his works might very well bear the title "Pell Physeous" ("On Nature"), the same title attributed to most of the Presocratic works; (ii) historically/culturally, his fascination with archaic societies: Native Americans, Asiatic et al but, principally, methodologically, the Ancient Greeks; again, Herodotus' famous book title "Histories" (i.e. historie ["Investigations"]) comes to mind in its periegetic ambit and bears testimony to Thoreau's endeavors; (iii) vitally, in terms of the correlation of world ages and individual lives, youth and early childhood are Thoreau's constant references for the "perfect state," here resembling Wordsworth and Holderlin: i.e., Greece as the "childhood" of humankind; (iv) calendar wise, Springtime, the point of departure of the natural cycles, the radicle of Nature Herself takes pride of place; (v) as a part of the day, morning or, better still, dawn, the "auroreal," heroic moment of supreme freshness; (vi) linguistically, we can subdivide his genealogical approach further: (a) semantically, etymology furnishes the best tool, due to his belief that, originally, words signify things, the more into the archaic structure of words and languages one goes, the nearer one gets to its pristine, original semantic absolute value, Thoreau being particularly fit to such a task due to his linguistic skills and training in both old and modern languages; (b) in terms of language register, poetry, or more precisely, the mythopoetical discourse, since it is the one closest to the source, is the linguistic register that best captures Being's multifarious original richness. Thoreau's well-known love of Homer, Greek mythology, and his translations of Aeschylus attest to his saying that only in Greek mythology Nature speaks for Herself, as we shall see further on. Thus, when he sings his love of Nature, archaic societies, youth, Spring, myth, poetry, he is, I believe, fundamentally singing an eulogy to different modes of the basic phenomenon: proximity to the Source, for, as he himself points out: "we want most to dwell near to ... the perennial source of our life," the "source" in question offering many possible avenues of interpretation, but apparently alluding to the rationale behind this genealogical look and the correspondence between those instantiations ("Greece-Spring-youth-dawn"), providing us not only

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with a grid of correlative micro-meso-macro phenomena but also with a powerful methodological and pedagogical tool to better capture Thoreau's overarching attachment to primeval and archaic dynamics in many different areas of interest as well. Pursuing each one of those avenues backwards, both in terms of an archaic, primeval level of experience before the fossilization of History, Culture and Society, but inwards as well, in terms of proximity and intimacy to the more "embryonic" experiential levels of reality, that genealogical effort would, ultimately, place us in the "existential knot" that represents both an experience of disalienation in terms of a personal quasi-soteriological, libertarian experience, but to a better understanding of the continuing "fall" that plagues humankind's history from a more radical and positive relationship with Nature before the progressive, and in a certain sense necessary, artificialization and falsification that socio-cultural domestication imposes on us.

All those powerful images (Greece-youth-Spring-dawn) being different symbols of the same arcane reality to be detected either, microscopically, within ourselves or, externally, macroscopically, in Nature and History. To sum up: I believe Thoreau is Greek. There is a delightful and illustrative story that Thoreau tells us about his "Greek-holistic" approach that may help us to clarify this point:

The secretary of the Association for the Advancement of Science requests me, as he probably has thousands of others, by a printed circular letter from Washington the other day, to fill the blank against certain questions, among which the most important one was what branch of science I was especially interested in, using the term science in the most comprehensible sense possible. Now, though I could state to a select few that department of human inquiry which engages me, and should be rejoiced at an opportunity to do so, I felt that it would be to make myself the laughing-stock of the scientific community to describe or attempt to describe to them the branch of specially interests me, inasmuch as they do not believe in a science which deals with the higher law. So I was obliged to speak to their condition and describe to them that poor part of me which alone they can understand. The fact is I am a mystic, a transcendentalist, and a natural philosopher to boot. Now I think of it, I should have told them at once that I was a transcendentalist. That would have been the shortest way of telling them that they would not understand m<sup>^</sup> explanations.

Most commentators have, in a very fecund way, dedicated a lot of attention to this passage trying to explore Thoreau's multiple interests and his incapacity to pinpoint exactly where his main field of interest lies. Such incapacity has reverberated in Thoreau's scholarship in terms of what exactly he was trying to do or be ("writer, mystic, naturalist, philosopher"). However, I believe that the sequence of this passage has been relatively neglected, and it offers a key not only to a better understanding of the extract, but it also sheds light on Thoreau's main methodological and philosophical affiliation:

"How absurd that, though I probably stand as near to nature as any of them and am by constitution as good an observer as most, yet a true account of m<sup>^</sup> relation to nature should excite their ridicule only! If it had been the secretary of an association of which Plato and Aristotle was the president, I should not have hesitated to describe my studies at once and particularly."

Thoreau's relation with Nature was plural, idiosyncratic and revolutionary. Plural because it consisted of many different perspectives. As we shall see later, an empiricist methodology, that is, observing and cataloguing the results in a quantitative way, would simply not do. Idiosyncratic because it was, among many tenets, a mix of trained observation, philosophical musing, poetical meditation and delicate fascination. Moreover, Nature's observation was never an end in itself: it served higher purposes. That is why he fears scientists would ridicule him. I believe it is very instructive that Thoreau singles out two Greek thinkers, Plato and Aristotle, whose plural interests unfolded into a herculean attempt to investigate many branches of knowledge having a final global, holistic, sapiential perspective at the basis of their endeavor: what Greeks used to call "Philosophy,"



"love of wisdom" or, in Thoreau's terms, "sympathy with intelligence." Such sympathy may well be called an openness towards every bit of knowledge that, once arranged in a symphonic intuition, might be conducive to a state of serenity, aesthetical and ecstatic contemplation. His method was indeed a "Method" in a teleological and one might even say "quasi-soteriological" way: something which one takes to a certain end or finality. The end, the finality of his method, as I shall try to present it, points to an experience, a radical experience of non-duality with Nature. An awareness, as I said earlier on, not only that we are Nature, but also that we are Nature experiencing Herself through us. This inconceivable, <sup>^</sup>r one might say, mystical experience, is not the fruit of any specific religious asceticism—albeit some of its components do seem to partake of asceticism—or Thoreau's asceticism at any rate. More than asceticism, however, that experience is, I believe, the optimal result of a profound and tender nearness to Nature. Inhabiting it not as a visitor, but as a conscious part and parcel of it. That is why <sup>^</sup> am calling his approach to Nature a "pedagogy," a willingness in relearn, reopen, reconnect: it is in fact a return and not an advancement or accumulation of new knowledge. Thus, one might call the whole process not only a pedagogy, but a paideia as well, the word in question being the one the Greeks used to point to their educational process as a continuum of music, physical activity, literature, practical knowledge and the pursuit of wisdom. And returning to his above quotation—by now certainly forgotten, it is certainly not by chance that he picks two of classical Greece most influential thinkers to point to his true philia, his ultimate intellectual belonging and affiliation. As he pointedly says somewhere else: "Philosophy is a Greek word by good rights, and it stands almost for a Greek thing." More than just advancing a substantive defense of Philosophy in its Greek, radical sense, Thoreau seems to be not only championing a very particular affiliation to a certain tradition of producing and reproducing knowledge, but also hinting at something deeper here, the very meaning of Philosophy itself. Elsewhere, he deepens his look: "we have all of us by nature munteumite (as both Plato and Aristotle call it), a certain divination, presage and parturient vaticinalion in our minds, of some higher good and perfection than either power or knowledge." Aristotle himself declares, that there is *logu ti kreitton*, which is *loggu arkhe*,—(something better than reason and knowledge, which is the principle and original of all).

It is interesting to note how, throughout Thoreau's works, in a very Greek philosophical way, he seems to search not only the sense, the meaning, an answer; rather, he seems to be endeavoring to search the perpetual condition of searching, searching the "arche," the very genesis of the condition of searching, the quest itself. If what Aristotle says is true, if the principal condition to philosophize is, fundamentally, wonder, Thoreau certainly subscribes to it. It is the search that materializes as sense, as meaning, since the result—ultimately corrupted as "truth"—is always open-ended in its possibility. "Sense," "meaning," "the answer," the "truth" is always a variable, subjective, provisional affair, unlike the search, the quest. This seems to be one of the possible avenues for understanding his definition of Philosophy as "sympathy with intelligence." This sympathy, this philia, to use the Greek word, generally translated as "love," Philosophy being traditionally understood and translated as "love of wisdom," seems to point to the old Greek conception of Philosophy as a perpetual search, as an open-ended quest, much more a method, a way of living, than a set of sclerotic systematic truths or, as he says in unmistakably mournful tones: "There are nowadays professors of philosophy, but not philosophers." In one of his most important philosophical statements, and pregnant of beauty, he puts it:

"My desire for knowledge is intermittent; but my desire to bathe m<sup>^</sup> head in atmospheres unknown to m<sup>^</sup> feet is perennial and constant. The highest state that we can attain to is not Knowledge, but Sympathy with intelligence. I do not know that this higher knowledge amounts to anything more definite than a novel and grand surprise on a sudden revelation of the insufficiency of all we called Knowledge before—a discovery that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy."

When one inquires, when one poses questions about what one does not know, one is putting into practice the true philosophical and scientific dimension of the search, as Thoreau says in a very peculiar Aristotelian tone: "I do not know that knowledge amounts to anything more definite than a novel and grand surprise, or a sudden revelation of the insufficiency of all that we had called knowledge before; an indefinite sense of the grandeur and glory of the universe." Moreover, in a truly Socratic way: "It is only when we forget all our learning that we begin to know." And again, as ironically as Socrates:

"I have heard that there is a Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. It is said that knowledge is power and the like. Methinks there is equal need of a Society for the Diffusion of Useful Ignorance, for what is most of our boasted so-called knowledge but a conceit that we know something, which robs us of the advantages of our actual ignorance."

Such a mode of being-in-the-search-of, this utmost scientific and philosophical openness, is the condition towards which Thoreau seems to invite us to reach and implement. In this sense, the answers—any answers—are just necessary unfolding of that openness, of that mode of inquiry; in other words, it is Science and Philosophy manifesting themselves with provisional and rectifiable answers. This methodology, this philosophical way of life, the very radical condition of the questioning subject, seems to be embraced by Thoreau in his quest for the perpetual condition of the questing itself, the intellectual "heroic" dimension of self- and Nature's knowledge; answers, be they what they may, are only corollaries, epiphenomena of that searching, of the inquiry, of the questioning itself. That intellectual "heroic" way of life discloses Thoreau's debt to the Greek concept of "historic," the "inquiry," the "open investigation" of phenomena, and this very openness antagonizes him with every kind of dogmatism—though he himself sometimes indulges in them—that he rebels against. His visceral dislike of any dogmas whatsoever, his relentless and sharp criticism of his contemporaries' beliefs, the inherited dogmas, the sclerotic social "truths" he barely manages to conceal his despising of, the "cattleicism" of his fellow Concordians, all these assume vital importance in his carefully crafted critique of inherited experience as well. In this perspective, one should remember that that line of investigation, or, better still, that methodological approach to phenomena, overarches the whole of Thoreau's writings: from *Natural History of Massachusetts* until his last published essays, both in life and posthumously, all subscribe to that Greek holistic approach, later on to be sacrificed on the altar of academic specialization. To sum up Thoreau's project—and Western's wisdom and scientific knowledge program in a nutshell, by the way—^ cannot think of anything better than Emerson's prophetic exhortation contained in his *American Scholar*: "and, in fine, the ancient precept 'Know thyself,' and the modern precept 'Study nature,' become at last one maxim." Self-knowledge and Nature study, as I hope to be able to point out along this text, encapsulate precisely Thoreau's basic drive, maybe unconsciously rising to Emerson's challenge and incorporating the very Natural Philosophy project itself, the hallmark of Western's intellectual trajectory, together with the Delphic invitation to self-scrutiny, another characteristic of our sapiential tradition. Thoreau, I truly believe, has a lot to teach us in both dimensions.

Moreover, I also intend to inquire into the possibility of thinking that already referred to anamnestic philosophical process as a "Pedagogy of awakening," to underline Henry's fascination with the "dawn," the aureoreal awakening, the experiential potentiality that lies hidden inside all of us, whose external correlate becomes a figurative comparison and constant point of reference throughout his writings for the inner overcoming of our sleeping condition. From the set of homiletic denunciations of his alienated sleeping contemporaries he wishes to awaken like a Chanticleer, to the symptomatology he draws at the beginning of *Walden*, it is important to try to detect the possible practices that may conduce to the eudaimonic state that ensues from the adoption of the said therapy. Such a Pedagogy, dispersed as it is through his writings, is worthwhile to trying to retrieve it in its integrity, since the reward, that eudaimonic experience which I shall characterize as a non-dual

experience of merging with Nature, seems to be the goal towards which Thoreau strives to achieve in his intimacy with the natural world.

However, again, more than an "ecstasy" or "instasy," I believe that experience could be better understood as "aesthesis," an aesthetical, sensual, elemental fruition of the necessary interdependence between subject and object, humankind and Nature, a Nature to which we intrinsically belong, which envelops and surrounds us, a Nature that, its centrality in his thought notwithstanding, is rarely systematically articulated in terms of a general and exhaustive theory of Nature, what one could technically call a "Philosophy of Nature." More like a pointillist picture, whose general effect is the result of a plethora of minimal views—which I shall call an epistemological perspectivism or epistemological sauntering when "in praxis," along this essay—Thoreau's recurrent effort to observe a fact from a plurality of perspectives not only enhances our horizon of research as well as deepens the richness of details that contours each phenomenon he describes against the backdrop of our clumsy and blurring lack of attention.

Another of my interests in pursuing this research is the possibility of inquiring over the potential of what I shall call "wild thought" and the characterization of Thoreau as a "wild" thinker. By "wild" I understand the non-domesticated, non-sedentary thought, a nomadic approach, an epistemological sauntering, a view from diverse perspectives and in different moments, each one helping to paint that pointillist picture referred to above, which one might as well call "perspectivism."

Such "wild" perspective, I believe, is a handy tool to explore Thoreau's "ecology of immanence," the understanding of the continuum between humans and Nature, which may be contrasted to the "sociology of difference," the dichotomic approach that splits humans and Nature. In this light, ^ will explore two correlate phenomena that, I guess, are at the very base of our domesticated, sclerotic civilization: architecture-building and agriculture-planting, as examples of that domesticating process. Thoreau, as we shall see, has a lot to say about both processes, since he was a both a builder as well as a tiller whose emphasis on sustainable sacramental agriculture and building are radical and innovative contributions to Western thought. But to introduce synthetically the two questions, which I will elaborate later on: what do architecture and agriculture mean and what do they have in common?

Both, I shall argue, are techniques; both are correlate phenomena in the process of humankind's sedentation. First, I would like to explore the tension between architecture and Nature, stressing architecture's carving out of Nature a domus, a "seat," a "house." However, as we know, from domus comes dominion, first the de facto, and then the juridical appropriation of what is common into private, particular usage and exploitation: the obverse of dominion, though, is domestication, another word that comes from domus, the civilizational seed that expels us from the intimacy with Nature and brings about the necessary sclerosis of the nomadic drive. As I shall discuss further on, according to Thoreau, a large part of our alienation from Nature can be ascribed to the successive layers of techniques and instruments that society superimposes onto the natural world. Another such technique is agriculture, "the cultivation of the ager," the domestication and instrumentalization of the fields, of the wilderness; again, such domestication implies a violence, a dominion, a segmentation and ulterior appropriation of wilderness and her fruits, that ultimately becomes, for Thoreau, a burden from which his hapless Concordian contemporaries could not manage to escape from. Those two techniques are exemplary to illustrate the interdependent process of the dominion of Nature and its necessary corollary, our voluntary subjugation to the socio-political-juridical and economical structures that morph into extremely problematic ethical and philosophical implications, debasing and corrupting our natural, most originary affiliation.

Another characteristic of this essay is an engagement with Thoreau's poetry. Thoreau's poetry has been, I am afraid, sadly neglected. More than advancing an aesthetical evaluation of his poems, or

contributing to the history of literary studies, I want to emphasize his poetical production as a privileged source to understanding some of his most important experiences, poetry being, in his personal scale of communication tools, second only to music, of which we shall talk a lot as well.

Finally, some words about the division of this monograph. This work is divided in five parts or chapters. The first one, "Concord, Cosmos" is an introduction to some methodological considerations and concepts that will illuminate this work: Nature, familiarity with it, roots and a plethora of related terms that will, further on, help in reflecting upon the possibilities of inhabiting the Earth in a more enlightened way.

The second chapter, "The long shadow of Prometheus: civilization and alienation," shall tackle the many problems involved in our assertion that our alienated ontological condition is directly related to a set of sociocultural mechanisms that help to hide our "naturalness." Such alienation is carefully

analyzed by Thoreau in the opening pages of *Walden*, his chiaroscuro masterpiece, where almost every chapter contrast with the previous one, so that the contours of things and phenomena get more vivid and sharp. The result of that analysis is an important propedeutic step towards the organization of the remainder of our essay.

We then proceed to the third chapter: "Sacramental Technique," to try to figure out some very important concepts in Thoreau's conceptual lace: his understanding of Nature and Her relationship to Culture, necessarily highlighting the many tensions and inconclusive theses that come up in such dimension if one bears in mind Thoreau's refusal to develop and elaborate a systematic definition of such terms.

Our fourth stop, "Being wild: Thoreau's Pedagogy of awakening," will endeavor to amplify the possibilities of imagining Thoreau's writings as providing a sort of "savage" Pedagogy, a set of intuitions and practices, political and economic included, that seem to stem from his continuous pointing to the need for a more profound relationship with Nature. Such intimacy with the natural world presupposes not only nearness—one may be near something or someone and not be intimate—but effective and deliberate careful engagement. To think his strategies of careful proximity as a "Pedagogy" shall prove, I believe, extremely tempting, more so if one compares it with Ancient Greece's philosophical traditions of self-care which took the study of Nature as their fundamental theses towards a fulfilling and serene life.

Finally, we turn to the possible results of the said Pedagogy, an experience of non-duality between humans and Nature: "Being Nature, the inconceivable non-dual experience"; there we shall try to assemble from many disconnected fragments of Thoreau's writings a set of testimonials that seem to point to a quasi-soteriological experience, where language shows its limits in conveying the vertigo and inconceivability of such a metanoic non-dualistic experience. <>

## **DOSTOYEVSKY, OR THE FLOOD OF LANGUAGE by Julia Kristeva, translated by Jody Gladding, Foreword by Rowan Williams [European Perspectives: A Series in Social Thought and Cultural Criticism, Columbia University Press, 9780231203326]**

Growing up in Bulgaria, Julia Kristeva was warned by her father not to read Dostoyevsky. "Of course, and as usual," she recalls, "I disobeyed paternal orders and plunged into Dosto. Dazzled, overwhelmed, engulfed." Kristeva would go on to become one of the most important figures in

European intellectual life—and she would return over and over again to Dostoyevsky, still haunted and enraptured by the force of his writing.

In this book, Kristeva embarks on a wide-ranging and stimulating inquiry into Dostoyevsky's work and the profound ways it has influenced her own thinking. Reading across his major novels and shorter works, Kristeva offers incandescent insights into the potent themes that draw her back to the Russian master: God, otherness, violence, eroticism, the mother, the father, language itself. Both personal and erudite, the book intermingles Kristeva's analysis with her recollections of Dostoyevsky's significance in different intellectual moments—the rediscovery of Bakhtin in the Thaw-era Eastern Bloc, the debates over poststructuralism in 1960s France, and today's arguments about whether it can be said that "everything is permitted." Brilliant and vivid, this is an essential book for admirers of both Kristeva and Dostoyevsky. It also features an illuminating foreword by Rowan Williams that reflects on the significance of Kristeva's reading of Dostoyevsky for his own understanding of religious writing.

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Everywhere and in all things I lived at the ultimate limit, and I spent my life surpassing it.

—Dostoyevsky to A. Maykov, 1867

In love with the absolute, clinical explorer in the "underground" of human passions, prey to the anguish of death and the infinite quest for meaning, on the razor's edge of crime and sublimity, abjection and saintliness, Dostoyevsky (1821-1881) has haunted the European and global consciousness for a century and a half (Nietzsche, Proust, Kafka, Berdyaev, Visconti, Bresson, Kurosawa, Wajda, and many others ...).

Carried by his Orthodox faith in the Word incarnate, the "Russian giant" reinvented the polyphonic novel by betting on the power of speech and story to defy nihilism and its double, fundamentalism, which blight a world without—or with—God. His extravagant characters, oscillating between the monstrosity and insignificance of "insects," already sensed the prison matrix of the totalitarian universe that would reveal itself through the Shoah and the Gulag. Even if the man and the work continue to fascinate the hyperconnected market that keeps churning out translations (sixteen versions of *Crime and Punishment* in Chinese!). can the impatient internet user still be pulled into the jubilant whirlpool of this eloquent terror?

Reading has a remarkable afterlife, and on many occasions I thought I had read "Dostoyevsky": understood or questioned him, overwhelmed or enthralled. Thanks to my French publisher's Authors of My Life series, I let myself be carried through the whole expanse of his oratorio devoted to sex haunted by language (Sollers) before spinning this thread, the knots and trails of which I leave for you to discover in that immense body of work. This is an invitation for you to clear your own path, without fear of overstepping the bounds or of living close to the final limit.

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## Mitya Recites The European Hymn

The Karamazovs are "sensualists." The word *naslazhdenie* ("sensual pleasure") peppers Dostoyevsky's writing, but Alyosha turns his ecstasies back into pedagogical plans and only Dmitri's purifying torture gives him full voice without killing him. This "jouissance," mystical operation paid for with a "pound of flesh" (Lacan), so close to us and so elusive, can be heard in the French "j'ouïe" ("I hear") and in all languages, when one body en-"joys" pure abandon through another.

Experiencing one's parricidal desires as an exhausting fantasy, without advancing to the act, however, leaves open the insolvable question: "But who has killed my father, who has killed him? Who can have killed him if I didn't?" cries Mitya at the end of the trial. This "martyr to a sense of honor," this "humiliated soul, guilty of nothing," is nevertheless not a man at peace. He continues his search for dignity (*dostoinstvo*) through "filth." In a brilliant twist on the biblical, evangelical man, this modern Diogenes thanks the Lord for having revealed to him that he is a "monstrous sinner," while not preventing him from leaving his father alive. "I didn't kill him ... but I wanted to kill him."

The tearful exaltation of this antihero is too pathetic to be convincing. And as a mix of Christian moralism and carnivalesque excess, his tortuous trial verges on the sarcastic and ridiculous through a commiserating send-up of the judicial system. Dostoyevsky never fails to give all his spokespeople a heartrending tragic-comic tone.

I hear that, and I prefer to remember Mitya in the summerhouse scene, in the grip of his contradictions, with no way out in sight—not even prison—and delivering to Alyosha a conviction that strikes us with its prophetic intensity. This survival of nihilism, this sinner before God, presents only enigmas, and as a celibate of art, lacking answers, suddenly singles out the most mysterious of them, the enigma of beauty: "There are plenty of people ... who begin with the ideal of the Madonna and end with the ideal of Sodom."

"Sodom," debauchery, anality, passivity, femininity, inexhaustible homoeroticism? Or the Hebrew "Sodom," archetype of universal evil, home of immorality and vice, insatiable, exhausting desire? "No, man is broad, too broad, indeed. I'd have him narrower.... What to the mind is shameful is beauty and nothing else to the heart.... Believe me, that for the immense mass of mankind beauty is found in Sodom."

Theologian and clever carnivalist, Dostoyevsky makes resonate in "Dmitri" the Greek name of the mythic Demeter, tireless "mother of the earth" for which she must plow up hell before returning to the harvests of life. He thus lets readers wandering in this polyphony understand that it is by merging with the energy of maternal eroticism that the son survives the murder of the father. And that Dmitri's "Sodom" aspires to and assumes the unbearable hysteria of feminine desire as well as the sovereign will of femininity.

Thus, it is a matter of Karamazovian beauty, that "terrifying thing," the secret battleground between the Devil and the Good Lord. But Dmitri is not satisfied with the stories and confessions that he stammers out. In order for "man to rise again from his abasement," and "in the very midst of this shame," Dmitri Karamazov finally leaves everything ... to the memory of European literature. Thus, "he raised his head, thought a minute, and began with enthusiasm" to recite Schiller's "Ode to Joy!"

To each his poem. Ivan, son of his father and the shrieker, composes his "Grand Inquisitor." Alyosha, the youngest, stops holding forth as pedagogue and transforms into a walker-educator of "boys." Mitya, the oldest brother, born of the same buffoon and the independent aristocratic woman who beat him, feminist before the term existed, becomes impassioned over a strange kind of romantic humanism. He recites for Alexie the verses celebrating the deist orgy with mother earth: "Her gifts



to man are friends in need, / The wreath, the foaming must, / To angels—vision of God's throne, / To insects—sensual lust."

Dmitri is much more irreverent, however, than the German idealist he quotes, his mentor in this case. He plunges into debauchery, "headlong and heels up," and finds beauty in that "humiliating position." Beyond sarcasm, is it the demonic that he rallies by trying to "kiss the hem of the veil in which my God is shrouded" and to enter into a new stage of sensuality? This absurd condemned man no longer complains of "not knowing how to say it with words," and he no longer "preaches" either. Having found the formula for beauty, he puts it into action and sketches out a future with Grusha as his wife: together they will brave prison camp and America!

A final—European and Dostoyevskian variation on the "ridiculous man."

A version of Schiller's hymn inspired the last movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. That tune, without words, became the anthem of the European Union. Today, romanticism and sarcasm maintain the global market, and Karamazovian jouissance is diluted or radicalized in the "everything is permitted" of the World Wide Web. The ideal of the Madonna is displayed, with no shame whatsoever, side by side the ideal of Sodom. Or so it seems. It is not certain that men and women are "broad" enough (just as Mitya wished) to grasp the terrifying beauty of that.

When the repercussions of this battleground escape us, maybe we can reread Dostoyevsky. Proliferating dialogues which are not a means, but the end. The only one still possible? With their unresolvable tensions, we approach something like the center of a beauty that constitutes us and that could, perhaps, survive us. <>

## **RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE by Amber L. Griffioen [Elements in the Philosophy of Religion, Cambridge University Press, 9781108742252]**

This Element looks at religious experience and the role it has played in philosophy of religion. It critically explores the history of the intertwined discourses on mysticism and religious experience, before turning to a few specific discussions within contemporary philosophy of religion. One debate concerns the question of perennialism versus constructivism and whether there is a "common core" to all religious or mystical experience independent of interpretation or sociohistorical background. Another central discussion concerns the epistemology of purportedly "theophanic" experience and whether a "perceptual model" of religious experience can provide evidence or justification for theistic belief. The Element concludes with a discussion of how philosophy of religion can productively widen its treatment of religious experience in the service of creating a more inclusive and welcoming discipline.

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### **Prologue**

This Element explores various dimensions of the historical and contemporary philosophical discourse surrounding religious experience. While no text of this length can cover all the material on

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this topic, my aim here is to present, contextualize, and critique just a few of the central discussions in analytic philosophy of religion as well as to gesture at some new directions a philosophy of religious experience might take that could help correct old biases. Section 1 provides some historical context to the contemporary discourse surrounding religious experience in the Anglo-American and European contexts. Section 2 then looks at one central discussion that came to prominence in the twentieth century, namely whether there is some "common core" to all religious experience and whether such experience can be considered independently of its religious interpretation. In sections 3 and 4, I explore in more detail the epistemology of religious experience, with a particular focus on the analogy drawn by some analytic philosophers between the purported experience of God and sense perception. Finally, Section 5 explores some alternative epistemological approaches to religious experience and concludes with a discussion of the ways the philosophical scholarship on the subject can be fruitfully expanded.

## Religious and Mystical Experience in Historical Context

The spiritual literature and oral histories of the various world religions are full of reports of the remarkable experiences of noteworthy religious individuals. However, much like the modern concept of religion itself, religious experience did not really become a prominent object of Western academic discourse until the nineteenth century. Indeed, rather like comic book superheroes, discourses surrounding religious experience in philosophy of religion have a (not uncomplicated) "origin story." And just as comic book origin stories help us better understand the motivations, powers, and vulnerabilities of the superheroes we know and love, knowing a bit more about the history of the discourse concerning religious experience can give us important insights into the ways the scholarship is framed today and help us to evaluate both its advantages and its shortcomings.

## A Brief Genealogy of the Discourse

As noted, religious experience itself did not become a topic of philosophical investigation until the modern era. However, appeals to religious experience have historically played a significant role in philosophical-theological contexts. (Consider, for example, the centrality of Augustine's conversion experience in the *Confessions*, or Ghazali's being cured of his epistemological paralysis through divine illumination in *Deliverance from Error*.) Further, although many philosophers today tend to associate the high to late Middle Ages in Western Europe with the rise of scholasticism and natural theology, reports of religious experience also became prominent in religious writing during this time as part of a surge in what we today call religious mysticism. Many mystical and contemplative texts appeal to instances of divine or saintly encounters to confer legitimacy on the work or its author, and they also often speak of particular kinds of experiential "union" with God as a marker or goal on the individual's spiritual journey (Griffioen and Zahedi 2018). However, the discourse surrounding mysticism has its own complicated history, one which has deeply influenced the philosophical treatment of religious experience down to the present day and which therefore merits a brief discussion here. (For a more detailed analysis, see Jantzen [1995] and Schmidt [2003].)

In Christian antiquity, and persisting through much of the early to high Middle Ages, so-called "mystical theology" had less to do with the experiential aspect of religion and more to do with the hermeneutical act of uncovering the "hidden" or "secret" meanings of Scripture and the sacraments (Jantzen 1995). It thus implied having special access to sacred texts and religious secrets, a domain generally reserved for those who enjoyed both literacy and ecclesial power (i.e., men). Women were thereby largely excluded from such activity. At the same time, Christianity also had the tools at its disposal to allow religious experience to play a central role in theological reflection. Not only was the Bible full of stories of passive religious encounters such as Moses and the burning bush, the annunciation of Gabriel to Mary, or Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus, medieval Christianity had also developed a long-standing tradition of confessional and meditative theological literature in the first-person voice. Together with the Church's strong veneration of the Virgin Mary

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as the blessed "handmaid of the Lord" and the dominant Aristotelian view of women as "passive receptacles" largely tied to the body, this paved the way for some later medieval women to lay claim to a certain degree of spiritual authority by appealing to their own passive, ecstatic, and remarkable experiences of the divine to frame and legitimate their theological insights (Van Dyke 2022). Indeed, an upsurge in literacy and the production of devotional literature for the masses during this period allowed both women and laypersons to explicitly enter into theological discourses previously reserved for male scholars by embedding their theological ideas within the context of accounts of their experiential encounters with Christ, Mary, and other holy figures. These forms of contemplative writing allowed the language of personal religious experience to begin to play a greater role in theological and philosophical reflection as a whole.

However, as religious experience gained a more prominent foothold in medieval theological and devotional writing, it also became more heavily policed by the Church — especially when those reporting such experiences were women or members of other socially marginalized groups. Thus, although the term "mystic" came to be more closely associated with religious experience during the late medieval and early modern periods, this terminological shift largely occurred in the context of identifying so-called "false mystics," witches, or heretics (Schmidt 2003). In this way, the earlier hermeneutical sense of mysticism, which was positively connoted yet coded as masculine, gave way to a more gender-inclusive, experiential sense of the term, but one which was negatively associated with unorthodoxy and religious enthusiasm (Jantzen 1994). This shift was accompanied by an increasing suspicion of somatic and sensory experiences associated with women, such as religious visions, auditions, stigmata, erotic spiritual encounters, and the like — a suspicion whose vestiges are still visible in the philosophical literature today.

It therefore became all the more important for those worried about being identified as "false mystics" to set out criteria for identifying religious experiences as authentic and to show how their experiences met those criteria, especially given the immensely popular treatises on spiritual discernment by late medieval theologians like Henry of Langenstein and Jean Gerson, who were particularly suspicious of the claims of women and of lay religious sects to authoritative religious experience (Sluhovsky 2007). It was in this context that the sixteenth-century philosopher and Doctor of the Church Teresa of Avila provided strict guidelines for distinguishing divine from hallucinatory, delusional, or demonic experiences in her writings. Cautionary reflections like hers introduced the significance of evidential considerations into theological appeals to experience and hence represent a very important chapter in the history of the epistemology of religious experience. And although the epistemological concerns of today's philosophers are far removed from those of Teresa and her contemporaries, we may consider some of the contemporary models of religious experience as having inherited the legacy of these late medieval discourses.

The early modern period in Europe saw a shift in focus to the idea of "rational" or "natural" religion, with the further development of theistic proofs and theodicies by figures like Descartes, Leibniz, Boyle, Clarke, and Paley, as well as discussions of cosmology and the relationship of God to nature by thinkers as diverse as Spinoza, Conway, Malebranche, and the Cambridge Platonists. However, another strand of thought came to prominence with Thomas Reid and Scottish "common sense" philosophy. Reid shifted the discussion from proofs for God's existence to an exploration of the rationality of religious belief — and from questions *de facto* to questions *de jure* — a move that would be taken up again by Reformed epistemologists in the twentieth century and, as we will see, would have a profound impact on the philosophy of religious experience (Nichols 2014).

It also seems to be around this time that mysticism became more solidly linked to claims of direct, ecstatic, ineffable experience of the kind that William James would later point to in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*. Still, at this point in time the use of the term "mysticism" remained largely

pejorative. Indeed, the association of mysticism and religious experience with quietism and heretical religious enthusiasm only increased during the Enlightenment, as manifestations of religious fervor came to be seen as antithetical to any acceptable, "rational" form of religion. However, in the eighteenth century, reactionary counter-Enlightenment critics began to speak out against religious rationalism, rebranding those labeled "mystics," not as religious threats, but rather as the guardians of "true religion" (Schmidt 2003: 281). Religion, they maintained, belonged most properly to the experiential realm of affect, not intellect, and was most fundamentally a matter of inner piety, not the outward actions of individuals, the public activities of the Church, or even the rational defensibility of theological doctrine. These critical responses to the Enlightenment suspicion of mystical experience laid the groundwork for the "invention of mysticism as the fountainhead of all genuine spirituality" that would gain prominence in nineteenth-century German Romanticism and American Transcendentalism (281). In this latter context, the term "mysticism" began to come into its own, bringing religious experience as a subject of scholarly interest along with it.

The shift to viewing feeling and experience as central to the religious enterprise also represented a response to a growing awareness of global religious diversity, one stoked by European missionary and colonialist ventures. On the one hand, this created conceptual space for a more universal(ist) sense of religion that promoted a degree of religious tolerance and would set the stage for modern scholarly approaches to religion. On the other hand, it often ended up binding disparate traditions together under a particular essentialist conceptual umbrella — one driven largely by European theological and imperialist norms (Asad 1993). Still, this "experiential turn" in the scholarship of religion gave rise to the thought of those figures most commonly referenced today in the philosophical literature on religious experience.

### The Experiential Turn: Schleiermacher, Otto, and James

Three names occur again and again in the contemporary literature, namely Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), Rudolf Otto (1869-1937), and William James (1842-1910). Schleiermacher and Otto, both Protestant German theologians, tend to be named in the same breath — especially in debates over perennialism, which we shall take up below — whereas James, the philosophical pragmatist and pioneer of religious psychology, remains a major touchstone for both empirical and philosophical approaches to religious experience. As we shall see, despite their different approaches to religious experience, the literature's combined reliance on these three figures has led to the philosophical discourse on religious experience being largely framed in a particular way.

### Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834): Religion as Feeling

Schleiermacher's thoughts on religious experience and feeling evolved over his lifetime, but the passages most commonly cited refer, first, to his claim in the *Speeches on Religion* (1st ed. 1799) that "religion is the sensibility and taste for the infinite" (1996: 23) and, second, to his much later discussion in §4 of *The Christian Faith* (1821/1822), in which he claims that "the common element in all howsoever diverse expressions of [religious] piety, by which these are conjointly distinguished from all other feelings [...] is this: the consciousness of being absolutely dependent, or, which is the same thing, of being in relation with God" (2016: 12).

Consonant with the emerging resistance to the attempts of modernity to reduce religion to either doctrine or morality, Schleiermacher thus claimed that religious piety was a deliverance of neither intellect nor will but rather something direct and immediate, not framed by conceptual thought, which can only be understood by acquaintance (Proudfoot 1985: 10-11). This grounding of religion in a particular form of feeling (*Gefühl*) is decidedly experiential. The emphasis here is not on what a particular subject thinks or does, but rather something they feel, something that is given to them in experience, whether or not they can articulate it. In one sense, this emphatic centering of affect should come as no surprise, given the blossoming of German Romanticism taking place at this time

in Schleiermacher's own intellectual circle. Nevertheless, this idea turned the Lutheran theology of his day "on its head," insofar as he maintained that religious feeling represented the very basis for religious belief and theological doctrine, as opposed to the other way around — so much so that Jacqueline Marina goes so far as to call Schleiermacher's insistence that feeling lies at the core of all religion a "Copernican revolution in theology" (2008: 461).

### Rudolf Otto: Religion, Experience, and the Numinous

Although his most influential work, *Das Heilige* (1917), translated as *The Idea of the Holy* (1923), was written nearly a century after Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre*, Rudolf Otto explicitly acknowledged his indebtedness to Schleiermacher's approach, even while taking him to task for what he claimed to be an inadequate account of the genuinely religious "moment" in human experience. Like Schleiermacher, Otto took the religious impulse to properly belong to the realm of feeling, and he placed the category of value expressed in that feeling outside the realm of the theoretical and moral. This element of "more profound" religion, when stripped of all its "rational[ized]" aspects, Otto famously called the Numinous. It represents, he thought, a "completely sui generis" category that is not, strictly speaking, definable or teachable, but rather only capable of being "evoked" or "awakened" in consciousness (Otto 2004: 7ff.). "Numinous," then, is a label for both the object and the quality of the religious Ur-moment.

The core numinous experience, which stands at the heart of the so-called "nonrational" aspects of lived religion, Otto claims, takes as its object something purportedly "not explicable in concepts [and] only specifiable through the special reaction in feeling that it elicits" (2004: 13). More specifically, the subject experiences the Numinous as *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*. As *mysterium tremendum*, the Numinous is met with feelings of awe and dread at that which is apprehended as "the Wholly Other" (*das Ganz Andere*), whose utter transcendence pushes the subject away or evokes feelings of radical distance. At the same time, as *fascinans*, the Numinous fascinates, attracts, and draws the subject to it. Otto takes this ineffable, paradoxical experience of awful dread and fascination — like the "irrational" object that elicits it — to be *sui generis* and irreducible to other forms of feeling, even if related "analogously" to other, more easily recognizable emotions. (He seems to think that the uniqueness of the numinous object demands this.) And since this experience stands genealogically at the core of all religion, it is also that which serves to transform empirical, historical religion into a more or less universal, *sui generis* phenomenon.

### William James: An Empirical Approach

When it was published in 1902, William James' *The Varieties of Religious Experience* was one of the lengthiest and most detailed scholarly treatments of religious experience produced up to that time. In line (though not exactly in step) with Schleiermacher and Otto, James was concerned with countering overly rationalistic, intellectualist, and institutionalist narratives about religion, hence his focus on what he calls "personal religion" and its association with experience, feeling, and emotion. He was nevertheless careful to note the relative arbitrariness of his own definition of religion as "the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual[s] in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine" (James 2002: 29-30, emphasis original).

However, despite making feeling and experience central to religion, James did not subscribe to the view that there is a common phenomenological core to all religious experiences. He noted that there "seems to be no one elementary religious emotion, but only a common storehouse of emotions upon which religious objects may draw." Moreover, pace Otto, "there might conceivably also prove to be no one specific and essential kind of religious object" that would elicit some *sui generis* religious experience (James 2002: 27). In this spirit, James presents the reader with a multitude of cases taken from various world religions and historical epochs, and although he did tend



to focus on their commonalities over their differences, he was careful to maintain a sense of pluralism throughout. Still, the examples James gives his readers are nonetheless filtered through an admittedly Western, Protestant lens and are often taken largely out of their social and historical contexts. He was also most concerned with the experiences of those he calls religious "geniuses," as opposed to "ordinary" believers who only live "second-hand" religious lives (11).

James' normative individualism in the *Varieties* had no small effect on a wide range of later philosophical and psychological texts regarding religious experience up to the present day (Jantzen 1995; Bush 2014), and this has further served to universalize and genericize certain kinds of religious experience while marginalizing others. Indeed, it is somewhat ironic that James' attempt to particularize and pluralize religious experience has been used again and again to reinforce a particular kind of subjective, individual experience as paradigm, while eschewing others as "suspect," "superstitious," or simply not worth investigating.

More than any other discussion in the *Varieties*, it is the chapter on mysticism that has garnered the most attention from scholars of religion. Although, as with his definition of religion above, he admits his criteria are relatively arbitrary, James proposed four "marks" of mystical experience — namely, ineffability, noetic quality, transiency, and passivity (2002: 295). That is, such experiences seem to those who have them as incapable of straightforward expression, as states of knowledge or as knowledge-conferring, as episodic and temporally unsustainable, and as something with regard to which one is wholly passive. While James intended this rubric to pick out only one cluster of experiences "for the purposes of the present lectures," these characteristics have been taken up by philosophers, theologians, and religious scholars in the generations that followed, and it has often been implied, especially in philosophy of religion, that experiences of this kind are pretty much the only kinds of religious experiences worth discussing.

### Schleiermacher, Otto, and James in Conversation

Certainly, there is much that unites these three thinkers. For example, their analyses all largely eschew approaches that center the institutional or the doctrinal, as well as those that attempt to reduce religion to either metaphysics or morals. Instead, they focus on the passivity with respect to some higher reality as given to the subject in experience, and they orient their discussions of religion around religious feeling. They all also focus, in one way or another, on individual religious "virtuosi" or "geniuses," where what is seen to lie at the heart of religion comes most prominently to expression in intense moments of profound episodic experience (Joss 2011: 157).

However, there are also important differences between Schleiermacher, Otto, and James that tend to be ignored or elided in the religious experience literature. For example, Schleiermacher and Otto are also often clustered together as proponents of a "sui generis" account of religious feeling. Yet this ignores the fundamentally transcendental character of Schleiermacher's account of the feeling of absolute dependence and may actually have more to do with Otto's self-styling as Schleiermacher's intellectual heir than with an actual continuity in thought (Marina 2008; Dole 2016). Moreover, Otto was a vehement non-naturalist, whereas Schleiermacher was perhaps much more sympathetic to a form of tempered naturalism (Dole 2004, 2016), placing the latter closer in this respect to James, who insisted that our ability to provide a naturalistic explanation for religious experiences precluded neither their psychological import nor their veridicality.

In contrast to both Schleiermacher and Otto, James emerges from a distinctly American experiential tradition, one that included the American Transcendentalists as well as figures like Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards (Joss 2011). He also pursues an explicitly empirical agenda and is an avowed pluralist about religious experience. Still, as Ann Taves has rightly pointed out, although James did not advocate for a sui generis account of religion or religious experience, by privileging the extreme experience of the religious "genius" over that of the everyday believer, he nevertheless "introduced a



bias toward sudden, individual experience that [...] shaped the contemporary Western idea of religious experience" (Taves 2009: 6). Especially when paired with Otto's detailed phenomenological analysis of the "sudden, individual experience" of *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, James' approach would have an impact on philosophers and theologians for generations to come.

Indeed, the discussion over whether the essence of Jamesian-style religious experiences is cross-cultural and irreducible would give rise to one of the central conceptual debates that would dominate much of the discussion on religious experience in the century to come, namely the discourse on the relationship between experience and interpretation and its bearing on the question of whether we can really speak of there being a "common core" to the wide variety of religious experiences of the kind explored by James and others. We will turn our attention more closely to these questions in Section 2, keeping in mind the tendencies of the discourse to privilege certain sorts of experience over others. <>

## **DEPECHE MODE: JACOB TAUBES BETWEEN POLITICS, PHILOSOPHY, AND RELIGION** edited by Herbert Kopp-Oberstebrink, Hartmut von Sass [Supplements to The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy. Brill, 9789004505094]

Jacob Taubes is one of the most significant intellectual figures in the more recent German intellectual scene—and beyond. However, Taubes was either dismissed as a highly controversial character, or as a mere commentator of ongoing debates, or the reception was restricted to his considerations on religion and the ambivalences of secularity. This volume challenges these reductions by putting Taubes' original, albeit marginalised, texts into new, sometimes surprising contexts. Furthermore, it relates familiar topics in his oeuvre to lesser-known themes that are still highly pertinent for contemporary discussions on faith, modernity, and the limits of politics.

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The philosopher and ordained rabbi Jacob Taubes (1923–1987) is one of the most important figures on the 20th century German intellectual scene and beyond. As one of the first academic jet-setters,

he had been the holder of the founding chair for Jewish Studies at Freie Universität Berlin and was professor at Columbia University. Taubes combined traditional Jewish thinking with contemporary issues in philosophy such as theories of secularization, the relation between politics and religion, and the hermeneutics of time, more specifically messianism, apocalyptic thinking, and gnosticism.

2017 marked both the 30th anniversary of Taubes's death and the 70th jubilee of the publication of his seminal dissertation thesis *Oriental Eschatology*, which he submitted to the University of Zurich. We have taken the opportunity to celebrate both occasions to re-read Taubes or to read him anew, also by referring to material that was, so far, not or only hardly available, most importantly *Apokalypse und Politik*, a volume that compiles several papers, critical comments, reviews, and smaller texts by Taubes.

This volume goes back to a conference held in the fall of 2017 at the Ludwik Fleck Center for philosophy of science at the Collegium Helveticum in Zurich; it was a cooperation with the Research Project "Jacob Taubes in Context" located at the Leibniz Center for Literary and Cultural Research in Berlin. Most of the Zurich speakers are also integrated in this volume while we also invited additional colleagues to contribute. First of all, we would like to thank them for their willingness to participate in this project and for their patience since it took some time to bring this volume to light. Moreover, we would like to express our gratitude to the Swiss National Foundation for their financial support and to the editors of the *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* for their interest in this collection that, hence, can now appear at a place that fits very well the theme and ambition of this publication.

## After 1945: Philosophizing under the Sign of a Double Crisis

Philosophy after 1945, and that of the German-speaking world in particular, was marked by a double crisis, an intellectual one and a historico-political one: firstly, the long-term after-effects of an earthquake in intellectual history of the 19th century, which can be described as the "collapse of systems" after the epoch of idealism, were still being felt, despite all attempts of the Weimar era to find alternative intellectual answers to that challenge. The other crisis was by far deeper and marked by the historical-political catastrophe of World War II and the killing of European Jewry—a catastrophe that affected all spheres of life and culture, not only in Europe. Even today, the search for the lost greatness of philosophy gives rise to hopes that traces of past splendor might be found, at least in the first half of the 20th century.

A phenomenology of the intellectual history of the years after 1945 is confronted with a great diversity of different forms of philosophical work and a rich typology of philosophers. Many of them were no longer satisfied by the ideal of traditional systematic philosophy and followed neither the traditional division into philosophical disciplines nor the canon cultivated by academic philosophy.

The philosophy of Jacob Taubes (1923–1987) was part of this "new complexity"—to quote a title by Habermas—of the years after 1945. Like an intellectual seismograph, he perceived the historical situation in its double brokenness, recorded it and reacted to it. For him, the time of traditional philosophical thinking in systems and the time of extensive philosophical world concepts, printed in monolithic books, had come to an end. There may hardly be a second philosopher in the history of academic philosophy in the public arena with only one book published during his lifetime. Yet his *Occidental Eschatology*, despite its idiosyncratic, collage-like style, received quite benevolent criticism.<sup>3</sup> When Sloterdijk aptly paraphrased Taubes's "heretical extremism," he had the late Taubes in mind: "When prophecy fails, apocalypticism arises; when apocalypticism also fails, gnosis arises" („Wenn Prophetismus scheitert, entsteht Apokalyptik; scheitert auch Apokalyptik, so entsteht Gnosis.") What seems to be a paraphrase appears to be all the more accurate as it originates from Taubes himself; it is formed from distilling two quotations from an essay Taubes published three

years before his death: “When apocalypticism is a possible answer to the situation that Leon Festinger formulated as ‘When Prophecy Fails,’ then it is perhaps not too bold to reduce Gnosticism to the formula ‘when apocalypticism fails.’” Taubes, for his part, coined the formula quite explicitly with reference to the title of a 1956 paper published by the American social psychologist Leo Festinger (1919–1989) and two colleagues. This fact is remarkable in two respects: First, it gives an indication of how little Taubes cared about the disciplinary boundaries of philosophy, how open and receptive he was also to what was being negotiated in adjacent disciplines. For Festinger’s work is a socio-psychological field study of millennial or messianic movements, whose theoretical leitmotif is the question of “Unfulfilled Prophecies and Disappointed Messiahs.”<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the reference to the work of Festinger et al. is remarkable because Taubes easily could have referred to his own work *Occidental Eschatology*. In the first book he developed prophecy, apocalypticism, and gnosticism as elements of eschatology as well as its historical course—which Sloterdijk emphasizes so adamantly—in the mode of a double failure. Prophecy, apocalypticism, and gnosticism form the systematic and historical signature of Taubes’s entire work. The almost obsessive engagement with these leitmotifs, embedded in the framework of the political, formed his life’s intellectual work and can be conceived as his philosophical answer to the double crises.

Therefore, it’s evident that once this threefold nucleus was unfolded in *Occidental Eschatology* and its significance recognized, it formed the matrix for all of Taubes’s philosophical works, which dealt, for example, with Hegel, Marx, Heidegger, and related well-approved subjects of the university philosophical canon of his time. But it also formed perspectives on less-prominent figures in the academic business of his days, such as Paulus, Overbeck, Benjamin, and Schmitt. And it paved the way not only in the fact that Taubes dealt with seemingly marginal subjects, as can be found in paraliptomenal works like “Apocalypse and Politics: Their Interaction in Transitional Communities,” but his entire political commitment. Two moments remained decisive for Taubes here, both of which were due to the double crises indicated above: On the one hand, the perspective of the philosophy of religion, whose interest in knowledge can be described as uncovering the “theological undercurrents” of philosophies. That seems appropriate for a philosopher who confessed rather early in his career that “philosophy, where it becomes relevant, must be theological.” The other moment consists in the relevance of the political, which became a focal point of all his reflections.

Taubes did not elaborate this nucleus in further, extensive books. Compared to Hans Blumenberg, his contemporary who might be called the Thomas Mann of the long philosophical-historical narrative, Taubes appears to be the master of the minor forms and genres of theory. His specific style of thinking permeated all areas of his work. He was, to a greater extent than others, a scholar of the spoken word. Taubes valued the development of thought through dialogue and engaging with a real counterpart. He preferred oral teaching and for this reason also left a relatively small printed legacy. Small-scale philosophical and scientific prose predominate: essays, articles, statements, reviews, open letters and critical interventions. Not to be forgotten here are the letters, which in his case constitute a work in its own right. Taubes’s mode was the commentary in the dimensions of theology, philosophy, and politics, the basis of which he provided in 1947 in *Occidental Eschatology*. The fact that this work became so productive and ended up spanning an entire life’s work indicates that its author was precisely not a one hit wonder. This way of philosophizing reacted in its own way to the double crisis, to the end of philosophy and the civilizational rupture of the years 1933 to 1949. Taubes was convinced that philosophy after the end of philosophy should not express itself once again in great works and in purely systematic discourse.

Who was this author really? Jacob Taubes was a controversial figure, embracing conflicting attitudes, stirring up tensions, and full of contradictions. He called himself a ‘Pauline Arch-Jew’, and nevertheless was inspired by Carl Schmitt to interpret the Epistle to the Romans. He was arguably one of the most potent networkers in the humanities of his time, yet his oeuvre remained relatively

small. He polemically intervened in various intellectual debates, using a diversity of forms affiliated to the Jewish tradition of commentary. He was part of a budding academic jet set on both sides of the Atlantic, travelling restlessly from one continent to the other, establishing relations and seeking connections, but remained a “difficult person”; sometimes he was celebrated, sometimes met with reservation or even hostility. At the same time, he persistently kept to a narrow arsenal of subjects since the days of his dissertation on eschatology. Jacob Taubes—a marginal rabbi at the center of intellectual networks, a key intellectual exploring the margins of academic life, a philosopher bored by “pure philosophy.”

### Depeche Mode: Questions and Perspectives

Most of the contributions of this volume are based on papers delivered on the occasion of an international conference, held in October 2017 at the Ludwik Fleck Center at Collegium Helveticum in cooperation with the Research Project “Jacob Taubes in Context” at ZfL Berlin. The papers were strongly revised for the present publication. As for Taubes, the year 2017 marked three landmark events: the thirtieth anniversary of his death, the publication of the one great book, *Occidental Eschatology*, took place 70 years ago that year, and 1947 was the year Taubes turned his back on Switzerland, moving to the United States. He was not to return to Europe until 1963.

Taubes was connected with important cities such as New York, Jerusalem, Paris, Berlin, and Zurich. As he was educated and, finally, buried in Zurich, Switzerland’s largest city seemed the appropriate place to reconsider Taubes’s achievements, thirty years after his decease. The manifold aspects of Taubes as an intellectual figure as well as of his challenging writings were focused in four separate, yet interrelated sections:

1. *Taubes, Switzerland, and Post-War-Germany*: After graduating from the University of Zurich in 1947 and stopping over at Jewish Theological Seminary (New York) and Hebrew University (Jerusalem), Taubes pursued an academic career in the United States. After emigrating to Berlin in 1963, in many ways his impact on the German-speaking academic scene was profound: his interventions in the academic politics of Freie Universität exerted long-lasting consequences, his role within the ‘Poetics-and-Hermeneutics’ circle, his ideas for Suhrkamp’s publishing programs, as well as his stance during the student revolts in the 1960s mark the strong commitment of an intellectual figure, both as an academic and as a non-academic. What was his exact role in the above-mentioned domains? How did Taubes’s practical commitment fit in with his theoretical achievements?
2. *Readings. Taubes between Friends and Enemies*: Taubes was a polarizing and disturbing intellectual. Often enough friends became enemies, and teachers turned into adversaries, as in the case of Gershom Scholem; whereas others, such as Hans Blumenberg, remained aloof, or even tried to avoid contact, like Hans Jonas. On the other hand, Taubes was endowed with an elusive talent of reaching out over abysses and opening up locked doors, as was the case with Carl Schmitt or Armin Mohler. What impact did contacts such as these have on his readings? Is there a hidden agenda recognizable behind his efforts, conflicts, and what he intellectually embraced?
3. *Hermeneutics, Philosophy of Religion, and Interdisciplinarity after Taubes*: In his beginnings at Freie Universität Berlin, Taubes combined the disciplines of philosophy, sociology of religion, and Jewish studies (Judaistik)—as well as the respective three institutes—in one person. Later on, all three disciplines were amalgamated to form the Institute of Hermeneutics. Among related issues, his papers and short contributions focus on messianism, gnostic thinking, eschatology, and St Paul as a turning point in the Jewish tradition. Can we determine the character of Taubes’s hermeneutics and philosophical work? What are its genres? Is there a

mutual interaction between topics and disciplines? And, last but not least, what are the features of his approach to religion and theology?

4. Taubes's '*Occidental Eschatology*'—70 Years after: His *Eschatology* is a tour de force of the history of western thought, while the God of this tradition is presented as not being supernatural, but 'counter-worldly', hence by all appearances decisively belonging to a dualistic framework. What sources, textual traditions, and strategies are to be discerned in his *Occidental Eschatology*? What can we learn from Taubes's thought for recent debates on secularization, contemporary religion, and future prospects of the 'political'?

### Research on Taubes: The Situation Now and Then

These were some of the questions that were to be discussed during the meeting. Comparing the Zurich conference with the first major meeting on *Occidental Eschatology* in Villigst in the year 1997, one has to ask what has changed in the reception of Taubes since then? A year before the Villigst conference, a first selection of Taubes's essays had appeared in the volume *Vom Kult zur Kultur*. This publication presented a milestone in research, because henceforth many of his major contributions were more readily accessible. The extensive volume by Faber, Goodman-Thau, and Macho mapped the terrain on which Taubes's thought developed. Most importantly, it has provided a kind of map of the intellectual references and figures with whom Taubes engaged in *Occidental Eschatology* and later. Some of those references he interwove into his writing: Carl Schmitt, Martin Buber, Karl Löwith, Simone Weil, Hans Urs von Balthasar, and many more. The abundance is overwhelming. Included was also a contribution dedicated to the intellectual relationship of Jacob and Susan Taubes.

A decisive step beyond this state of matters was only achieved with the publication of the first volume of the correspondence between Taubes and his wife Susan and of the letters between Taubes and Carl Schmitt. For now began the actual phase of 'Taubes research' in the eminent sense of the word: his legacy was opened, and this brought to light not only Taubes's so important correspondence, but also other posthumous materials and documents. Research continued along this path, and his all-important correspondence with Susan Taubes (to the extent that it had been preserved) and the exchange of letters with Hans Blumenberg were published in rapid succession. The material included hitherto unedited materials, the publication of further essays, reviews, public letters, and also obituaries in a volume with the title *Apokalypse und Politik*, making Taubes's publications during his lifetime available in their entirety. In a sense, we have come the full circle, as this anthology was published to coincide with the Zurich conference.

This meant also another step toward historicizing Taubes's work—an indispensable prerequisite for further research in the history of theory and intellectual history. For the volume not only assembles the essays in chronological order, but also distinguishes the epoch of Taubes's work in the United States and Jerusalem from that in Germany. For the first time, it became clear which thematic shifts and displacements resulted when Taubes moved from the New World to the Old. For the first time, it also became apparent what a formative role, opening up intellectual contexts, the seemingly marginal minor forms, such as reviews, played in his American years. This phase of the examination of his thought is characterized by the view into his intellectual laboratory, by looking behind the curtains. Since then, Taubes's theoretical relationships can be grasped more precisely and, in part, only truly emerge in their significance—thus reshuffling the cards.

The possibility of grasping Taubes in his biographical context, his intellectual contexts and in networks transforms our view of his work/thought, lets us look deeper. And this form of probing the depths is also an intention of the present volume. To mention just a few examples, one can now measure, or rather spell out, the give-and-take in the intellectual relationship with his wife Susan. His ambivalent relationship to Heidegger becomes evident: not only the so-called 'influence' of one thinker on the other but, above all, of the theoretical work of the one (Taubes) on the other

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(Heidegger); his reading against the grain or even misreading left deep imprints in Taubes's texts. Hegel's impact on Taubes's thought becomes accessible in its fine ramifications, and how biographical background shaped the work becomes apparent.

### On This Volume: An Overview

*Martin Tremblé's* contribution "Taubes's *Jüdischkeit*, or How one led a Jewish life in post-Holocaust Germany" shows how Jacob Taubes baffled scholars and students, followers and enemies for a long time, as he was a man of conflicts, a figure of contradictions, always thinking in oppositions. He was well versed in Christian theology, both Catholic and Protestant, but also an ordained rabbi, trained at a traditional East-European Yeshiva in exile in Switzerland. He drew from both traditional Jewish sources and the Western academic library. From the 1960s, upon his arrival in West-Berlin, Taubes, now the founding chair for Jewish Studies at the Free University, tried to form an extensive intellectual and spiritual center, while he yet engaged in controversies and partisan struggles bestowing an aura of cosmopolitan life to the then divided city. The paper aims at giving some remarks on his family background, on how he figured Judaism, or *Jüdischkeit*, beyond bourgeoisie, but in a mystic and messianic sense, and how his understanding was linked to the life and thought of a Jew in post-Nazi Germany.

In his essay "Depeche Mode: Jacob Taubes and his Style," *Hartmut von Sass* attempts to conceive Jacob Taubes's particular mode of philosophical expression. Starting from a statement on Karl Barth's commentary on Paul's Letter to the Romans, Taubes's reflections on intellectual form and its aptness in specific historical situations are applied on himself and his styles of thought. Transposing Barth's diagnosis of crisis as a permanent state from the 1920s into his own time, the concept of "depeche mode" might serve as abbreviated circumscription of what we are dealing with when reading Jacob Taubes. "Depeche mode" does not only mean a mode of expression and a preference for shorter, more flexible forms and genres of theory (as for instance the commentary), a refusal of elaborated systematic approaches, but also a way of communicating with other voices—including (mes)alliances. It is the intellectual response to the experience of a world in fragments. Accordingly, Taubes's very form of life, his participating in the then quite new phenomenon of an academic jet set, might also have determined the choice of genre and intellectual style—and, perhaps, even the other way round. The question of the style of thought is traced back to the historical shift from analogical thinking to dialectical thought, as practiced by Barth, as well as to the urgency with apocalyptic thinking and the messianic hope that created Taubes's readiness for political engagement.

The aim of *Agata Bielik-Robson's* paper "Jacob Taubes, the Jewish Hegelian" is to present Taubes's *Occidental Eschatology* as a masterpiece of a late-modern philosophical line of thought called 'Jewish Hegelianism.' This classification allows a rereading of Taubes's early work in the theoretical context of the thinkers who also belong to this group: Theodor W. Adorno, Emil Fackenheim, and Jacques Derrida—whose *Glas* bears particularly strong affinities to Taubes's attempt to interpret Hegel against his overarching dogma of universal reconciliation. Bielik-Robson argues that Taubes remains within the frames of the Hegelian dialectic, but tries to 'gnosticize' Hegel by maintaining the element of the 'Jewish antithesis'—the divine 'counterprinciple to the world'—which Hegel himself rejected. The Taubesian Hegel never manages to 'sublate religion into philosophy,' which also makes him immune to the process of a full immanentisation: he retains the concept of the antinomian transcendence which finds its 'cunning' way to subvert the course of nature and natural history. Even if Taubes's own solution in *The Occidental Eschatology* is not quite successful, its underlying intuition is nonetheless right: the true dialectics, which breaks with the pre-modern metaphysics of analogy, depends on the method of *operative antinomianism*, which only the Jewish mutation of Hegelianism can supply.



In her essay “Jacob Taubes: Messianism and political theology after the Shoah,” *Elettra Stimilli* holds the thesis that after the plebiscitary acclamations of the Nazi regime and the ‘historical apocalypse’ of the Shoah, the focus of Taubes’s reflections is the relationship between religion and politics. This intervention focuses on Taubes’s interpretation of Paul of Tarsus, in which he highlights the Jewish roots of Pauline discourse and at once underlines the antinomic element present in the Biblical pact. Thus, in his work there emerges a new definition of political theology, which contrasts the “sovereign” unity between the theologian and the politician proposed by Carl Schmitt. Taubes does not identify theology with politics in order to legitimate it. The two instead diverge and messianism becomes, for him, the theology capable of proposing an act, that is in itself political as a critique of power.

In his reflections on “The Boredom of ‘Pure Philosophy’: Jacob Taubes, Academic Philosophy, and the Challenge of Theologico-Philosophical Intervention,” *Herbert Kopp-Oberstebrink* addresses the intricate relationship of (academic) philosophy and theology in Taubes’s thought. The focus is on his early, formative years as a young academic in the United States and Jerusalem. Taubes’s texts from the 1950s present the philosophical questions and debates of the time, as for example his essay on *Time and Being*. A reading of these texts reveals how Taubes’s resorted to the rich philosophical tradition from Plato onwards. At the same time, his approach is critical towards philosophy and always points out the limits and deficiencies of philosophical discourse. Taubes’s reflections start from the historical diagnosis of an “exodus” of philosophical thought after Hegel, of a migration into other disciplines. The paradoxical strategies and Taubes’s epistemological interest connected therewith form the core of the essay. Examples presented in the essay are Taubes’s discussion of Heidegger in his 1952 paper on “The Ontological Question” and the first post-war debates on Heidegger, on the so-called ‘philosophical anthropology’ and other philosophical positions that were in the process of becoming established in the German academic philosophical discourse of the 1950s and 1960s. In opposition to all thoughts of human self-empowerment, which Taubes finds in Heidegger’s thoughts and in philosophical anthropology, he pleads for the recognition of the hidden sides of man that are concealed to him. In this way, he opens up an interface for philosophical theology in the broadest sense.

*Christian Zolles*’s contribution “From Heaven above and Hell below: On the Social Scientific Task of Translating ‘Gnosis’” aims at providing a complementary perspective on Taubes’s thinking, positioned at the crossroads of politics, philosophy and religion, by emphasising his approach towards the social sciences. The socio-historical tendencies in his works were already reflected in the title of his chair at Berlin’s Free University, which included not only philosophy and Jewish studies but also sociology of religion. Examining his remark on Pierre Bourdieu being “most likely the first person to bring Ernst Cassirer’s ‘Philosophy of Symbolic Forms’ down from the theoretical heavens to the earth of social sciences,” their common theoretical ground is staked out in this article. In particular, Taubes’s and Bourdieu’s analysis of the institutionalization of education and the universities serves as a theoretical background to illuminate the modern anti-discourse of ‘Gnosis’ to which Taubes was firmly attached. Additionally, a supplementary reading of Walter Benjamin’s “On the Task of the Translator” will help to bring about the transformation of the question “What is Enlightenment?” into the social scientifically informed “What is translation?”

In “Gnosis and the Covert Theology of Antitheology: Heidegger, Apocalypticism, and Gnosticism in Susan and Jacob Taubes,” *Elliot R. Wolfson* follows two strands of thought. Firstly, a diligent reading of the letters between Susan and Jacob Taubes and their writings sheds light on their intellectual family workshop. This line of argument points out that Jacob introduced the topics of Heidegger and Gnosticism, whereas the crucial point of linking both together was Susan’s innovation. Her gnostic interpretation of Heidegger should not be considered ancillary or subordinate to that of Jacob. According to Susan Taubes, Heidegger’s rejection of Christian theology was motivated by Jewish-

Christian gnosis as a secret and heretical tradition. Further points of contact between Gnosticism and Heidegger's thought are spelled out in the following. However, the hypothesis guiding her reflections that ancient Gnosticism was a kind of Jewish heresy underscores her own existential feelings of marginalization and rootlessness. The second strand offers a close reading of *Occidental Eschatology* that discusses time and history within the framework of Heideggerian thought. Jacob Taubes's considerations seem far away from the hardly ever explicitly mentioned Heidegger and often sound Hegelian enough. But in the end they align with the Heideggerian dismissal of any attempt to posit a transcendence that would liberate humankind from the temporal yoke of finitude. *Occidental Eschatology* provides the gnostic reconfiguration of the Jewish idea of redemption—which was sharply criticised by Susan.

Gabriel Motzkin's deliberations in his essay "Taubes and Secularization" start from the fact that, according to Karl Löwith, Taubes—despite his adherence to a political conception of history—did not believe that secularization had really occurred. However, he did view Christianity as a political religion. This notion required that he conceive Judaism in terms of political theology. It is questionable whether Paul understood Judaism in the way that Taubes understood it, and whether Paul thought of Judaism as a political religion. Understanding religion as being primarily political may itself be an indication of some kind of conceptual secularization. The same issue arises in the examination of the conception of the apocalypse. There is a difference between maintaining that a specific conception of the apocalypse has political implications and that it is politically motivated.

Sigrid Weigel's text "Between Fascination and Compulsive Schmittian Reading: The Traces of Walter Benjamin in Jacob Taubes's Writings" discusses Taubes's readings of Walter Benjamin from their first, implicit traces in 1953 to their final manifestations in the Heidelberg lectures shortly before Taubes's death. The essay identifies different modes of reference in Taubes's writings. When Benjamin began to inspire his thinking and to fascinate him, this happened in an idiosyncratic mode, whereas in other contexts an adaptive mode can be spotted. Characteristic for Taubes's dealing with Benjamins' texts is his way of making use of them, without referring to their meaning. Later on, as a result of the obsessively pursued project of maintaining a spiritual affinity between Carl Schmitt and Benjamin, a significant shift occurred in Taubes's system of coordinates: from an interest in Marxism and Messianism to an interest in political theology. Taubes's project of political theology produces a composite portrait comprising not only features of both Walter Benjamin and Carl Schmitt but also his own. Finally, in an act of misreading, Taubes positions Benjamin as his predecessor while at the same time reading him through the lens of his own work. <>

## **RETHINKING PHILOSOPHY WITH BORGES,** **ZAMBRANO, PAZ, AND PLATO** by Hugo Moreno [Continental Philosophy and the History of Thought, Lexington Books, 9781793639288]

In **RETHINKING PHILOSOPHY WITH BORGES, ZAMBRANO, PAZ, AND PLATO**, Hugo Moreno argues that in *Ficciones*, *Claros del bosque*, and *El mono gramático*, Jorge Luis Borges, María Zambrano, and Octavio Paz practice a literary way of philosophizing—a way of seeking and communicating knowledge of reality that takes up analogical procedures. They deploy analogy as an indispensable and irreplaceable heuristic tool and literary device to convey their insight and perplexities on the nature of existence. Borges' ironic approach involves reading and writing philosophy as fiction. Zambrano's poetic reason is a mode of writing and thinking based on an imaginative sort of recollection that is ultimately a visionary's poetizing technique. Paz's poetic thinking relies on analogy to correlate and harmonize an array of worldviews, ideas, and discourses.

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In the appendix, Moreno shows that Plato's *Republic* is a forerunner of this way of philosophizing in literature. Moreno suggests that in the *Republic*, Plato reconciles philosophy and poetry and creates a rational prose poetry that fuses argumentation and narration, dialectical and analogical reasoning, and abstract concepts and poetic images.

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About the Author

Philosophy is frequently said to be akin to, or even indistinguishable from, literature. This idea is usually associated with the Continental tradition, specifically with the hermeneutical tradition of Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Derrida. However, several philosophers from the Anglo-American tradition have also expressed this notion, including Santayana, Whitehead, Wittgenstein, Iris Murdoch, Arthur Danto, Stanley Cavell, Martha Nussbaum, and Richard Rorty. Although there are many crucial differences among them, each of these philosophers has something in common with the others. Each became entangled in the modern quarrel between philosophy and poetry and wound up figuring out acceptable terms on which philosophy might reconcile with poetry (Rorty 1989, 26).

In the Spanish-speaking world, leading philosophers in the first half of the twentieth century also participated in the rapprochement between philosophy and poetry. Among these were Miguel de Unamuno, Jose Vasconcelos, Jose Ortega y Gasset, Carlos Astrada, Jose Gaos, Juan D. Garcia Bacca, Julian Marias, Leopoldo Zea, Feliz Schwartzmann, and Arturo A. Roig. In fact, it is often said that a considerable portion of Hispanic philosophy is not just similar to literature; it is literature. Although, in the past, philosophers often commended this aspect of Hispanic philosophy, over the past sixty years, most came to regard it as a drawback that needed to be overcome. As a result, contrary to what occurred in mainstream Western philosophy and literature circles, the leading contemporary Hispanic philosophers ended trying to work out acceptable terms on which poetry might surrender to philosophy.

According to these acceptable terms only one genre of literature—the essay—is recognized as an integral part of Hispanic philosophy. Such nonexpository genres as poetry, drama, the short story, and the novel, while still regarded as thought-provoking, are not deemed genuine works of philosophy. What I intend to show in this book is that contemporary scholars disregard some of the most original texts of the Hispanic philosophical tradition when they exclude literary texts from the realm of philosophy. My main argument is that Jorge Luis Borges' *Ficciones*, Maria Zambrano's *Claros del bosque*, and Octavio Paz's *El mono grammatico* are examples of an ancient literary way of philosophizing, a way of seeking and communicating knowledge of reality that resorts to analogical procedures.

*Ficciones*, *Claros del bosque*, and *El mono grammatico* exemplify the intellectual acumen, breadth, and depth, as well as the literary brilliance of these three Hispanic philosophers. Borges, Zambrano, and Paz deploy analogy as an indispensable and irreplaceable heuristic tool and literary device to convey their insight and perplexities on the nature of existence. Borges' ironic approach involves reading and writing philosophy as fiction. Zambrano's poetic reason is a mode of writing and thinking

based on an imaginative sort of recollection that is ultimately a visionary's poetizing technique. Paz's poetic thinking relies on analogy to correlate and harmonize the array of worldviews, ideas, and discourses that it engages and synthesizes.

In addition to shedding light on Hispanic literary philosophy, this book identifies and defends an alternative way of approaching the literature-philosophy relation. I call it the analogical schema, which arguably provides the most adequate comparative schema for understanding philosophy in literature, and literature as philosophy.

It is important to challenge the schemas that separate literature and philosophy when studying contemporary Hispanic literary texts. This is necessary not only for the sake of creating a more complete picture of Hispanic philosophy but also, and more crucially, because many Hispanic texts are situated right at the philosophy-literature interface. Far from being isolated cases, these texts are part of an old, though not often acknowledged, philosophical tradition that spans several centuries in the Hispanic world.

### World Philosophy and First-Problematic Thinking

The idea that some literary texts deal with genuine philosophical matters is quite common in contemporary philosophy and literary criticism. Among the texts most frequently cited are poems by Lao Tzu, Parmenides, Lucretius, Dante, Holderlin, Baudelaire, Celan, Pessoa, and Tagore; plays by Sophocles, Shakespeare, Calderón, Goethe, and Sartre; novels by Cervantes, Dostoyevsky, Proust, Joyce, Kundera, and Eco; and short stories by Zhuangzi, Kafka, Borges, Lispector, and Cortázar. What remains controversial is whether or not philosophical literature counts as genuine philosophy.

Many philosophers and literary critics have no problem granting that some literary texts embody sophisticated philosophical ideas, and sometimes even an entire philosophical system (Santayana 1935). Similarly, if the author of a literary text is a canonical figure in the history of philosophy, or received formal training in philosophy, the philosophical character of their text is not usually called into question. The best-known cases are texts by Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Unamuno, and Sartre. However, if the author in question is a poet, a fiction writer, or a dramatist who is not a philosopher by training, most readers would not consider his or her texts to be truly philosophical.

Clearly, an author need not have a degree in philosophy for his or her writings to be genuinely philosophical; one must examine the texts themselves. However, there are no universally recognized criteria that can help us distinguish a philosophical text from a literary one, primarily because philosophy and literature are not mutually exclusive categories: a text can indeed be both literary and philosophical. Another reason is that there are no universally valid definitions of philosophy. Up until Plato's time, "the word philosophēin (and its cognates) meant 'intellectual cultivation' in the broad sense; it did not refer to a specialized discipline or mode of wisdom" (Nightingale 2004, 77). Moreover, between the third and thirteenth centuries of our era, the terms "philosophy" and "poetry" were interchangeable in Latin (Curtius 1990, 209-213; Marenbon 2000, x). The difference between one and the other was far from clear-cut in Europe until the nineteenth century. For example, a well-known anthology of Renaissance philosophy contains excerpts from Petrarch's *The Ascent of Mount Ventoux* and Luis Vives' *Fable about Man*—works of literature that few today would classify as philosophy (Cassirer, Kristeller, and Randall 1948). Similarly, in England, philosophers like Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill regarded the poetic works of Samuel T. Coleridge as the most representative of "Continental [Idealist] philosophy" (Vrahimis 2019, 256-257).

Some might argue that, in the contemporary era, the difference between philosophy and literature is much clearer than in the past. However, as Jorge Gracia points out, the "poetic tradition" of Pythagoras, Plotinus, Pseudo-Dionysius, Bonaventure, and Giordano Bruno, among others, has

enjoyed an uninterrupted history since antiquity (1992, 6-9). In fact, since the eighteenth century, this tradition has played an ever-growing role in philosophy. Nowadays the "poetic tradition" stands out as one of the two major tendencies in Western philosophy, partly because of Heidegger's major influence (Gracia 6). Admittedly, philosophers like Alfred Ayer, who strongly identified with the Anglo-American analytical tradition, referred to this kind of philosophy as little more than "misplaced" poetry (Ayer 1936, 44). This only reinforces the point that there is a major disagreement in the field about what counts as "real" and what counts as "spurious" philosophy. This is particularly the case in the Hispanic world, where it is often said that Hispanic philosophy is found in literary texts rather than in treatises (González García 2000, 73).

Most scholars agree that Hispanic philosophy is found in essays but view the claim that it is also found in poetry, fiction, and drama as far-fetched. Nonetheless, throughout the first half of the twentieth century, this conception of philosophy was still common in the Hispanic world, and most of those who defended it did not think of the essay as the genre best expressing and embodying Hispanic philosophy. Unamuno (1976, 248-271) felt that the text that most fully embodied Hispanic philosophy was Cervantes' *Don Quijote*, while Juan D. García Bacca (1945, 219-317) believed it was Calderón's play *La vida es sueño*. María Zambrano (1986, 1989a, 1991, 1996a) proposed that Hispanic philosophy is best represented in a wide variety of literary genres, including the mystical poem, the spiritual guide, and the realist novel. While José Gaos did favor the essay, he also recognized that Hispanic "aesthetic thought" encompasses a wide range of literary genres, including literature de imaginación o ficción (1993, 60-61).

Philosophers frequently maintain that philosophy consists of reasoning, and this explains to some extent why some of them have looked favorably upon the essay in the Hispanic world. Another important consideration is the fact that Ortega y Gasset, unanimously recognized as the most influential Spanish-speaking philosopher of the twentieth century, deployed and defended the use of the essay in philosophy. Of all literary genres, the essay is undoubtedly the most appropriate for making a logically sequenced argument that can be supported with verifiable information. However, it should be stressed that some essays are literature and that not all philosophy is argumentation. There are also non-discursive modes of philosophical thinking. Two examples of such modes would be what Wilmon Sheldon refers to as "affective" and "conative" thinking, which correspond, respectively, to the discourse of the mystic and the existentialist (1954, 602). Another nondiscursive mode of philosophical thinking is what David L. Hall and Roger T. Ames call "first problematic" or "analogical" thinking, a term I find most useful for reconsidering the philosophical value of genres of thought currently excluded in the Hispanic context (1995, xvii, 112-141).

Alfred Whitehead famously wrote: "The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato" (1936, 63). The footnote metaphor privileges the role of the philosopher as scholar in that it suggests that all philosophical writing is hermeneutical in nature. But replacing "footnotes" with "poetic answers," in the sense that Rorty uses the latter term (1991, 9), provides a more apt general portrayal of "first problematic" philosophical thinking. Likewise, by modifying Whitehead's formulation, we might also obtain the safest general characterization of first-problematic thinking in the European tradition: it is not a compendium of footnotes to Plato but a series of poetic replies to Homer (Hall 2004, 83). Homeric and Hesiodic myths; the "many-worlds" theories of Leucippus, Democritus, and Anaximander; and the Sophists' "conventionalist perspective" epitomize "first-problematic thinking" (Hall and Ames 1995, 115-116).

"First-problematic" or "analogical" thinking is, of course, neither exclusively nor originally a Greek phenomenon, and it certainly cannot be reduced to being an effort to write codicils on the Platonic or the Homeric corpus. For example, Hall and Ames show that a type of analogical thinking they call



"correlative thinking" "dominates classical Chinese culture" (1995, xviii). Similarly, according to David B. Zilberman, analogy is the "structural unit" of all "basic types of Indian philosophy" and the "genetic code" of most major "cultural mechanisms" in South Asia (2006, 240).

Moreover, it is important to recognize that not all ancient and medieval philosophers adopted the "second-problematic" model of thinking developed by Aristotle and his academic followers. Many of them resorted to a hybrid discourse that fused first- and second-problematic thinking and categories (Brisson 2004). These philosophers wrote not only footnotes to Plato but also poetic replies to Homer.

Even though it is undeniable that in the eighteenth century in many parts of the Western hemisphere, analogical thinking was displaced by the rationalistic episteme (Foucault 1994, 46-77), in several places where this episteme did not prevail—for example, in Latin America, the Arab world, and in certain cultural spaces in Europe and North America—analogical thinking has continued to play a major, if sometimes subterranean, role in philosophy, literature, religion, and the arts.

## Organization

Chapter 1 examines some of the most prominent and engaging arguments for and against the claim that Borges' fiction is a kind of philosophy. To accomplish this task, I rely on Alain Badiou's conception of the three hegemonic ways of understanding the art-philosophy relation in the contemporary era, namely, the classical, the didactic, and the Romantic schemas (2005, 1-15). However, since Badiou's model is rather general and does not take into consideration what I call the analogical schema, which is particularly important in the fields of Hispanic philosophy and literature, I rely on other models to complement Badiou's. One such model is Rorty's theory of the four main genres of philosophical historiography, which includes "doxography," "rational and historical reconstruction," "Geistesgeschichte," and "intellectual history" (Rorty 1984). Additionally, in this chapter, I provide a brief historical account of the origins of the analogical schema and its dissemination in the Hispanic world since the Middle Ages. My main argument is that the analogical scheme provides the most appropriate models for understanding Borges' fiction as philosophy on its own terms.

Chapter 2 proposes that Borges is a skeptic and an ironist in the tradition of Gorgias, Pyrrho, Montaigne, Santayana, Pessoa, and others. My main argument is that Borges' fiction, in general, and *El jardín de senderos que se bifurcan*, in particular, invent a new form of philosophical thinking and writing. I argue that the greatest contribution of Borges to contemporary philosophy is to have realized better than anybody else before him the philosophical possibilities of the short story. My analysis of *El jardín de senderos que se bifurcan* shows that in this text there are at least two entirely different images of Being, one monistic and one pluralistic. While most of the stories belong to the mystical tradition of philosophy inaugurated by Parmenides' poem—which I call the way of the Same—I argue that other stories belong to the pluralistic tradition that Borges' *El jardín de senderos que se bifurcan* arguably inaugurates—which I call the way of Ts'ui Pên. In the last section, I offer a general description of this kind of literary philosophy, which I call modal ironism. I use Borges' short story "The Garden of Forking Paths" as the model text for modal ironist philosophy and propose that Ts'ui Pên—the legendary architect of Borges' Garden—is the conceptual persona of this kind of philosophy.

Chapter 3 discusses Maria Zambrano's literary philosophy in light of her concept of poetic reason. The main thesis is that Zambrano's philosophy is mystical in character and that it belongs to the network of traditions known as philosophic perennis that was originally inspired by the Pythagorean intuition that analogy is "the structural principle of the universe" (Palakeel 281). This network connects the mystical philosophy of Zambrano with various esoteric traditions, including Orphism, Pythagoreanism, Neo-Platonism, Hermeticism, Gnosticism, Sufism, the Jewish Kabbalah, Christian

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Theosophy, and Negative Theology. This chapter also offers an account of the evolution of Zambrano's philosophy of poetic reason from its inception in early works to its culmination in *Claros del bosque*. It shows that "the event of the Word" is the foundation of Zambrano's "method" of poetic reason in that this "event" is the primary analog that coordinates the set of relationships and experiences that Zambrano's mystical philosophy discloses in *Claros del bosque*.

Chapter 4 discusses Paz's literary philosophy and offers a close reading of *El mono grammatico*. It begins with a brief review of the various characterizations and evaluations of Paz's philosophical thinking and proposes that Paz's philosophy is Romantic in character and origin and that it privileges unity and subordinates otherness. My close reading of *El mono grammatico* shows that, in addition to offering a poetic and philosophical critique of language, this text discusses and illustrates the analogical sense of being and the mystical character of language. It also shows that Paz resorts to both analogy and irony in this text. Through analogy, he sets out to disclose the ultimate reality and unity of things; and, through irony, he relativizes all truth-claims, including his own.

While there are obviously many important differences between the literary philosophy of Zambrano, Paz, and Borges, this book also aims to identify some of their similarities. One important affinity between them is that they conceive of existence as a mystery, a mystery that cannot be solved and dispelled but only experienced. Conceived as a mystery rather than as a problem or a question, existence renews our sense of wonder and increases our perplexity of what is radically other. Unlike most philosophers who perceive perplexity in negative terms as something insufferable that must be overcome (Desmond 1995b, ix—xi), Zambrano, Paz, and Borges embrace perplexity and engage in the ensuing speculation via fabulation, figuration, and irony. Even though they often engage in hermeneutical and dialectical types of reasoning, these serve not purely rational but eminently aesthetic ends.

The appendix revisits the ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry as expressed in Plato's *Republic*. It situates Plato's quarrel with poetry in a historical perspective by discussing the cardinal role that poetry played in the foundation and the development of the Greek polis. This essay is relevant to my general argument because it shows that, contrary to common opinion, Plato's writings are both literature and philosophy. In the *Republic*, Plato reconciles philosophy and poetry and creates an alternative kind of poetry: a rational prose poetry that fuses argumentation and narration, dialectical and analogical reasoning, and abstract concepts and poetic images. Plato's *Republic* is indeed a key foundational text of Western literary philosophy. <>

## **THE PHILOSOPHERS AND THE BIBLE: THE DEBATE ON SACRED SCRIPTURE IN EARLY MODERN THOUGHT**

edited by Antonella Del Prete, Anna Lisa Schino, Pina Totaro  
[Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, Brill, 9789004418639]

The Bible is the crucible within which were forged many of the issues most vital to philosophy during the early modern age. Different conceptions of God, the world, and the human being have been constructed (or deconstructed) in relation to the various approaches and readings of the Holy Scriptures. This book explores several of the ways in which philosophers interpreted and made use of the Bible. It aims to provide a new perspective on the subject beyond the traditional opposition "faith versus science" and to reflect the philosophical ways in which the Sacred Scriptures were approached. Early modern philosophers can thus be seen to have transformed the traditional interpretation of the Bible and emphasized its universal moral message. In doing so, they forged new conceptions about nature, politics, and religion, claiming the freedom of thought and scientific

inquiry that were to become the main features of modernity.

Contributors include Simonetta Bassi, Stefano Brogi, Claudio Buccolini, Simone D'Agostino, Antonella Del Prete, Diego Donna, Matteo Favaretti Camposampiero, Guido Giglioni, Franco Giudice, Sarah Hutton, Giovanni Licata, Édouard Mehl, Anna Lisa Schino, Luisa Simonutti, Pina Totaro, and Francesco Toto.

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Index Nominum

This book collects papers presented during the international conference *I filosofi e la Bibbia: Letture filosofiche delle Scritture in età moderna*, which took place in Rome and Viterbo on 9–10 May 2019 and was organized by the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, History, Philosophy and

Law Studies (diStu) of the University of Tuscia, the Department of Philosophy of “La Sapienza” University in Rome, and the National Research Council’s Institute for the European Intellectual Lexicon and History of Ideas (ILIESI-cNr) in Rome. The invitation was then extended to other scholars, in order to present a coherent framework of the relationship between philosophy and the Holy Scriptures. Experts coming from different research fields – from the history of philosophy to ethics, from the philosophy of religion to history of science, theology, and exegesis – were asked to investigate the pervasiveness, the influence, and the role of the biblical text in philosophical reflections during the early modern age.

From the early stages, the conviction that animated the project of the conference was the awareness that the text of both the Old and the New Testament has constituted the constant reference point for philosophical analysis from the early Middle Ages until at least the modern age. Beyond the various exegetical and theological interpretations, the Bible remains one of the main elements of the most important debates and the breeding ground for questions that have always nourished the history of cultural tradition in the Western world. Consider, for example, the metaphysical discussions on the nature of being, or the problems linked to the origin of evil and sin, the essence of good, truth and life, the concepts of eternity, freedom and free will, and the soul-body relationship. Different conceptions of God, the world, and the human being have been shaped on the basis of the history of salvation, constructed (or deconstructed) in relation to the various approaches and readings of the Holy Scriptures. Not to mention the history of languages and their linguistic implications, since some of the great idioms of the European tradition found their written and literary style thanks to translations of the ancient Hebrew, Greek, and Latin texts of the Bible. Such was the case of the German language, which established itself thanks to Martin Luther’s translation, or of English, which became definitively established with the so-called King James Bible. These are just a few examples, but they are very significant in terms of the theoretical and practical effects of the long-lasting influence of the scriptural text. Much of European cultural heritage has been elaborated around it, from the formation of the collective imagery (proverbs, idioms, the multiform representations of figures such as the serpent or the devil, for example) to the great cosmological systems. The same process of secularization that began with Renaissance humanism is studded with questions of biblical exegesis, to such an extent that it seems impossible to discuss early modern and contemporary thought while ignoring or downsizing its biblical foundations.

Despite the widespread presence of the text of the Scriptures in Western culture, scholars have partly neglected this aspect in the analysis of philosophers’ thought, certainly discouraged by the fact that 17th-century theologians have always taken exegetical work into their own hands, mistrusting if not outright rejecting the readings proposed by the laity. Indeed, with the exception of the pioneering work of Amos Funkenstein, of the volume devoted to the 17th century in the series *Bible de tous les temps*, edited by Jean-Robert Armogathe, and a few other general, monograph studies, not many texts have offered extensive and in-depth reconstructions of the philosophers’ relationship with Scriptures. Hence the proposal for a debate on the different readings of the Bible in the early modern age, specifically devoted to the 17th century as a privileged century for philosophical analysis: it marked a milestone after the turmoil caused by the impact of the Reform and the development of knowledge. Furthermore, during this century the mingling of conceptual categories reached its peak, and the debate on the interpretation of the Bible began to affect directly the most compelling scientific issues in the fields of ontology, psychology, ethics, as well as in anatomy, physiology, geology, and above all cosmology, which had traditionally derived from the fusion of biblical cosmology with the Aristotelian-Ptolemaic world picture (see for example the clash between Galileo Galilei and Cardinal Bellarmino).

Historiography has long enriched and modified our knowledge of the vast movement of thought that runs from the Reformation to the Enlightenment, but common belief is still grounded firmly in the

idea that the great cultural change that began and developed between the 16th and the 17th centuries primarily concerned astronomy, mathematics, physics, applied sciences, and medicine. That an equally radical mutation also affected the historical and hermeneutical disciplines was a deep conviction initially held by scholars such as Eugenio Garin and Paul Oskar Kristeller, who explored Italian humanism and Renaissance. Later, other scholars systematically traced connections between this tradition and its developments in Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries. Today, the framework of our knowledge has expanded considerably and, thanks to the essential contribution of authors from different disciplinary areas (historians, exegetes, anthropologists, philologists, and linguists), our approach to the relationship between the Bible and philosophy has changed considerably. There is a growing awareness that the rejection of bookish erudition, exemplarily expressed in Descartes's *Discours de la méthode*, and strongly supported by Malebranche's pages of *La recherche de la vérité*, coincided with a general movement of break with tradition, and at the same time with a substantial affirmation and recovery of concepts, notions, and convictions that united rather than divided the different fields of knowledge of early modern European culture.

In fact, the impact of biblical exegesis on scientific debate has been the focus of a large range of recent studies. Particular attention has been paid to the disputes over the reconciliation between heliocentrism and the literal interpretation of the Scriptures as well as to its opponents and their doctrines. The feature that unites the pro-Copernicans, beyond the sometimes strong differences in their strategies, is the claim for an autonomy of scientific research from the control of theologians. This claim is based on three assumptions. First, the belief in a twofold revelation developing through the book of Scripture and the book of nature: the two books are endowed with equal dignity, but they refer to different spheres, so that the book of Scripture does not concern and does not hand down those scientific truths that must instead be explored in the book of nature, as Galileo explicitly declared. In the second place, the purpose of the Bible, in fact, is equated to its salvific message and to the moral indications contained therein, without forgetting that the study of nature can also take on an apologetic function. These themes are explored in the sections *Rational Theology and Natural Religion* and *The Moral Message of the Bible*, respectively. Lastly, biblical language is structurally "humanized," i.e. adapted or accommodated (*accommodatio* is the technical term) to man's intellectual capacities (*ad captum vulgi*). The section *The Accommodation Doctrine* is devoted to this topic.

None of the above-mentioned assumptions on the interpretation of the Bible shared by Copernicans was wholly original and they are accepted by both Catholic and Protestant sides on behalf of different auctoritates. However, both orthodoxies deny that they can be used to claim the autonomy of natural philosophy. On the contrary, this is the time in which the different religious confessions devised conceptual tools necessary to elaborate and reinforce their own formulas of faith, define the boundaries between what could be tolerated and what had to be refused, and reorganize their control and propaganda apparatuses. These macro-structural frames, largely transversal to the different historical contexts and geographical borders, explain why scientists and philosophers, although animated by deep Christian faith, may have aroused the suspicion, or even the hostility, of the ecclesiastical hierarchies, which agreed in the refusal of Copernicanism regarded as incompatible with biblical dictates.

In the last decades, research devoted to the early modern age studied the spread of increasingly sophisticated exegetical tools, functional to the textual and hermeneutical criticism of the Scriptures. During the 17th century, the development of the philology of ancient texts applied to biblical studies has led to the accumulation of an increasingly comprehensive knowledge about the languages, the historical context, and the nature of the sacred texts. This increasing attention to historical aspects seems finally to have led to a radical critique of the very foundations on which the authority of the Bible was built. Through the creation of communication tools and cultural networks spread

throughout Europe – epistles, journals, and newspapers, for example – individual scholars participated in a *Respublica litteraria* going beyond the constraints of mere confessional ties and geographical borders of the various local and national communities.

The most recent studies in this field largely share the same characteristics, focusing in particular on reconstructing the intellectual physiognomy of an individual author and exploring his writings, or examining a specific thematic framework or cultural heritage. The merit of these contributions is that they have shown how the work of philosophers and exegetes led to the reconsideration of the Bible as a historical and cultural product. Hence the need to delve into the philosophical aspects of these themes and to reconstruct the origins of some particular hermeneutic trajectories in the sections devoted to Enquiring on Moses and Prophet's Witnessing.

The issue of vowel points highlighted by several authors, the attention to internal inconsistencies in the original texts, the incompatibility of the biblical chronology quoted in the various books, the semantic shifts in the translations raise doubts and heuristic problems that are difficult to resolve, undermining the very authority of the Scriptures. On the one hand it is denied, for example, that the Hebrew text of the Old Testament can be corrupted, on the other hand the Protestant principle of *sola Scriptura* not only encourages the proliferation of a large number of individual interpretations of the sacred text, but also contributes powerfully to the emergence of different confessional creeds and sects, often “sans Église,” as well as to a progressive historicization of the Scriptures.

Despite of orthodoxy's repeated attempts to demarcate social and cultural spaces, the debate on “Mosaic physics” is very lively among exegetes and scientists as a clear sign of a dissent connected to a different understanding of power relations in the political and intellectual fields. However, without ignoring the existence of forms of unbelief, irreligiosity, and atheism, it seems that a large number of scientists and philosophers between the 16th and 18th centuries were sincere believers and sometimes programmatically structured their activity as a contribution *ad maiorem gloriam Dei*. Nonetheless, when cases of self-censorship did not occur, their adherence to a shared religiosity relentlessly clashed with the ecclesiastical institutions of the time. The “secular theology [...] conceived by laymen to laymen,” so well described by Funkenstein, took on different meanings in authors such as Galileo and Descartes, for example, who aimed to ensure that natural philosophy had a space free from theological interference. Other philosophers and scientists, conversely, while agreeing with the need for science and philosophy to be free to investigate without the undue intervention of other disciplines, constantly interlaced theological and scriptural elements with their own scientific or philosophical thinking, as in the case of Kepler.<sup>15</sup> Others, such as John Wilkins and Thomas Sprat, believed that it is a specific task of the philosopher to venture into natural theology, giving rise to what would be called physico-theology.

Therefore, the present volume does not aim to question the relationship between science and religion or the progress in biblical exegesis, which, as we have seen, have been widely explored by scholars, but rather to analyse the different uses that philosophers make of the Bible. As much as the fluid disciplinary demarcations of the early modern age allow, philosophy is the main focus of this work. Every chapter addresses fundamental aspects of early modern philosophers' views on the Bible. A complex picture emerges: it appears that, in very different ways and using different approaches, early modern philosophers made a constant effort to explore, deconstruct, and reconfigure the most diverse ontological, epistemological, logical, and theological-political issues through a close comparison and a careful reading of the biblical text. Some topics in particular stand out. In the first place, there was a strong interest in Moses's role as a lawgiver and founder of states, an interest arising from reflections on political issues of urgent relevance in an era characterized by the rise of absolutism and the emergence of the modern state. Secondly, the theme of prophecy stands out: it concerns the possibility of the communication of the divine word and of a mediation

entrusted to a few chosen men. The debate on prophecy is thus configured as the privileged place for probing the relationship between religion and power and for assessing areas of coexistence of temporal and spiritual powers. Besides, the reflection on the Bible, its historical-documentary value, and its moral content, is closely intertwined with the debate on the possibility and significance of a natural, unrevealed, and rational religion, finding a fertile breeding ground during the 17th century. Lastly, the relationship between religion and science becomes a crucial issue: philosophers and scientists rediscovered ancient theological doctrines – often anchored in a traditional language, but used according to new forms and meanings – providing them with new functions and producing a deep change in the relationship between philosophy, faith, and reason. As a result, this volume is divided into five distinct sections: Enquiring on Moses, The Prophet's Witnessing, Rational Theology and Natural Religion, The Moral Message of the Bible, and The Accommodation Doctrine. However, this subdivision does not intend to provide programmatic signposts. It is rather a possible reading path, stemming from the identification of some areas of research that has emerged in recent years as the most interesting and fruitful. Spinoza's role is confirmed as central, while, even if not directly addressed, the debate spreading after the 'Galileo affair' constitutes the background of the book.

The various contributions collected in the five parts of this volume examine, in the first place, the multifaceted use of the figure of Moses, variously presented as legislator, magician, or even impostor (Enquiring on Moses). The reflection on his role as author of the Pentateuch is an opportunity to address questions of a purely theoretical nature (see, respectively, the chapters by Simonetta Bassi and Pina Totaro). Thereafter, the wide domain of prophecy is put in the spotlight (The Prophet's Witnessing): its nature and status are analysed in the chapters concerning Campanella, Hobbes, and Spinoza with the aim of defining its theological-political implications (Guido Giglioni, Anna Lisa Schino, and Diego Donna). The relationship that some representatives of Cambridge Platonism, the English Unitarians, and Pierre Bayle established between rational theology and natural theology is then addressed (Rational Theology and Natural Religion by Sarah Hutton, Luisa Simonutti, Stefano Brogi). Pascal, and again Hobbes and Spinoza, then come under scrutiny (The Moral Message of the Bible) to identify the strength of the moral message of the Bible as its sole area of competence, negating further scientific implications (Simone D'Agostino, Francesco Toto, and Giovanni Licata). Lastly, the new use of the theory of *accommodatio* as a vehicle for a break with tradition is investigated throughout case-studies provided by Kepler, Mersenne, Descartes and his Dutch followers, Newton, and Wolff (The Accommodation Doctrine by Édouard Mehl, Claudio Buccolini, Antonella Del Prete, Matteo Favaretti Camposampiero, and Franco Giudice).

In conclusion, the confrontation of modern philosophers with the Holy Scriptures appears to be marked by radical solutions, which paved the way and contributed to founding the values of tolerance and *libertas philosophandi*, with a highly diversified range of proposals. On the basis of this confrontation, indeed, the concept of freedom of speech finds a philosophical foundation and a theoretical justification in the claim for the separation and emancipation of philosophy from theological authority. The debate on history, on languages, and on the meaning of the sacred texts carried out by the philosophers contributed to a general rethinking of the nature of human beings and of their relationship with God and with the world. The elaboration of new frameworks establishing the relationships between civil and religious authorities and defining theological-political categories were decisive elements in the birth of modern thought. <>



## **PHILOSOPHIES OF GRATITUDE by Ashraf H.A. Rushdy** **[Oxford University Press, 9780197526866]**

In **PHILOSOPHIES OF GRATITUDE**, Ashraf H. A. Rushdy explores gratitude as a philosophical concept. The first half of the book traces its significance in fundamental Western moral philosophy and notions of ethics, specifically examining key historical moments and figures in classical antiquity, the early modern era, and the Enlightenment.

In the second half of the book, Rushdy focuses on contemporary meanings of gratitude as a sentiment, action, and disposition: how we feel grateful, act grateful, and cultivate grateful being. He identifies these three forms of gratitude to discern various roles our emotions play in our ethical responses to the world around us. Rushdy then discusses how ingratitude, instead of indicating a moral failure, can also act as an important principle and ethical stand against injustice.

Rushdy asserts that if we practice gratitude as a moral recognition of the other, then that gratitude varies alongside the different kinds of benefactors who receive it, ranging from the person who provides an expected service or gift, to the divine or natural sources whom we may credit with our very existence. By arguing for the necessity of analyzing gratitude as a philosophical concept, Rushdy reminds us of our capacity and appreciation for gratitude simply as an acknowledgment and acceptance of our humble dependency on and connectedness with our families, friends, communities, environments, and universe.

### **Review**

"The volume benefits not only from the author's insights but from perceptive inquiry into the work of scholars who have thought long and hard about the complex issues surrounding gratitude.

Summing Up: Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty." -- L. J. Alderink, *CHOICE*

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### **The Questions of Gratitude**

Gratitude is an emotion; we feel grateful when we receive what we think is an undeserved kindness. Gratitude is an action; we express our gratitude through words or returns of some other sort that acknowledge and reveal the depth of our appreciation to our benefactor. Gratitude is a disposition or a virtue; we work to cultivate in ourselves the habit or character- trait of being grateful, of being ready to respond graciously to the grace of benefits we are given and the bountifulness of the world we inhabit. These, we might say, are the forms that gratitude takes: as a sentiment, as an act, and as

a disposition. Philosophers, past and present, have written about gratitude— not that many of them, though, and certainly not with the kind of concerted focus we find in philosophical treatments of other emotions, actions, and virtues. Yet, gratitude, as we will see, is a deeply important philosophical concept. For many, it is the primary religious sentiment; a great deal of wisdom literature in many faiths urges us to be grateful for creation, for our own existence and that of the one we inhabit. Prayer and worship are expressions of that very attitude; we thank God for what we are and what we have. For others, it is a secular act that makes social life not only more gracious, but, for some, even possible, keeping all the destructive forces of envy, resentment, and anger at bay. How a gift, service, or kindness is received is a moment fraught with possibilities and tensions. The gratefulness of the beneficiary can be an invitation to a fuller and more resonant connection; the ingratitude of a beneficiary can likewise end that connection and relationship.

What, then, is gratitude? It is not my intent to offer any single answer to that question, primarily because there is no single phenomenon that we can call gratitude. There are many traditions of what constitutes religious gratitude in one realm, what secular grateful feeling and acting looks like in another, and much of what we think about gratitude, and how we inhabit and exhibit it, is defined by our cultural locations in quite distinct cultures. There is, in other words, no one “philosophy of gratitude.” Rather than answer that untenable question— What is gratitude?— I believe we can understand better what it might be and mean by exploring both what earlier philosophers have written about it, and by seeing what it can mean when it is manifest in the three forms we have identified.

We can start by exploring what might seem like a tension within it— a tension, if it is one, based on the fact that gratitude requires both an act of cognition and an emotional response to that cognition. Cognitively, we have to identify a benefit as indeed a benefit, something someone did for us. Emotionally, we then respond to that cognitive determination in feeling grateful. Gratitude, then, like resentment, is a reactive attitude. We assess and judge an event (the giving of the gift), we identify the motives behind it (the benevolence), and feel grateful to the agent who made it possible (the benefactor). In this way, then, like resentment, we can say that gratitude is a philosophical sentiment.

## Juridical Gratitude

Consider two philosophical approaches to the question of gratitude. The first is what we might call juridical, and the second relational. The first focuses on questions emerging from the concept of justice, while the second focuses on questions emerging from the nature of human sociality. One attempts to understand the conditions under which gratitude may be said to be due or deserved, the second on what it is that gratitude does or expresses or invites in the specific contexts in which it is manifest.

In what Barbara Herman calls the “quasi- justice model of benefit and gratitude,” philosophers engage in the same kind of accounting that marks the discourse of justice: What is required to define desert and to create a model for restoring “a balance of goods”? In this quasi- justice model, a benefit is a good or service a beneficiary needs that the benefactor provides with the implicit understanding that the verbal expression of thanks acknowledges that no immediate return is necessary but that a future act might be required to return the benefactor to “the condition *ex ante*” of the original benefit. Thought of in this way, gratitude is a form of acknowledging a particular kind of debt, which in justice must be paid.

Much of the recent writing on gratitude has focused on questions organized around the idea that gratitude is a form of something like justice. Many contemporary philosophers have employed the language of “desert,” “propriety,” and “indebtedness” in their studies of gratitude. For the past half-century, they have asked under what conditions gratitude is required, or expected, or deserved, or appropriate, or owed. Can we or should we be grateful to those who are simply doing their duty, or

is gratitude reserved solely for supererogatory acts? Must we be grateful to those who unintentionally give us a benefit, or who give us a benefit we don't necessarily want? When, in other words, is there a duty or obligation to express gratitude? And since justice requires repayment, how does one assess the propriety and timing of the "return" in cases where we are obliged to be grateful? These are important questions, and the work of identifying what features of a benefactor's act and motive should elicit gratitude has helped us define just what role either motives (like benevolence) or conditions (intention, for instance) play in acts of beneficence—and what role they should play in our cognitively assessing and then behaviorally responding to those acts and benefactors.

It is largely the quasi-justice account that helps us understand the form gratitude took in ancient Athens, for instance, in which gift-giving operated under the cultural expectation of a determined reciprocity. To receive a gift was to be expected to give one. That way of thinking to some extent survived into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in societies such as the ones Marcel Mauss wrote about in *The Gift*. The argument in Mauss' book that has attracted the most focused attention has been his claim that what are called "free gifts" are in fact never free. In a good number of civilizations, Mauss declared, "exchanges and contracts take place in the form of presents; in theory these are voluntary, in reality they are given and reciprocated obligatorily." Rituals that involve what Westerners think of as generosity, even apparently unreasonable generosity in practices like the potlatch of the aboriginal people of northwestern North America, are not acts of generosity or unreasonable, Mauss concludes, since there is something, socially and spiritually, that "compels the gift that has been received to be obligatorily reciprocated." It is important to recognize that Mauss phrases it this way, in the passive mood, giving agency to the gift rather than the giver. It is not the benefactor who is compelled, nor the beneficiary, but the gift that compels the one to give and the other to reciprocate (emphasis in original).

One of the Maori informants puts it this way in a famous formulation: "Let us suppose that you possess a certain article (taonga) and that you give me this article. You give it to me without setting a price on it. We strike no bargain about it. Now, I give this article to a third person who, after a certain lapse of time, decides to give me something as a payment in return (utu). He makes a present to me of something (taonga). Now, this taonga that he gives me is the spirit (hau) of the taonga that I had received from you and that I had given to him." If I do not give the taonga I received from the third party to you, the informant continues, then "serious harm might befall me, even death." That, he concludes, "is the nature of the hau, the hau of personal property, the hau of the taonga, the hau of the forest." What Mauss will later call the "balancing of accounts" is the dynamic process that hau enacts; whoever fails to respect the hau will be harmed, and those who respect the hau may be benefited in turn.

Hau might be what we can call the karma involved in how we treat objects, or, to use the discourse of a different tradition, the "exchange value." By putting the hau of gifts back into circulation, we permit blessings, just as by hoarding them we incur potential harm. It would be the kind of self-inflicted harm Marx, for instance, argued afflicted the miser who makes a fetish of objects when he takes them out of circulation. For Mauss, then, giving a gift is not an act of altruism, because, as he says of the Trobriander Islanders, "gifts are not freely given" and "not really disinterested." While there are several other important points Mauss makes about the nature of the gift—especially, his argument about how social and spiritual elements are mutually involved in this process, and his argument about the gift as an "intermingling" of souls and things, things and souls—the primary point he made about the absence of altruism, disinterestedness, and a western conception of generosity in the gift is what especially caught the attention of those who followed him.

In the quasi-justice model, then, gratitude is largely about determining the conditions, terms, and obligations involved in what often seems like an accounting problem. Because gratitude in this model comes at the end of a particular kind of “exchange,” it is possible to assess when it is manifest as either what Fred Berger calls “pathological gratitude”—that is, gratitude that is either undeserved or excessive for the benefit received—or what Jacques Derrida called “narcissistic gratitude,” that is gratitude that expressly intends to extend the chain of reciprocity. One can be abjectly grateful or greedily so; how one responds to a gift may reveal either a failure of self-esteem or a surplus of self-love. In either case, the form gratitude takes reveals something about the beneficiary’s sense of her own deserts and her own sense of justice, what is her due.

This way of understanding gratitude has a long history, from the ancient Greeks who thought of gift-giving in terms of reciprocity, to early modern philosophers, like Hobbes, who saw gratitude as a natural law that could help control what is not stipulated in non-contractual agreements and exchanges. Indeed, Hobbes’ contemporary, the Cambridge Platonist Henry More, made this point explicit when he wrote that “Gratitude seems to be a natural or essential part of commutative Justice.” And, like Hobbes, More saw that ingratitude endangered any society. “Gratitude is so remarkable a part of Justice, that whoever has the heart to violate this Bond,” he wrote, “is thought capable (might he do it with Impunity) of trampling on all the Laws of the World.” Gratitude as a form of justice, for Hobbes and More, was what kept at bay a war of all against all.

### Relational Gratitude

The second way to think about gratitude focuses less on when and for what reason gratitude might be due, and instead attends to questions about the nature of the relationship in which it occurs. Such relationships can be trivial and fleeting, as when we thank someone for holding open a door for us, or abiding and define the rest of our lives, as when we are grateful to someone who has done something truly significant for us. Herman calls this model the “relational-status account” of gratitude. Unlike the quasi-justice model, which was premised on an inequality and a form of dependence that the expression of gratitude affirmed, the relational-status account holds that the beneficiary’s expression of gratitude acknowledges the good will of the benefactor, and simultaneously implies an alteration in the ends of the beneficiary (whose ends now include assisting the benefactor when necessary). The expression of gratitude in that account, Herman says, shows that the beneficiary and the benefactor “are doing something together, as moral equals, no matter the indeterminate time and kind of reciprocation.” The benefactor’s agency does not “stand in for” the beneficiary’s; the relationship between them is not one of dependence, but instead one in which they are “equal persons who may at times have needs” that each at that moment cannot meet. What gratitude acknowledges in this model might be better described not as a debt, or at least not only as a debt, but rather a relationship. The saying of “thanks” constitutes “the outward and formal recognition” that the terms of the relationship between benefactor and beneficiary have changed, that there is now a deeper relationship, and that there will continue to be one. It is for that reason, as Herman points out, that ingratitude is perceived as more than a “failure to take one’s turn in righting an imbalance” (which would be the case in the quasi-justice model). It is felt instead as a “refusal to admit the new relationship, denying that the benefactor is worthy of one’s attention.”

This way of thinking about gratitude is largely derived from P.F. Strawson’s delineation of what he termed the “reactive attitudes and feelings” we have in interpersonal relationships. In a foundational 1962 essay, Strawson argued that gratitude and resentment were a “usefully opposed pair” representing precisely that kind of attitude. We react with resentment to injury, and with gratitude to beneficence. Strawson’s major argument was not about gratitude, in the end, nor in fact was it about resentment as the title suggested. He was initially more concerned about establishing what kinds of attitudes could be held about the actions of others: the reactive feelings were premised on respecting others’ freedom and agency, while what he called the “objective attitude” was premised

on accepting the absence of that agency. We can be resentful of someone who maliciously injures us, or someone who harms us for selfish reasons, but we cannot be resentful of someone who does not know what he is doing when he injures us because he might be too immature or lacking cognitive abilities to know the meaning of the action. We react with resentment to those who are able— and with objective regard (and, one hopes, compassion and understanding) to those who are unable. Strawson was finally more concerned with the question of determinism in the paper, and his exploration of how we respond to an ability or disability in those who might or might not have the freedom to act is his entrée into that debate between libertarians and determinists. Resentment is his way of exploring that condition.

Strawson's assessment of the reactive attitudes has been enormously influential in modern moral philosophy, and deservedly so, since it gives us a very insightful way to define what constitutes moral responsibility. Someone who does not have certain capacities cannot have the same moral obligations as someone who does. For Strawson, then, that person cannot be "seen as a morally responsible agent" or "as a member of the moral community." Any resentment we feel toward such a person is not a judgment about him, but about us and our failure to respond morally to another's capacity. Someone who does have those capacities, though, deserves our disapprobation precisely because she is a morally responsible agent who is "a member of the moral community; only one who has offended against its demands." It is clear that resentment serves Strawson's main argument considerably better than does gratitude, and it would seem that gratitude appears in his argument primarily to give his analysis balance (there are positive reactive attitudes as well as negative ones).

Earlier in the century, Edward Westermarck had made a similar point when he defined gratitude as a form of "retribution." What we now call "retribution" almost always connotes punishment, and usually indicates the way we ought properly to respond to crime or evil. That has not always been the case. Earlier, both positive and negative responses were considered retributive. If someone injures us, we respond with resentment; if someone loves us, we respond with affection. Both are requitals, both acts of retribution. At the beginning of his magnum opus, *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, Westermarck presented a schematic diagram of the retributive emotions, which branch off into two directions, one in which we feel "Resentment" and the other in which we feel "Retributive Kindly Emotion." As we will see later, this division is largely an inheritance from eighteenth-century British philosophers, especially those who focused on "sentiment" as the origin of moral judgments (which is also Westermarck's premise). The two categories of retributive emotions for Westermarck, then, are resentment and kindly emotions. Under the subheading of resentment, Westermarck listed two further classes of response: one is "anger and revenge" and the other "moral disapproval." Under the subheading of "retributive kindly emotion," he also listed two: one is "Non-moral retributive Kindly Emotions" and the other "moral approval." It is within this overall model that we can understand what Westermarck means when he identifies gratitude as a nonmoral, retributive, kindly emotion. It is in fact what Westermarck calls "the most developed form" of that emotion, and it is the only one he cites as an example of a nonmoral, retributive kindly emotion. Later, he will identify the dynamic conditions of gratitude by describing it as an emotion that "contains a definite desire to give pleasure in return for pleasure received, and at the same time is felt by the favoured party in his capacity of being himself the object of the benefit."

For Westermarck, then, gratitude is an emotion, although as what he calls a "kind of retributive affection," it is primarily based on intellectually discriminating acts that assess and judge the external circumstances that might or might not call it forth. It is less a felt emotion than what modern philosophers call a judgment or construal. He refers to the "cognitions by which non-moral resentment and gratitude are determined" to define precisely how we arrive at an intellectualized grateful (or resentful) attitude. It is not surprising that Westermarck arrives at this rather palliated



concept of gratitude, given the hedonic paradigm within which he defines what gratitude is, how we arrive at it, and what it means (and does not mean). “Our retributive emotions are always reactions against pain and pleasure felt by ourselves,” he writes, and that “holds true of the moral emotions as well as of revenge and gratitude.”

Where Strawson differs from Westermarck most significantly is in identifying gratitude and resentment as moral attitudes and feelings. He is thus closer in spirit to the eighteenth-century British moralists whom Westermarck echoed, but misrepresented. Indeed, at one point in the paper, Strawson notes that it is “a pity that talk of moral sentiments has fallen out of favour,” since that discourse of Francis Hutcheson, David Hume, and Adam Smith, in particular, would perfectly suit the kinds of attitudes and feelings he is describing in his essay. Our responses to benefits or injury are moral, Strawson implies, because they are judgments of propriety and responsibility.

What is implied about gratitude in Strawson’s analysis is a little more difficult to discern because the topic of gratitude entirely drops out of his discussion after he proposes it as resentment’s opposite. His major point is to show that we are grateful by the same structure of thinking as we are resentful. We assess actions by intention and by what attitude they evince; we are resentful of those who intend to harm us out of ill will, just as we are grateful to our benefactors because they intend to benefit us and they do it out of general goodwill toward us. (I will argue later in this book that the question of intention is complicated, and that there are possible models of grateful feeling that are not premised on it).

Some philosophers have assumed that Strawson’s model of reactive attitudes somehow ignore the question of relationships. While not stating so explicitly, T.M. Scanlon offers such a critique when he proposes “blame” as an alternative to “resentment” as the obverse of gratitude. Scanlon’s focus in *Moral Dimensions* is to present a theory of blame as a way of thinking and judging that is not merely evaluative of the given event, but rather indicates a “revised understanding of our relations with a person.” Scanlon’s model is more dynamic than traditional models of blame, in that such judgments are not simply a measure of the gravity of the event being judged, but rather a function of the “significance for the agent’s relations with the person who is doing the blaming.” In the old model Scanlon is challenging, praise is the opposite of blame. In his new dynamic model, though, gratitude becomes that opposite, he argues, because it is “not just a positive emotion but also an awareness that one’s relationship with a person has been altered by some action or attitude on that person’s part.” We are not grateful for an unintended benefit, or if a benefit was an “incidental consequence” of a plan of action with a quite different aim. When we are grateful, part of our sentiment is based on the knowledge or belief that we are acknowledging an alteration in our relationship with our benefactor. The benefit is usually that alteration, but what is important is that it is the alteration that orients our sentiment. We had this kind of relationship before, the benefit altered it in this way, and therefore my gratitude acknowledges the changed state of our relationship. What we can take from Scanlon’s model is the valuable insight that gratitude involves a fuller and more dynamic assessment both of ourselves and of the benefactor with whom we had a relationship that is now evolving in a particular way.

What gratitude does in these relationships, as Stephen Darwall has recently shown, is deepen them in a very particular way. Darwall terms gratitude a “second- personal attitude ‘of the heart.’ ” Like love and trust, which he also defines under that rubric, gratitude is a sentiment in which “we open ourselves to others as the particular individuals they are.” Gratitude, in Darwall’s conception of it, as it was in Scanlon’s, is a dynamic process. When a beneficiary receives a benefit, she perceives the benefit not simply as something that improves her situation, or alleviates some need she has, but rather as a sign of the benefactor’s “heartfelt expression,” in other words, an invitation to an enhanced relationship that carries with it an implied RSVP. Her gratitude, then, is “a reciprocal



opening in return,” a response that reveals a shared understanding of what the benefit represents and in what ways the relationship is now deepened. A gift and the expression of gratitude it elicits, then, are “forms of personal relation in the sense that through them we give and receive ourselves to one another.” The relationship that started with the giving of the benefit is completed and nurtured through the gratitude with which it is received. Unlike Scanlon, then, whom Darwall believes to be representing gratitude as “an observation about a relationship,” Darwall believes that gratitude is “a state of mind that is itself an essential part of the relationship, part of the connecting tissue with which the relational connection is forged.”

Gratitude, then, is not simply a recognition that there is a relationship, nor an acknowledgment that there has been an alteration in it, but rather a sentimental state in which the heart is open and involved in the deepening relationship, which is deepening precisely because of that sentiment. Generosity and gratitude in a relationship are not simply the primary and secondary acts in an exchange; each of them is an episodic expression of the love and trust that constitute the relationship. We are grateful not for the gift, or not only for the gift, but for the relationship itself that makes this gift meaningful in this specific way, and is itself part of the gift. Viewed through the relationship model, then, we can say that the very dynamic of benefactors, beneficiaries, and benefits is changed because the benefactor is simultaneously a beneficiary since it is the relationship itself that is the benefit.

### The Virtues of Gratitude

Each of these approaches— the juridical and the relational— is valuable for what it reveals about gratitude, both as a historical philosophical concept and as a contemporary idea. The juridical helps us comprehend what the giving and receiving of gifts and services meant for the classical world, and what it continued to mean for early modern Europe. The relational comes more to the fore when we enter the eighteenth century and examine those philosophers who want to understand the nature of benevolence and sympathy— those forms of care for and attention to the other that they believed mark us as a particular kind of creature with a specific kind of “human” nature. In other words, each of these approaches helps us explicate a mode of gratitude in a particular historical age. But these two approaches are neither derived from those historical moments, nor are they solely valuable because they help us understand the differences among them. These approaches also reveal two aspects of gratitude as a contemporary phenomenon. The juridical helps us assess how to think about the proper response to generosity, while the relational permits us to understand the sentiments that generosity arouses in us. One gives us information about feeling grateful, and the other about acting grateful.

Gratitude, then, is a virtuous practice that is premised on and serves as a gauge of our moral recognition of the other. As a sentiment and an action, that is, as something we feel and express, gratitude is a heartfelt response to a local situation that acknowledges and appreciates the generosity of our benefactor. As a sentiment and action, then, gratitude can be said to resemble the ethical practice of forgiveness in that it requires a particular temporal context. Something had to happen in the past for us to be grateful or to forgive: we are grateful for a benefit that is already given in the same way we forgive an injury that has already been inflicted. There is another aspect or form of gratitude, though, in which, also like forgiveness, it is not solely conditioned by the past, local, or occasional event in question. Gratitude is a disposition in addition to being a sentiment and an action— not only do we feel grateful and act grateful, but we can also cultivate grateful being. As a disposition, gratitude can be said to resemble the fundamental ethical practices of respect and benevolence, that is, those sentiments and attitudes that involve a moral response not to the past action but rather to the standing of the other (whom we respect and toward whom we are benevolent simply because each one is a fellow human being). Just as to be forgiving is not only to forgive a direct harm, but to hold and maintain an attitude of forgiveness toward a world in which

there are those who wish us harm and attempt to inflict injury on us— to be ready to forgive, as well as actually to forgive— so, likewise, to be grateful is to have an outlook and philosophical response that recognize the world's bountifulness.

These are the terms in which religious thinkers have largely defined gratitude as a virtue. We thank God as a testimony of our gratitude for our existence and as a testament of our complete and abiding dependence on Him for that existence. "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God," wrote the Apostle Paul (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Thinkers of an earlier tradition argued the same thing about polytheistic worship. Our gratitude, Socrates told Euthyphro, is an acknowledgment of our dependence on the gods: there is "no good that we do not receive from them." Likewise, in his tract *On the Nature of the Gods*, Cicero argues that worship seems to depend on gifts. "I fail to see how the gods should be worshipped," Cicero orates, "if we neither have received nor hope to receive benefit from them." If the assumption is that everything we count as a benefit is received from the gods, the logic of Cicero's statement goes, then our worship is effectively a form of gratitude. To be grateful, then, in a sacred sense is to be virtuously ready to acknowledge the multiform benefits we received and continue to receive from the divine beings we worship, not to examine each gift in order to assess what is due for that particular thing, but to accept that our very existence itself is the original and enduring gift for which we are perpetually grateful. To be virtuously grateful in a secular sense is likewise to be habitually disposed to an appreciative acceptance of our dependent and humble place within the moral economies in which we are the beneficiaries of our families, our friends, our environment, our universe.

Described in this way, gratitude, as I suggested earlier, is a deeply important philosophical concept, and we would expect that there exists an extensive set of philosophical texts that describe, explicate, and reveal its depth and its foundational place in ethics. That, however, is simply not the case. The philosophers who have written on gratitude, from Aristotle to Kant, have largely focused on other subjects, and they have almost uniformly made scattered or unfocused comments on gratitude while pursuing quite different matters or defining unrelated projects. There is, in other words, no philosopher of gratitude. There is no one to whom we may refer in that way as we can, for instance, call Joseph Butler the philosopher of forgiveness, or Nietzsche the philosopher of resentment, or Hume or Adam Smith the philosophers of sympathy. The one who might seem most deserving of the title as the philosopher of gratitude is Seneca, who wrote about gratitude in his first-century tract *On Benefits*; but even in that case, he was writing as much about the decorum with which one should give gifts as he was about the propriety with which they should be received.

Because those philosophers have largely offered commentary on gratitude as a concept within a larger project, they have characterized it as sometimes irrelevant, and sometimes supplementary. And they have characterized it in a variety of incommensurable ways. For Aristotle, for instance, in one form it was seen as irksome and onerous, not a virtue in itself but rather the deficiency of another virtue. For other later classical writers, with more commitment to Stoicism, it was gracious and enlivening, a way of accepting the world one inhabits. Later philosophers who were not focused on virtues of grandeur or self-control would subsume it into their philosophies rather than commenting on it itself as a sentiment or disposition. Hobbes, for instance, made it a law of nature, but primarily as a way of controlling the obligations owed in noncontractual situations that could endanger the peace of the state. Spinoza would characterize it as a defect of the perfectly rational person, while Shaftesbury, Butler, Hutcheson, Hume, and Smith would define it as an important sentiment that not only lubricated social life, but also fundamentally created our very sense of our social selves and relations with others. Gratitude, then, has been a concept that has played an unappreciated role in a series of philosophies— from Aristotelean ethics to Scottish Enlightenment sentimentalism— not as a central concern for any of these philosophers, but as a concept they felt they had to account for and somehow incorporate into their systems.

There are two questions, then, that confront us in our attempt to understand gratitude as a philosophical concept. One is historical— What has gratitude meant for past thinkers who have incorporated it into their ethical models?— and the other is formal: What does it mean to feel, to act, and to be grateful? If we think of gratitude as a practice, as a moral sentiment, act, and virtue with a discernible tradition and largely felt and acted on within shifting cultural parameters, then we can see that in order most fully to recognize and appreciate the depth and valence of gratitude as a practice, we need to understand both its history as an evolving concept in western philosophy and the meanings involved in the three discernible forms it assumes as a moral practice in our own time and lives. Those questions are intertwined, of course, but they can be approached separately. In what follows, we can first explore philosophers who have written about gratitude from Homer to Adam Smith, and then examine the forms gratitude takes when it is manifest or absent as a sentiment, an act, and a disposition. <>

## **FAITH AND PHILOSOPHY: A HISTORICAL ORIENTATION** by Jerry H. Gill [Value Inquiry Book, Brill, 9789004465459]

The ancient religious thinker Tertullian asked: “What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?”, implying that faith and philosophy have nothing to say to each other. The history of this dialogue has shaped the intellectual dialogue from the very beginning right up to the present. In this book, Jerry H. Gill has traced the dynamics of this dialogue and in the conclusion he has offered his own answer to the questions it raises.

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Over the centuries of Christian thought there has been a wide variety of approaches taken to dealing with the relationship between divine revelation and human reason, or between faith and philosophy. Although the Christian community claimed to have discerned God’s revelation in the person and teachings of Jesus Christ, and to have recorded this revelation in the Bible, it remained unclear just how one was to go about understanding, interpreting, and theorizing about this newly revealed truth.

Clearly language, insight, and some sort of conceptualizing must be involved, but from the outset and through the ages of the Christian Church there was no fundamental agreement as to the role of human reasoning in relation to the community’s efforts to fulfill these tasks. Several somewhat distinct approaches to these issues have arisen and each of these still has adherents in contemporary times as well. The main perspectives or postures may be thought of as arranged along a continuum in the following manner.

Initially many Christian thinkers found the approach advocated by an early Church Father, Tertullian, who basically asked “What has Athens, the center of human reasoning, to do with Jerusalem, the

focal point of the Christian revelation?" In other words, Tertullian and his followers maintained that God's divine revelation in Christ went way beyond the categories of human reason and had no need for them.

In fact, those who take this posture, even today, actually think of the truths of revelation as directly opposed to those resulting from the exercise of the mind. In words attributed to Tertullian: "God has spoken, so we no longer need to think."

In contemporary times this approach often gets expressed by saying that since God's thoughts are far above and different from our human ways of thinking, we cannot hope to understand them through rational categories and philosophical efforts.

Frequently certain scriptural passages, such as Paul's statements in his first letter to the Corinthian church<sup>1</sup> where he contrasts human wisdom to the "foolishness of the gospel," are quoted as providing substantiation for this point of view. The wisdom of this human world is said to be at odds with God's wisdom, and is therefore deemed useless, if not downright harmful, in relation to the Christian revelation.

Clearly, this approach to the relation between faith and philosophy represents an extreme pole of the continuum that I suggested above. Very often Christians who take this position on the matter refuse even to think about how the Christian revelation can be understood by anyone who does not already believe it. Sometimes, on the other hand, those who advocate this perspective claim that the truth revealed in Christ and the Christian scriptures constitutes an alternative system of thought to that of human reason, and only those on the inside of the faith are given the ability to grasp it.

This latter position welcomes the phrase, taken from the ancient theologian Anselm, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, that "faith seeks understanding." However, in this approach the claim is made that the understanding sought and found within the Christian revelation is entirely separate from and superior to anything that natural human reason can come up with. The understanding in question here is thus a special, spiritual sort of understanding that has its own basis, logic, and truths. In short, faith is said to have arrived at its own unique type of understanding quite apart from general human reasoning.

There are several objections that can and should be raised over against this perspective on the question. The first is simply to point out that even reasoning about the content of divine revelation as being different from and superior to that of human reason depends upon some sort of human reasoning just to make its own point of view understood. Moreover, within the structures of this divine reasoning there must be categories, principles, and criteria by means of which to carry on any form of interpretation in the process of seeking understanding.

God has, presumably, given all humans minds with which to discern truth from error and wisdom from foolishness. It would seem, then, to be an affront to God to maintain that the truths of revelation are completely unreachable through the employment of reason. Even to use human words such as *wisdom*, *truth*, and *reason* in presenting this point of view presupposes that the hearer understands them. After all, we must know what wisdom and truth are in a basically human sense in order to understand what it means to say things like: "God is wise" and "Christian revelation is true."

To return briefly to the passage in Paul's letter to the Corinthians, it is important to note that even in that context, Paul is reasoning very carefully and working to choose the right words with which to make and explain his point. General human language and reasoning capacities cannot conveniently be dispensed with or transcended just when one wants to claim a superior sort of wisdom and truth. So Paul must be making a distinction between arrogant or misleading reasoning, on the one hand,

and true, reliable reasoning and wisdom on the other, rather than trying to do away with human reasoning and wisdom altogether.

The same needs to be said about the passage in Paul's letter to the church in Colossae where he warns the folks there not to be led astray by empty philosophy that follows human traditions. We need to note that here too Paul is using his best language and reasoning power in order to make his case. There are, to be sure, vain philosophies and empty claims to wisdom, but these need to be discerned and avoided by means of the criteria and processes of human reasoning, just as Paul himself is doing in this passage.

The sense in which God's ways are above human ways cannot be completely beyond all human comprehension, since if this is the case none of us, even those advocating this position, can even begin to talk about them. There must be some overlap, some point of connection between human thought and divine revelation if there is to be any communication at all. Thus faith and reason, revelation and philosophy, cannot be diametrically opposed as this approach would maintain. If God's truth and wisdom are completely beyond and different from our own, there is nothing we or anyone else can say about them.

To return to Tertullian's initial question about what Athens has to do with Jerusalem, the only answer is, a great deal, since without the human logic embedded in human language one cannot even ask this question, let alone claim that God has indeed spoken and can be believed. As Peter's letter puts it, Christians should "be prepared to give a reason for the hope that is within them." Of course, no one can claim to have all the truth, whether human or divine, but some reasons are better than others and some thoughts may be closer to God's than others, so even believers must have their wits about them in order to "try the spirits, whether they be of God or not." Of course this approach to faith and philosophy has the strength of reminding us that thinking and talking about spiritual matters, matters having to do with intangible realities, is very difficult at best. It is important for all of us to remember that there are aspects of experience and reality that may well lie beyond any exhaustive understanding, but which are, at the same time, extremely important and rich. This perspective serves to keep us from becoming overconfident about our rational capacities and categories.

Nevertheless, even though this initial approach to the relation between faith and philosophy, between reason and revelation, has always had its advocates, on balance it seems to raise as many if not more problems than it is attempting to solve. Clearly, Christian theologians and thinkers have always sought to understand and clarify the truths that they claim to have received through revelation. In other words, they, together with all believers, must in some way or other affirm that faith must always be seeking understanding. Any approach to this important issue which simply dismisses it by claiming that reason and faith are opposed is too extreme to be of much use.

A less extreme approach to this basic question, one a bit further along toward the center of our suggested continuum, would be the one that claims that although human reasoning and divine truth are not fundamentally opposed, they are nevertheless essentially distinct. This is the historic point of view developed by the majority of Catholic theologians from the Middle Ages right up to the present. This perspective is generally attributed to Thomas Aquinas who devised his philosophy around 1200 CE and even today it continues to be a highly influential one.

Thomism, as Aquinas's system of thought has come to be called, is grounded in the philosophy of Aristotle, and as such it relies heavily on the role of human reason in relation to the search for truth, while neatly distinguishing between what can be known of God, on the one hand, from what cannot be known but can only be believed by faith, on the other hand. In this approach there are two kinds of truth, the one attainable through human reason and the other attainable only through revelation.

Thus this point of view can be said to be dualistic in nature, because it separates reason and revelation from each other yet affirms the value of both.

The writings, and thus the thought of Aristotle, unlike those of Plato, were essentially lost during the first ten centuries of the Common Era, and were only preserved and brought back into the West through certain Arabic thinkers when European and Islamic cultures began to confront each other around 1000 CE. Aquinas saw the value of basing Christian thought on the insights of Aristotle for the purposes of encountering and even converting Muslims to the Christian faith. Thus he developed his own thought, which was also grounded in the work of his mentor, Albertus Magnus.

Basically, Aquinas claimed that while it is possible to know *that* God exists by means of ordinary, natural human reasoning, the knowledge of *who* God is in the divine nature can only be obtained by means of revelation and faith, namely through the Christian scriptures and the church. In order to show how knowledge of God's existence is possible by pure reason, Aquinas devised five separate arguments or proofs, which are called the "Five Ways" of establishing that God exists. We shall take these arguments for the existence of God up in detail in the chapter on Aquinas.

It is easy to see how this approach seeks to serve as a sort of synthesis of reason and revelation, of faith and philosophy, rather than seeing them as opposed to each other. As such, it stands closer to the middle of our proposed continuum while still remaining in the range of views that see reason and faith as essentially distinct. At the same time, it can be seen that this point of view does not really develop a true synthesis of these two capacities, since it insists that they actually fulfill quite different functions, both of which are deemed to be highly significant.

Although Aquinas's teachings and writings were at first taken to be heretical by the Catholic church, it was not long before they became the absolute foundation of its theology and philosophy throughout the remaining centuries of the Common Era. Indeed, only at the beginning of the 20th century did some Catholic thinkers begin to explore other philosophical avenues, such as existentialism, as a way to understand and expound their faith. This dualistic synthesis approach also came to characterize the official Catholic posture toward the relation between Christianity and culture in general.

The chief difficulty with this perspective on reason and revelation is that in spite of its claim that the two can be synthesized and are not opposed, it is in fact often very difficult to harmonize them at the concrete and practical level. Not only have serious questions been raised by important thinkers about the viability of the famous "Five Ways" of proving God's existence, but the various claims of the Church and the Bible can and have been subjected to serious criticisms, especially in modern times. It seems to be a good theory, but it does not actually work in practice,

At the opposite extreme pole of our continuum from that approach represented by Tertullian stands the perspective which basically assumes that faith and revelation, on the one hand, and human reason and philosophy, on the other hand, are essentially in agreement with each other. This view is grounded in the confidence that our best human efforts to understand and expound religious and spiritual truth are all that we have at our disposal. Thus, in this view, human reason and philosophy are both the necessary condition and a sufficient condition for understanding divine reality, because they are what the Creator has endowed us with.

Although this approach had some roots in previous thinkers, it was first fully developed by John Locke in his book *The Reasonableness of Christianity*. Locke argued that the truths of religion can be arrived at by the full and proper use of our natural reasoning powers quite apart from any presuppositions about faith and revelation. Thus, he had little use for Aquinas's "proofs" of God's existence, on the one hand, and little patience for those who would maintain that spiritual truths can only be obtained through faith as absolutely distinguished from reason, on the other hand.



This open and confident attitude toward the necessity and sufficiency of human reason in relation to matters of religious belief came to characterize the majority opinion in theological and philosophical circles during the early modern era of Western thought. It was paralleled by a growing confidence in the scientific method and Newtonian physics as the ways to all and any truth. This confidence eventually foundered on the world wars of the 20th century, as well as on the results of the Einstein's theory of relativity and contemporary quantum mechanics.

At the heart of this approach is the belief that there are no special shortcuts to arriving at truths about God and divine realities that seek to bypass the best that human reason has to offer. Neither the traditions of the Church nor the claims of various scriptures can replace the criteria and methods embodied in the use of natural human rational powers. All claims to truth must be subject to rational scrutiny and only those that pass muster should be accepted and lived by.

One important exponent of this approach to the relation between faith and reason was John Dewey. As part of his strong emphasis on the role of scientific reasoning in every area of human endeavor, Dewey advocated the continual revision of all fields of knowledge, including the religious. In his book *The Quest for Certainty* he insisted that people holding religious beliefs should and could ground them in the evidence of experience, both their own and that of the broad spectrum of other individuals, traditions, and cultures.

Those who take this perspective on religious knowledge are generally referred to as “religious naturalists,” since they maintain that what can be known of spiritual reality can only be known through the powers and processes of natural human understanding.

So then, this approach is the diametric opposite of that approach with which we began this brief survey, since it tends to equate rather than separate reason and philosophy, on the one side, from faith on the other. Here any notion of revelation must be understood as subsumed under scientific and historical reason, if not reduced to them, rather than as antithetical to them.

The major strength of this approach may also be seen as its major weakness. For, it has become increasingly difficult to maintain any kind of absolute confidence in the powers of human reason to fully understand all of reality. To be sure, as Dewey would be quick to point out, even the shortcomings of scientific reasoning are discovered by further human rational efforts, since scientific reasoning is at heart self-critical. Nonetheless, there remains an air of self-confidence at the center of this more extreme identification of reason and all matters spiritual that belies its naivety about the limits and the scientific method, especially when applied to purportedly intangible, mysterious realities.

The above approach might be seen as interpreting the notion of “faith seeking understanding” by subsuming the former under the latter and thereby equating the two. The final approach on our proposed continuum lies somewhere between this more extreme position and the center of the spectrum. Although it seeks to find a way to integrate faith and philosophy, reason and revelation, it does so neither by separating them nor by equating them, but by seeing them as related functionally. Here the notion of “faith seeking understanding” takes on a more straightforward meaning.

The main proponent of this more functional or mediating approach was Augustine, an early Church Father who hailed from North Africa and lived around 400 CE. Before being converted to Christianity as a young adult, Augustine had been enamored of Plotinus's dualistic philosophy, often called *Neoplatonism*. Thus the philosophical theology he developed was deeply rooted in the presuppositions and insights of Platonic thought.

Moreover, partly because of his early experiences with various forms of sensuality and sexual desires, after his conversion Augustine laid a great deal of stress on the limited value of the role of

the body in achieving moral and spiritual wellbeing. Thus his theology was characterized by a strong distinction between natural and spiritual realities, between this world and the next, as well as between what he called *the City of God* and *the City of Man*. Augustine became the most influential Christian thinker of his time, and his reliance on Platonic thought dominated the early Middle Ages until the arrival of Thomas Aquinas.

However, even though Augustine placed little value on sensory experience and knowledge, he did greatly value the role of rational thought. He viewed the mind as an important aspect of the soul, and as crucial in the search for the knowledge of God. As he put it in his prayer: "Thou hast made us for thyself and our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee." Nevertheless, this restless search cannot, in Augustine's view, be satisfied through reason alone, for faith and reason are not one and the same thing.

Reason must, then, join forces with faith in order for us to come to a knowledge of God. Indeed, according to Augustine, although human reason is needed in the search for God, the point of departure in this quest must be faith rather than reason. This, then, is what Augustine meant by the phrase "Faith seeking understanding." One begins with faith, to be sure, but it is inherent in authentic faith to seek a deeper understanding of the meaning and implications of itself, as well as of the things of God.

Another proponent of this overall approach to the problem was Anselm, the first Archbishop of Canterbury who lived around 1000 CE. In fact, it is to him that the phrase "Faith seeking understanding" is generally attributed. As he put it: "I do not seek to understand in order that I might believe, but I believe in order that I may understand." Anselm is also well-known for his exploration of the doctrines of incarnation and atonement in his famous book *Cur Deus Homo?* – or in English, "Why Did God Become Human?"

Although he is probably best known for what is usually called his ontological proof of God's existence, it should be clear from the above brief quotation that Anselm was not trying to start from pure reason alone to prove God's existence. Rather, as he himself put it, he found himself believing in God and then set about to understand how this was possible. The proof itself, put simply, goes like this: if we think of the most complete being that can be thought of, it should be clear that this being must have the attribute of existence, since otherwise it would not be fully complete; hence God, the fully complete being, must exist by definition.

In this way we can see how the approach of Augustine and Anselm to this issue is closer to the center of our continuum than that of Locke and Dewey, on the one hand, as well as that of Tertullian and even Aquinas, on the other hand. For them, both faith and reason, both revelation and philosophy, are necessary in the search for divine understanding, but one must both begin with faith and go on seeking further understanding through it. Rational proofs, such as Anselm's, can only come later.

The title of the introduction to these explorations is "Faith Seeking Understanding," and under this rubric I introduced the continuum schema along which to position various views on the relation between faith and philosophy. Although this continuum was, hopefully, a helpful device for getting this project underway, I would now like to shift gears and introduce a slightly different point of departure by way of presenting what I take to be a more fully satisfying angle of approach. Somehow the more traditional approaches seem to fail to integrate faith and reason in a manner that does them both justice. Perhaps there is a better way to go about this endeavor.

I take my cue from a remark made by Blaise Pascal, a mathematician and philosopher who was a contemporary of Descartes. One of Pascal's more well-known statements was referred to in the previous section in connection with Tillich's claim that the God of the Bible and the God of the

philosophers is one and the same God. Pascal had insisted that these Gods are completely different from each other. In addition, Pascal is famous for his development of the advantages of wagering that there is a God because one has nothing to lose and everything to gain if there is. Conversely, if one bets that God does not exist, there may well be serious negative consequences if God does in fact exist.

However, the statement of Pascal's that I want to take up is quite different from these two better known ones. Tucked in among his many pithy yet rather rambling "thoughts" in his book by that very name, *Pensées*, we find this statement: "The heart has reason that the reason knows not of."<sup>1</sup> This remark of Pascal's is often taken to be an endorsement of a kind of existentialist approach to the relation between faith and reason, namely that faith is above, or at least quite separate, from normal human rational processes. My own reading of this remark moves in a different direction.

I think it is very important to note that Pascal used the term 'reason' in two different senses, and he still in fact chose to call his subject *reasons* of the heart. He did not say that the heart and the head have nothing to do with each other, that faith is a matter of the heart and does not need reason. On the contrary, Pascal deliberately stated that there are two senses of the term 'reason,' and thus two uses or kinds of reason. What then could he have meant by the suggestion that heart has a rationale different from that of the mind, but a rationale nonetheless? I should like to propose a way of rethinking the issues developed throughout these explorations in light of Pascal's notion of "reasons of the heart."

There are, it seems to me, three major issues that need to be addressed. The first pertains to the way we envision the structure of *reality*, the second has to do with to the sort of *language* we wish to use when speaking of God, and the third pertains to the nature of human *knowledge*. Each of these aspects of human experience figures decisively on the question of the relation between faith and philosophy, and in my opinion need to be rethought if we are to construct a sound and meaningful approach to this all-important question. After reworking each of these spheres of experience, I shall connect up my results with this crucial remark of Pascal's.

Generally speaking, as we have seen, traditional treatments of religious belief have been dependent on a two-story model of reality. On the one hand, we are told there is the material world, and on the other hand, there is the spiritual world. Almost all of the debates that have occurred over the viability and truth of religious belief have taken this two-domain or two-realm model for granted. Ever since Augustine the Christian notion of heaven and the ideal world of Plato have pretty much been equated. So, believers argue that there is another, higher realm than that of this world, while disbelievers argue that there is not. Reason is said to pertain to the things of this world and faith to the things of the spiritual world.

Moreover, this realmistic model has led to awkward and confusing notions of how God is related to this world, especially in terms of such concepts as creation, revelation, miracles, and providence. Does God exist independently of this world? If so, how does God interact with the events of history and with people's everyday lives? Do miracles and revelation imply that God intervenes or interrupts, let alone controls this world? The various convolutions and difficulties of questions such as these have dominated the history of the discussions between and among philosophers and theologians alike. They have also left us with a great many loose ends and unsolved riddles.

I would suggest that when thinking and speaking about the structure of reality we should substitute the notion of *dimensions* in place of that of realms. This may sound rather simplistic, but such a substitution has far reaching and very helpful implications. The idea is that rather than conceive of reality as a two-story structure, we envision it as the intersection of several simultaneously interpenetrating dimensions arranged in a mediational hierarchy of increasing richness and

comprehensiveness. The two key terms here are 'dimensions' and 'mediation,' so let us take a closer look at each of them.

As we all know, as human beings we exist in a three dimensional physical reality. Each of these dimensions interpenetrates the others so that we exist in all three of them simultaneously. Whenever we move in one direction or the other, we also move in relation to the other dimensions. In other words, these dimensions are not separable from one another in our experience. Now, the idea I am presenting is that we incorporate this way of thinking about the relation between the material and spiritual worlds. Rather than seeing them as stacked one above the other, we should see them as flowing into or interacting within one another all at the same time. Thus, the two are neither the same as, nor separate from, but are symbiotic to and of one another.

This way of thinking of materiality and spirituality opens up fresh ground in the discussion of the nature of God's relation to the world, both in connection with the concepts of creation and providence, on the one hand, and in connection with the notion of revelation, on the other. This is not the place to go into more detail about how this dimensional model might enhance our understanding of reality in general and of religious belief in particular. Suffice it say that a dimensional understanding of the human experience of reality carries with it a great deal of promise for resolving a good many of the standard debates over the key issues and concepts involved. It emphasizes the interconnection and penetration among different aspects of reality.

Those interested in pursuing my own treatment of these issues more fully, as well as those yet to be introduced in the following pages, may be interested in my book *Mediated Transcendence*. Now, secondly, let me offer an explanation of the notion of *mediation*. The suggestion here is that we see the different dimensions of reality, and there may well be more than the two we have just been considering, as arranged in a hierarchy of increasing richness and comprehensiveness. The highly increased richness and comprehensiveness of the spiritual dimension, and perhaps others, are experienced by us as *mediated* in and through the less rich and comprehensive dimensions. We can, for instance, consider the least rich and comprehensive dimension of reality to be the physical or material world. Thus, our awareness of, say, the aesthetic or moral dimensions, as well as the spiritual, comes to us *in and through* our awareness of the physical dimension.

Consider the way the aesthetic dimension comes to us in and through the particulars of our experience with the physical dimension or world. Certain sounds, colors, sensations, and the like mediate the beauty of a given work of art without our being able to reduce or exhaust that beauty in an account of these particulars. Likewise, in social contexts and exchanges often the significance of a given comment or shift in posture, while mediated by specific words or body positioning, cannot be reduced to an account thereof. These words and body postures can be said to mediate their more complex meanings. We often come away from such conversations and settings decidedly more knowledgeable, but without being able to say why.

Indeed, within the phenomenon of speech itself we clearly see the mediational pattern at work. Depending on the tone, gesture, and social context almost any set of words can carry a wide variety of meanings. Irony, humor, and poetic meaning all depend on certain nuances and innuendos, as well as specific contexts, in order to be successful. Consider the utterance "The door is open." Can this only be a statement of fact, a description of the position of a door? Can it not also be an implicit command to a child to go close the door? Or an invitation for friends to drop by for a visit? Or a word of encouragement to a person who is hesitant about pursuing a new opportunity? Indeed, right here the utterance is in fact being used as an example in a book.

So then, the notion of mediation simply calls attention to an aspect of everyday human experience that can cast light on our discussions of how reality is structured. In addition, it helps us understand

how it is that we can experience the spiritual dimension of reality in and through its other dimensions. Bringing the concepts of dimensionality and mediation together in this way provides us with a model for how to think about the world in general and about God's activity within it, as well. Thought of in this way, spiritual reality need not be conceived of as totally different from or disruptive of physical, aesthetic, or moral reality, but as mediated in and through them.

This model of reality as mediating dimensions rather as stacked realms goes a long way toward resolving the sorts of problems we have encountered throughout our study of the history of Western thought. In one way or another, most concerned thinkers have struggled with how we are to understand the interrelations between spiritual reality and our everyday experience here on earth. These struggles have produced many conflicting and problematic views of the relation between reason and faith. From Plato and Aristotle, through Augustine, Aquinas, Descartes, Hume, and Kant, right up to Feuerbach, Whitehead, and Tillich, the concepts of reason and faith have been at the mercy of a two-story model of the structure of reality.

Now, let us move on to a consideration of the nature of the language that is the most appropriate for speaking of God. This is the second main area of philosophical theology that needs reworking if we are going to be able to move on past the dilemmas and stalemates we have encountered so far in our explorations. Because the generally accepted idea of how language functions in human experience has been wrongheaded from the outset, our understanding of God-talk has been off base as well. What is needed is to update our view of how we can and should speak of God.

Let's begin with a brief account of the nature of language in general. The commonsense view of what language is and how it functions would seem to be that language is an instrument for the communication of information. Thus, we say things like "Today is Friday," "This is a ball," and "She is a good friend," and of course utterances that are far more complex, as well. In the early part of the 20th century the major philosophers of language pretty much agreed with this view, and thus set out to refine and explicate it. Thinkers like A.J. Ayer, Bertrand Russell, and the early Ludwig Wittgenstein set forth, each in his own way, what has come to be called "the picture theory of language."

The basic idea behind this theory was that words name things, sentences picture states of affairs, and true propositions are those that picture reality correctly. Thus, the statement "The cat is on the mat" pictures, or describes, the state of affairs that the cat is on the mat. If the cat is, in fact, on the mat, then the statement is true, and if it is not on the mat, then the statement is false. In any case, the point of such statements, and indeed of all of language, is to represent facts in this way, and only those that do so can be said to be cognitively meaningful. Others can be said to be *emotive*, because they express emotions, or *directive*, because they seek to direct behavior. Utterances expressing artistic, moral, and religious sentiments are thus judged to be cognitively meaningless.

Unfortunately, theologians and everyday believers alike unwittingly subscribe to this way of conceiving of language about God and spiritual matters, as well. It has nearly always been assumed that the term 'God' designates a specific divine being who operates, along with other divine beings, in a spiritual realm above or at least beyond the physical realm of this world. It is largely because religious thinkers have bought into this way of thinking about what language does and how it does it that so much confusion and so many debates have arisen and continue to arise in the dialogue between philosophy and faith.

Fortunately, on the other hand, the insights of more recent philosophers of language, notably the later Wittgenstein (*Philosophical Investigations*), Gilbert Ryle (*The Concept of Mind*), and J.L. Austin (*How to Do Things with Words*) have made it abundantly clear that language is far more complex and multifarious than the general picture theory acknowledged. Wittgenstein in particular has shown that



language has very many functions in addition to communicating information. He is well known for defining meaning as a function of use within specific *crisscrossing and overlapping language games* which are grounded in the activities and concerns of everyday human life.

In this way Wittgenstein opened up our understanding of the poly-significance of human speech and caused theological scholars to rethink just what God-talk is really seeking to do. A few theologians and believing philosophers, most notably D. Z. Phillips (*Religion Without Explanation*), have taken Wittgenstein to mean that each language game is autonomous unto itself, and thus religious language has nothing in common with other uses and need not concern itself with answering to their criteria of meaningfulness and truth. Unfortunately, such thinkers have overlooked the fact that Wittgenstein clearly stated, and sought to explicate, the fact that language games “crisscross and overlap” with one another. None is an island unto itself.

This acknowledgement of the open texture of language has enlivened both philosophical and theological discussion, especially around the concept and function of metaphorical language. There has, of course, always been some awareness of the nonliteral use of language about God, for example with Aquinas’s notion *analogy of proportionality* and the *via negativa* in the Middle Ages. However, in recent decades a number of thinkers have explored and developed the notion of metaphor in very interesting and useful ways (see, for example, Sallie McFague’s excellent little book, *Speaking in Parables*). Indeed, the fact of the crisscrossing and overlapping nature of language games actually invokes and stimulates the use of the metaphoric mode of speech.

One of the thinkers who has explored the metaphoric mode most thoroughly is Ian Ramsey (*Religious Language and Models and Mystery*). He continually called attention to the dual thrust of our talk about God, as both grounded in everyday experience and pointing beyond itself to a more complex, spiritual reality. For instance, expressions like ‘Heavenly Father’ and ‘Divine Son’ exhibit what Ramsey called a *model-qualifier* pattern. That is to say, the terms ‘father’ and ‘son’ serve as models from our everyday human lives, while the terms ‘heavenly’ and ‘divine’ are used in conjunction with them, not as literal names but as signals to direct our attention beyond everyday experience to a richer reality.

In addition, many thinkers have suggested that since Jesus’ primary mode of communication was story telling we should understand the Christian gospel as a cosmic metaphor which indirectly mediates the meaning of God’s love through the story of Jesus. Telling a story, instead of giving a sermon, creates a space or existential arena which invites the hearer to explore the message without feeling either crowded or ignored. In this way, stories too can be seen as narratives that participate in the metaphoric mode. Once again, there are many enriching possibilities in seeing God-talk as primarily metaphoric in quality.

It should be noted at this juncture that this open textured way of understanding the nature of language fits very nicely with the concepts of dimensionality and mediation introduced previously in connection with the need to rethink the structure of reality. In fact, the twofold or two directional character of metaphoric speech is precisely what the notion of the mediational dimensions of reality is all about. In both the mediational and metaphoric dynamics the richer meaning and truth of an idea are grasped *in and through* the particulars comprising the less rich dimensions. In a word, both of these facets of experience and language are *incarnational* since their reality becomes concrete in and through the everyday and the mundane.

It is true that in the minds of many believers who engage in talk about God and other spiritual matters the idea that such language is largely if not primarily metaphorical in nature causes no small degree of discomfort. Somehow it seems that this way of thinking about God-talk divests it of its truth value and renders it simply emotional rather than cognitive. However, we should remember



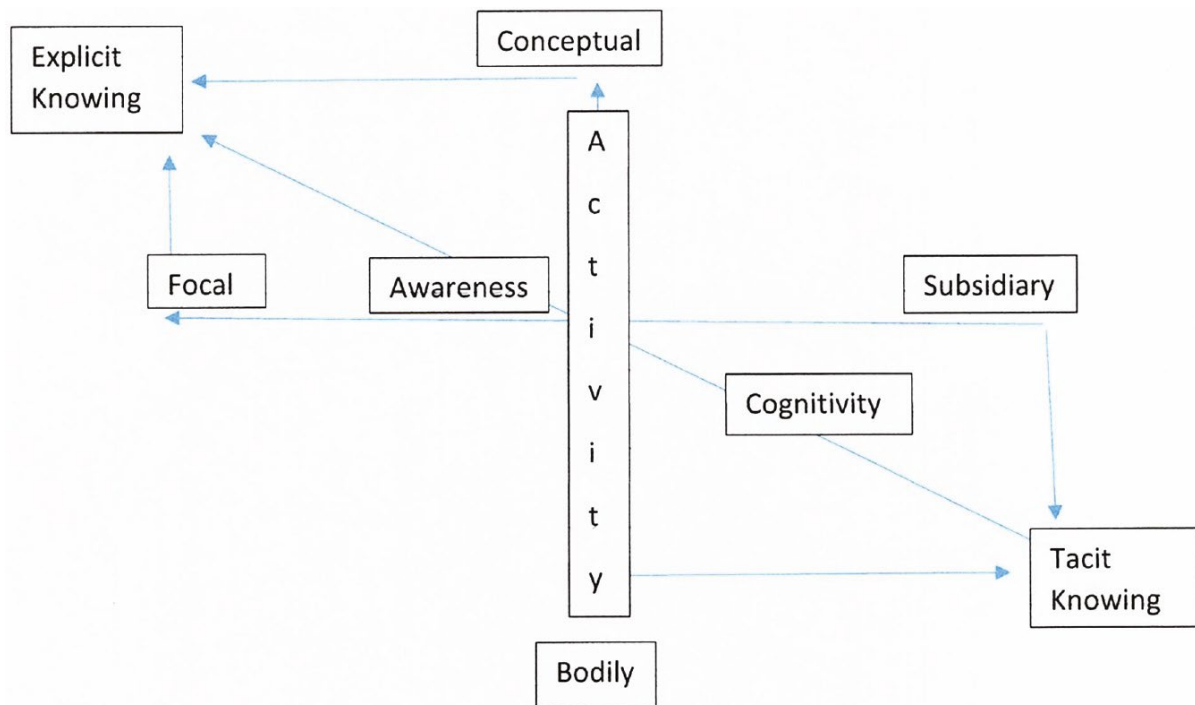
that it is just possible this discomfort results from a prior assumption that real truth must be equated with hardnosed scientific and historical truth. This assumption needs to be questioned, for there are other viable modes of truth. Indeed, it is precisely to this question of the nature of cognitivity that we shall now turn our attention.

The insights of the philosopher Michael Polanyi can be of significant assistance in our efforts to understand the nature of knowledge in general and the possibility of religious knowledge in particular. In his major works, *Personal Knowledge* and *Knowing and Being*, Polanyi has provided a deep and revealing analysis of the structure of human cognition revolving around the notion of *tacit knowing*. I shall now offer a brief presentation of his major distinctions, insights, and conclusions, followed by an application of them to our understanding of how we might be said to have knowledge of God and other spiritual realities.

It is helpful to think of human experience as involving two main dimensions, (see below) the *awareness dimension* and the *activity dimension*. The former has as its poles *subsidiary* and *focal* awareness. In every cognitive situation we are aware of some aspects of our environment focally and of others subsidiarily. The reader is now, or was, until I mentioned it, only subsidiarily aware that his or her feet are in shoes, or that I am using written symbols to communicate these ideas. Moreover, we attend *from* some aspects of our environment to others, even though what is focal in one setting can become subsidiary in another, and vice versa. In short, this distinction is relative in relation to context.

Next, the poles of the activity dimension of experience are *conceptual* and *bodily* activity. Although there may not be a hard and fast line between these two, we generally distinguish them from each other. Doing mathematical problems in one's head and running the hundred meter dash are significantly different activities. In addition, at least from birth onwards we tend to move from bodily activity toward conceptual activity. Our thought life arises out of our physical life. Here, again, we can shift back and forth from one range of activity to the other depending on the context and our intentions.

Things begin to get much more interesting when we correlate these two dimensions in relation to their respective poles, because from their interaction arises what we shall call the *cognitivity* dimension of experience. That is to say, when we connect up the focal awareness pole with the conceptual activity pole we get what Polanyi calls *explicit knowing*, while when we connect up the subsidiary awareness pole with the bodily activity pole the result is what he calls *tacit knowing*. These two forms or aspects of knowing can be said to form the poles of a third dimension of human experience, namely the cognitivity dimension. Here is a simplified diagram of mine of the interrelationships amongst these various dimensions and their respective polarities:



Polanyi's first contention, then, is that the tacit aspect of our cognitivity must be acknowledged as a genuine factor within all human knowing. Both traditional and modern philosophical, as well as theological, thought have systematically ignored this possibility, labeling such things subjective, irrational, or at best mystical. By way of calling attention to the universal character of tacit knowing Polanyi offered examples of everyday experiences wherein we rely heavily, if not exclusively, on tacit factors. Most of his examples involve the learning and use of bodily skills, such as walking, riding bicycles, and even speaking, none of which can be acquired nor fully articulated by passing along certain formulae from one person to another.

Our knowledge and use of our primary language is a classic case in point, because everyone knows that this knowledge can only be acquired through the practice of various activities involving constant imitation and repetition. Obviously, there is no prior language with which elders can teach a child to speak, and yet by the age of five or six nearly every child has acquired a functionally complete knowledge of their mother tongue. Moreover, neither the parent nor the child can fully articulate the particulars involved in this mysterious transformation. It is a process in which tacit factors are clearly and crucially present, and must be acknowledged as being so.

In addition, the whole range of our knowledge of other persons, both intimately and casually, depends largely on our being able to read, as it were, various clues, tips, and innuendoes which often are far too subtle to even be recognized, let alone be articulated. Even the seemingly simple fact that most people can pick a familiar face out of a sea of faces in a crowd, or recognize a friend's walk or voice across rather significant distances, cannot be reduced to an account of some inductive process. Indeed, the very ability to grasp the subtle meaning of a given utterance, say a pun or a line of poetry, let alone explain the meaning of the concept of meaning itself, clearly requires the notion of tacit knowing.

Polanyi, who was himself an established practicing scientist, went on to analyze both scientific and conceptual reasoning in terms of the principles of tacit knowing. In all deep thought, certain assumptions and commitments have to be made, even in the formulation of initial hypotheses and experiments, in order to acquire any knowledge at all. In addition, the resultant articulation of what has been learned itself must rely on tacit factors that are left unexplained and unarticulated in

explicit fashion. All of which leads to Polanyi's second major conclusion, namely that tacit knowing is not only a legitimate feature in all cognitivity, but that it is in fact logically prior to or more fundamental than explicit knowing.

Polanyi summarized this most important point in this way: "We always know more than we can say, since all explicit knowing in the final analysis arises from tacit knowing."<sup>3</sup> It is important to understand that Polanyi is not saying that every claim to tacit knowing is legitimate, any more than every claim to explicit knowing turns out to be valid. In both kinds of cases there are criteria that need to be employed in order to determine whether or not a given claim is to be accepted. Those criteria relevant to explicit knowing are quite familiar: evidence, precision, inference, coherence, and the like. Those relevant to tacit knowing are far more subtle and flexible, but they revolve around such pragmatic things as reliability, consistency, agreement, and workability.

The key to tacit knowing is clearly the centrality of embodied activity. Here is how Polanyi makes this point:

The way the body participates in the act of perception can be generalized further to include the bodily roots of all knowledge and thought. Our body is the only assembly of things known almost exclusively by relying on our awareness of them for attending to something else. Parts of our body serve as tools for observing objects outside and for manipulating them. Every time we make sense of the world we rely on our tacit knowledge of impacts made on our body and the complex responses of our body to these impacts. Such is the exceptional position of our body in the universe.

Two final characteristics of tacit knowing need to be mentioned. One is that tacit knowledge is acquired by what Polanyi calls *indwelling*, the investing of one's self in the activity so as to make it, through practice and habit, part of one's self. Whether it be in learning how to walk, talk, shoot baskets, use tools, or even get along with other persons, one must seriously participate in the activity by indwelling it. After a while, interestingly enough, the activity in question will come to indwell the practitioner, and thus become part and parcel of who and what he or she is and becomes. The activity in question actually becomes instinctual and inexplicable, as is evidenced by the fact, for example, that while reading these very words and sentences, the reader is unable *not* to understand them!

The second additional characteristic of tacit knowing that deserves mentioning is that this type of knowledge is not the result of deductive or inductive processes, but rather of what Polanyi calls *integrative acts*. That is to say, whereas explicit knowing is arrived at by inferential processes which are both articulable and reversible, tacit knowing arises from the indwelling activity as a *gestalt*, a holistic grasp that once it takes place can neither be explicated nor reversed. Once one has, for instance, acquired the ability to swim, ride a bicycle, or understand and speak a language, one cannot go back to square one, as it were, and unlearn that ability. Premises and evidence can be reversed and rehearsed, but integrative acts cannot.

Finally, we should now connect up this examination of the notion of tacit knowing with our previous analyses of the mediational and dimensional structure of reality, along with the primacy of metaphorical language. In my own view, all of these notions fit together like hand-in-glove. Mediated dimensions of reality are best spoken of by means of metaphorical language and are primarily known through the processes of tacit participation and activity. Thus, to speak of God and other spiritual realities responsibly, we should become aware of them as mediated in and through the particulars of everyday experience in community and history, and we should not so much seek to articulate what we come to know of them as to demonstrate and practice it in the way we live our lives.

Now, then, with respect to the whole question of the relationship between faith and reason, philosophy and theology, and *reasons of the heart*, let me say this. To my way of thinking, the entire

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threefold model presented here in this conclusion goes a long way toward explaining the most fruitful way of thinking about these issues. When Pascal introduced the notion of the reasons of the heart I think he might have had something like this model in mind. What the heart knows is not without an adequate rationale, but it is not the sort that can be explicated in terms of the criteria and processes generally associated with purely logical and empirical knowledge.

More specifically, the notion of tacit knowing lines up very nicely with Pascal's intent. Faith is not reasonless, without any cognitive basis, but its reasonableness is of a different, richer and more comprehensive nature. On the other hand, what faith knows is not beyond all reason, beyond the need for confirmation and validation. More importantly, what faith knows can and must *show itself* in the lives of those who claim it. It is the result of existential indwelling and integrative acts that one would rationally expect to be bodied forth in the everyday lives of the individuals and communities involved. Reason and faith thus come together in everyday life. As Jesus said: "By their fruits you shall know them." <>

## **GLOBAL ORIGINS OF THE MODERN SELF, FROM MONTAIGNE TO SUZUKI by Avram Alpert [Suny Press, 9781438473857]**

In **GLOBAL ORIGINS OF THE MODERN SELF, FROM MONTAIGNE TO SUZUKI**, Avram Alpert contends that scholars have yet to fully grasp the constitutive force of global connections in the making of modern selfhood. Alpert argues that canonical moments of self-making from around the world share a surprising origin in the colonial anthropology of Europeans in the Americas. While most intellectual histories of modernity begin with the Cartesian inward turn, Alpert shows how this turn itself was an evasion of the impact of the colonial encounter. He charts a counter-history of the modern self, tracing lines of influence that stretch from Michel de Montaigne's encounter with the Tupi through the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau into German Idealism, American Transcendentalism, postcolonial critique, and modern Zen. Alpert considers an unusually wide range of thinkers, including Kant, Hegel, Fanon, Emerson, Du Bois, Senghor, and Suzuki. This book not only breaks with disciplinary conventions about period and geography but also argues that these conventions obscure our ability to understand the modern condition.

### **Review**

"This is an original and masterful synthesis of diverse sources and intellectual traditions. It is massively learned (ninety pages of endnotes) and engages in technical debates with other scholars, yet never loses the thread of the author's own central argument about the global context of modern ideas about the self. Alpert's writing is clear, incisive, and lively." — *H-Net Reviews (H-Buddhism)*

"Altogether this very erudite and engaged book shows how fruitful the history of the self from a global perspective can be, as the book functionally expands and diversifies the set of canonical texts and offers different interpretations of some of them. The book will undoubtedly provide food for researchers from different fields who study the question of the self." — *Global Intellectual History*

"Alpert's scholarship is impressive, offering a focused sweep of intellectual history and incisive readings of many important figures (and the scholarly literature devoted to them). He is a fantastic writer. His prose is direct and evocative, conveying complex ideas in clear and probing terms. This style transforms a long text into a relatively quick and, at times, gripping read." — Jane Anna Gordon, author of *Creolizing Political Theory: Reading Rousseau through Fanon*

“Through textual and historical analyses and great interpretive abilities, Alpert shows persuasively that Montaigne, Rousseau, Emerson, Suzuki, and others—separately and together—are thinkers not of a Western (monopolizing the sense of modern) tradition, but of global, pluralist thought. His way of reading these thinkers can be a model for others interested in decolonizing and deracializing modern thought while preserving much of the canon with its present membership; with its male, Western-European and Anglo-American membership. But Alpert has done more. Through his arguments he has made room for Du Bois, Fanon, and Suzuki to be included in the canon. This is intellectually progressive and politically significant, and will make a fresh reading experience for many readers.” — Peter K. J. Park, author of *Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy: Racism in the Formation of the Philosophical Canon, 1780–1830*

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## A Partial History: The Narrative of this Book

A word on the choice of figures represented in this book. It might seem that the task I embark on—to trace the attempts at global subjectivity in a series of essay writers from Montaigne to Suzuki and his followers—is an impossibly ambitious project. To my mind, however, it remains unbearably parochial. Although this book is informed by the complex pasts of the peoples whom Europeans once called “without history,” the pre—twentieth century writers studied here are largely European born. Little mention is made of the global subjectivities being enacted simultaneously in the Americas, South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, the Levant, the Pacific, or the Maghreb, or elsewhere. I do not in the least mean to imply that no such indigenous accounts exist—even some sixteenth-century European writers were aware of and engaged with them.<sup>64</sup> I discuss the importance of such engagements in the section on Montaigne but then focus mostly on how the willful misunderstanding of the lives of these peoples shaped the philosophical history that follows him. My aim in doing so, again, is to continue the work of reconstituting the fraught global origins of what is still taken to be a self-contained European history of philosophy.

There are other limits here. The liberal tradition, so important in shaping the colonial world, has also been relegated to marginalia. There remains, further, a complete absence of noncanonical theorists and enactors of “planetary consciousness,” such as those painstakingly detailed in Linebaugh and Rediker’s *Many-Headed Hydra*. And, while references are given to original language works for the major figures considered, the debates engaged here are grounded in the bibliography of primarily Anglophone scholarship. Nor do I address the question of the World Wide Web, or the digital more generally, which is perhaps the most significant way in which global selves are being sculpted (if not essayed) minute by minute today. And the question of climate change, perhaps the global issue of the day, is not discussed until the coda.

There is, further still, a general absence of female writers in the primary figures studied (with the exception of bell hooks), although I raise questions about the role of women in a number of the authors considered here. In this context, it is also important to mark a debt in the methodology of reconstituting reading that I owe feminist studies as much as to the postcolonial theory mentioned above. The general concern is well expressed in an essay by Hazel Carby. Carby questions the idea that the problems with patriarchal ideas "speak for themselves." If that were the case, Carby argues, then such ideas "are merely superficial, easily recognized, and quickly accounted for, enabling real intellectual work to continue elsewhere." The result is a space in which male intellectuals maintain "a politically correct posture of making an obligatory, though finally empty, gesture toward [feminist critique]." Although my main focus is not on gender or sexuality, Carby's criticism of the idea that the "real intellectual work" is "elsewhere" has guided my reflection on understanding how global cultures formed modern selves. Thus feminists like Carby taught me to read for othering—for how the act of othering mattered, for how we could not insulate the philosophical insights from this act's constitutive force—and it is this sensibility that I bring to the philosophical texts that have mattered for so much contemporary theory, feminist and otherwise. I have no doubt that other histories of the global origins of the modern self can be told, have been told, and should be told.

As I wrote in the preface, the selection choices were animated by my aim to reconstruct the global intellectual history that resulted in Suzuki's own writing. As such, the development of a fully fledged understanding of practices of the global self beyond a certain number of canonical, mostly male figures remains beyond the scope of this book. It is instead primarily concerned with how a series of male writers—a number of them racialized as white—attempted to come to terms with global identity, and largely through their encounters with peoples and traditions outside white identity. One-half of the book, then, is a study of a kind of white, masculinist practices of the global self. But it is not blindly so, and thus the other half of the narrative is concerned with how this construction of the self was one among others. Equally, all of this is undertaken in the context of radical pluralism, which again is the insistence on layers of plurality all the way down. This means, first, that none of the positions offered here is represented as the truth. Second, it is not presumed that simply because the identities of the thinkers considered are white and male that the totality of their positions can be circumscribed by their identities—any more than Fanon's or Du Bois's thoughts are circumscribed by theirs.<sup>o</sup> My hope is that this canonical focus does not detract from the work so much as continue to open mainstream critical theory to other writings. By opening up the canon to these same concerns of self-making in a global world, I hope this book might further other investigations by showing how deeply practical, global concerns were to even the supposedly most abstract thought.

I make these qualifications along the lines of what the novelist Wilson Harris has called "confessions of partiality." In admitting to our own limitations, Harris argues, we refuse the instinct to universalize our own ideas, and, at the same time, we unravel claims to sovereign universality that others might make. The claim that I am making about practices of the global self is true for a part of modern subjectivity, but it is, on the whole, only a part.

The idea of a partial history is based on the fundamental multiplicity of any historical epoch. It is partial both because it is a part and because it is not impartial—it represents the concerns of just one author when faced with the history of attempts to essay the globe. As Emerson admonishes, "You ^have not got rid of your parts by denying them, but are the more partial." The chapters of this partial history are as follows.

In chapter I, I suggest that the realization that we live on a single, interdependent, rapidly connecting planet led early writers like Montaigne to realize that private wisdom could no longer bear the weight of modern responsibility. The book begins with a reading of his "Of Cannibals," as an



essayistic practice of the self in which Montaigne attempts to transform who he is so that he can understand his relation to the Tupi people he meets in 1562 in Rouen, France. I look especially at how Montaigne uses the method of skepticism to break down his prejudices and then eclecticism to build an early pluralist mode of thought. I conclude my reading of Montaigne by responding to the criticism of him levied by Sankar Muthu in his important work on enlightenment and colonialism. Then, in a comparison with ideas of subjectivity found in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and Descartes's *cogito*, I polemically suggest that Montaigne's essay, more than these other writings, ought to be understood as the foundation of modern thinking. *Hamlet* and Descartes are representatives of the attempt to hold onto singular identity in the face of globality. As a result, they produce a line of identity thinking connected to the anxiety of trying to bear the truth of the whole world in a single subject that I follow into the work of Martin Heidegger. Despite his famous attempt to overcome the Cartesian self, Heidegger remains wedded to its evasive, monocultural practices. I am especially concerned here to question the common use of Heidegger as a theorist of modernity given his unrepentant Eurocentrism. Following this argument, I work to reposition a line of post-Montaigne global thought stretching from Rousseau to Marx. Montaigne left a pervasive impact on Jean-Jacques Rousseau, whose earliest essays register the same desire to transform his thinking in order to comprehend global cultures. A large part of this book is dedicated to unpacking the wide-ranging yet underappreciated influence of Rousseau's ideas about the global self on writers around the world. Rousseau broke with Montaigne's open approach and began to plot a specific evolution for human subjectivity. While still a pluralist, Rousseau came to believe that there is a singular true path for Europeans. That path is staked along the route of evolutionary history, and Rousseau's key intervention is to use conjectural histories (speculative histories about human origins based on colonial ethnography) to understand how to construct a global self. Willfully misreading missionary accounts from the Americas, Rousseau suggests that "savage" life is happy but without reflection or justice. Civilized life, meanwhile, is unhappy and alienated, but contains the seeds of perfection. Rousseau's solution is to combine the best of both conditions through the dialectical sublation of the savage and the bourgeois into the cultured state of "instinctual reason." (This is a term I use throughout the book. By "instinctual reason" I do not mean an essential human instinct for reason. Rather, I refer to the achievement of making reason a kind of instinct.)

The remaining chapters detail how extensive the influence of Rousseau's narrative was on seemingly unrelated concepts, including Kant's enlightenment, Schiller's aesthetic, Hegel's dialectic, and Marx's communism. It will also be central to those who opposed or repurposed his vision of the modern self, including Emerson, who suggested we alternate between reason and instinct rather than combine them; Fanon, who refused the reduction to instinct; and Suzuki, who kept Rousseau's aim of instinctual reason but critiqued his methods. I conclude this chapter with the significant response to Rousseau by Immanuel Kant. Kant's use of conjectural history informed his theories of progress, cosmopolitanism, and enlightenment, as he argued that both individuals and nations needed to combine instinct and rationality in their constitutions. In so doing, Kant connected practices of the global self to global practices for the self, which is to say that he prescribed a general way of being for the entire world. In concluding the chapter, I discuss how this global history of Kant should shift his place in contemporary theory. These brief remarks are part of my overall attempt to show how telling a more global history transforms how we theorize the present.

In the next two chapters, I then discuss how Rousseau's implicit concept of sublation is a fundamental idea that underpins German idealism in the work of Schiller and Hegel. At the same time, I begin to bring other voices into the conversation, showing how the globalizing visions of these thinkers were contested by Senghor (paired with Schiller) and Marx and Fanon (paired with Hegel). Schiller argues that aesthetic experience can create the kind of instinctually rational subject imagined by Rousseau. His argument for the role of aesthetics in the making of the subject is in fact inseparable from the conjectural history he tells, in which the goal of the aesthetic life is to combine

the best aspects of primitive instinct with the best aspects of rationality through the use of beauty and play. Senghor provides a powerful, if implicit, response to Schiller by arguing that Idealist aesthetics fundamentally misunderstood the importance of intuition as a meaningful way of being in itself. Rather than seeking to sublate intuition and reason into a single mode, Senghor instead embraced a plurality of ways of engaging the world—each of which, he argued, had developed more profoundly in different geographic spaces. In rewriting the racialized philosophies of modernity, he sought to remap the geography of aesthetic theory. Building on trenchant analyses of Senghor's work by Souleymane Bachir Diagne and Gary Wilder, I argue that Senghor's work is part of the "radical pluralist" tradition and that his insights on aesthetics as a mode of global thinking remain an untapped resource for the practices of global selves.

Hegel, meanwhile, brings Rousseau's individual pedagogy onto a grand historical scale, showing how contradictions in each moment of development lead to new stages in world history. The trouble with both Schiller and Hegel, as with Kant, is that they prescribe this teleological movement for the entire globe. While recent theorists such as Timothy Brennan, Susan Buck-Morss, and Andrew Cole have argued for the liberating potential of Hegel's "Master Slave Dialectic," I show how his work is another form of conjectural history that risks creating unbearable identities for the colonized. Rereading Hegel in light of contemporary research, I suggest that a reconstitution of dialectics allows us to see how his ideas are premised, in part, on racist beliefs. We cannot simply "negate" those parts, but we can constitute new, more pluralized forms of dialectics that develop in their absence. This, I argue in the rest of the chapter, is what we can see at work in Karl Marx and Frantz Fanon. In responding to Hegel, Marx, though he largely began his career as a traditional Idealist, eventually came to understand that his youthful universalism would mean the horrific destruction of whole ways of life and that communism must in fact proceed through multiple forms of social organization. He also made the fundamental claim that practices of the self cannot be thought of as separate from the economic systems in which they are formed. I conclude the chapter on dialectics by showing how Frantz Fanon offers a counterhistory of being to what we find in Heidegger and others, one that understands the profound need of global research and denies the claim that there is an ontology of being to be found outside historical and geographic interactions. It is on these grounds that he will partialize the applicability of the dialectic. Fanon's essaying also pushes back against the unbearable identities created by Rousseau and others by showing how the encasement of people by "epidermalization" destroyed their identity and reduced them to their skin.

Marx's reformist ideas were coincident with the development of "radical pluralism" in the essays of Emerson and, later, Du Bois, which I analyze in chapters 5 and 6. Radical pluralism, again, is the idea that the plurality of existence goes all the way down. All cultures are pluralities; all individuals are pluralities; all natures are pluralities. The task for radical pluralists is thus not solely to respect difference, but also to learn how to engage with different elements from different traditions. What interests Emerson is the capacity of "alternation," or the ability to move between the different modes of life that each collective plurality makes possible. Reconceiving conjectural history, Emerson posits multiple dispositions rather than singular instinct at the origins of humanity. This is what opens his thought to a radical pluralism. He thus seeks a mode of essay writing that brings out the many layers available and coexistent in the present. His essays seek to make subjects who can both discern and move through these layers. I argue that Du Bois was one of Emerson's most perceptive readers and that his idea of "double consciousness" grows out of Emerson's use of the same phrase. However, Du Bois was also critical of Emerson because Du Bois understood that alternations require different practices for those who have been forced to "alter nations" through slavery and exile. His complex essay form thus seeks to enable global identity formation while simultaneously working to overcome the debilitating identities of modern racism. Freedom here becomes the subject's capacity to alternate without compulsion. Radical pluralism, Du Bois proved, is itself plural and requires different practices for different life situations. Such pluralism, I ultimately argue,

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manages to overcome the unbearable identity by learning to share the burden of global subjectivity—never abandoning the task, but never claiming a final solution either.

It is in this broad context that I situate the global mysticism of D. T. Suzuki. Suzuki departed from both synthesis and pluralism in his version of essaying the globe. According to him, the only path to global enlightenment was through the undoing of all our inherited concepts. This required a "pure experience" of the world, unmediated by language. Whereas all the other thinkers sought a resolution after contact, Suzuki argued that our ability to bear the world would only be possible if we got in touch with a moment before the division of subject and object even began. Suzuki's essays used anecdote, repetition, nonsensical asides, and other tactics to try to jolt readers out of their conceptual world and into the world itself. The chapter explores Suzuki's relationship to idealism and transcendentalism and investigates the fraught relationship between this nonconceptual experience and the historical contexts of Japanese imperialism and neoliberal capitalism. In these contexts, Suzuki's Zen also becomes an unbearable identity because such difficult times call for an active and discriminating intellect. Suzuki believed, nevertheless, that even a momentary experience of egolessness could produce global subjects more concerned with equality and justice than with individual gain. By shifting the framework of our understanding, we can stop reading Suzuki as a mere Westernizer of Zen and recognize him as an important theorist of global subjectivity worthy of further study.

I conclude the chapter by showing the importance of Suzuki's reworking of Zen for John Cage and bell hooks. In Cage I find a performative exploration of Suzuki's ideals as he seeks "world-enlightenment" through his music and writings. Cage also used Suzuki's notions of silence to develop a way of working through his sexuality outside what he found to be the unbearable frames of psychoanalysis and the disclosure of identity. The analysis of hooks similarly follows how Zen helped in her development of what she calls an "identity in resistance" because Zen foregrounds the fact that politics is about overcoming suffering that is both psychic and social. Like Cage, hooks shows how subjects within different social groups can use practices of the global self for purposes beyond their original intention. She is an important critical voice warning against a nonconceptual practice that could blindly write over the realities of sexism, racism, and classism.

Finally, in a brief coda, I argue that our practices today should be guided toward "being-toward-bequeathment." Rather than the individual angst of "being-toward-death," in other words, we should develop ways of being on this planet that guide our subjectivity toward the creation of sustainable futures. This "being-toward-bequeathment" must be matched by the next generation's capacity to "bear" the "responsibility of inheritance," as Stanley Cavell puts it. This reciprocal structure is perhaps the best way to preserve the very globe on which we, collectively, can develop ourselves.

The resulting narrative functions both diachronically and synchronically. It works across time to show the historical and thematic connections that unite these diverse thinkers into a single tradition of engagement and debate. In turn, it shows how our reading of each figure changes when seen from the angle of this unfolding narrative. While each section thus should be meaningful on its own, the book makes most sense as a complete narrative. Most chapters also have an engagement with contemporary theorists or critics at the end to show how the reading within this narrative might help resituate some of the themes and concerns of contemporary criticism and theory. While the general trajectory of the narrative is chronological, I have moved thinkers around to draw out the connections between them through immediate comparisons. I also wanted to avoid the impression of a teleological narrative toward resolution: there are insights to be gleaned across these writers.

The task I have set myself is to evaluate these forms in my own essayistic engagements. I have used the notion of unbearable identity to understand the normative limit against which all attempts to essay the globe in this partial history will be judged. That is to say, I consider the extent to which

authors manage to produce a vision of global subjectivity that does not result in the production of a new unbearable identity for themselves or others. The argument, again, is that radical pluralism best satisfies this demand. But because radical pluralism itself depends on the constant production of new ways of being in the world, this is not a teleological story leading to its invention. Indeed, this book that started with trying to understand Suzuki and his influence now ends with a chapter on his thought. Although I ultimately critique Suzuki, this does not exclude the validity of his claims any more than Kant's production of the unbearable identity of primitive life destroys the value of his universalism. A radically pluralist analysis seeks to find as much value in a form of thought as it can while always remaining vigilant against master tones that drown out others. It restlessly seeks out new forms of life that may add to the richness of existence. Such an essay of essays is the project of this book. <>

## **TEMPORAL ASYMMETRIES IN PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY** edited by Christoph Hoerl, Teresa McCormack, and Alison Fernandes [Oxford University Press, 9780198862901]

Humans' attitudes towards an event often vary depending on whether the event has already happened or has yet to take place. The dread felt at the thought of a forthcoming exam turns into relief once it is over. Recent research in psychology also shows that people value past events less than future ones, such as offering less pay for work already carried out than for the same work to be carried out in the future. This volume brings together philosophers and psychologists with a shared interest in such psychological past/future asymmetries. It asks questions such as: What different kinds of psychological past/future asymmetries are there, and how are they related? Under what conditions do humans exhibit them? To what extent do they reflect features of time itself, or particular beliefs people have about time? Are they rational, or at least rationally permissible, or should we aspire to being temporally neutral? What exactly does temporal neutrality consist of?

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## A Variety of Temporal Asymmetries

Temporal asymmetries seem to feature in human psychology in at least two different ways. First, at least on the face of it, common ways of thinking about time itself appear to involve the idea that time exhibits a number of fundamental asymmetries. Thus, for instance, it is commonplace for people to talk about time as flowing or passing. Whilst this way of talking about time is clearly to some extent metaphorical, it has also been interpreted (at least in some of the literature on the philosophy of time) as reflecting genuine beliefs that people hold about the nature of time itself. In this context, the idea of the passage or flow of time has been taken to imply that the present moment in time constitutes a cusp between two quite different regions in time—the past and the future—and that which moment is the present moment in time constantly changes, so that what is in the future becomes present and then recedes into the past. Thus interpreted, there seem to be at least two respects in which time itself is thought to be asymmetrical. First, time has a direction—the earlier/later relation between two non- simultaneous events is not symmetrical, where this is more specifically to be spelled out in terms of the idea that earlier events always become present before later ones. Second, there is a fundamental difference between the past and the future—future events are quite different in their nature from past ones: For instance, as time passes, a future that was ‘open’ becomes the ‘fixed’ past. Philosophers working on the metaphysics of time who think that these are indeed aspects of people’s common- sense conception of time have devised their own metaphors to capture them—speaking, for instance, of the ‘spotlight of the present’ that constantly moves from one moment in time to the one that comes after it; or speaking of the world as a ‘growing block’, with the past being real, and constantly being added to; whereas the future is just a realm of possibilities.

There is also a second sense in which past/future asymmetries feature in human psychology. Human judgements about or attitudes towards events in time also sometimes exhibit temporal asymmetries. A number of such asymmetries have been documented in a body of research involving two contributors to this volume— Eugene Caruso and Leaf van Boven. For instance, a study by Caruso, Gilbert, and Wilson (2008) demonstrated that people require and offer more compensation for future events when compared to past ones; another study by Caruso (2010) found that moral judgements also differed depending on whether the deed being judged was described as being in the past or the future, with past misdeeds being judged less harshly than future ones. These asymmetries have been connected to further asymmetries in how close past and future events appear to be and how much affect they elicit. Thus, Caruso, Van Boven, Chin, and Ward (2013) found that people tend to judge future events to be closer in time as compared with equidistant past events, and Van Boven and Ashworth (2007) found that people tend to feel stronger emotions when contemplating future events when compared with past ones.

The particular types of psychological past/future asymmetries towards events just described are ones that it has taken empirical studies to unearth; they are not necessarily transparent to first- person reflection. However, there are others that seem more obvious from a first- person perspective. Thus, not only is it the case that people feel stronger emotions when contemplating future as compared with past events; sometimes the type of emotion they feel about one and the same event also varies systematically as a function of tense: People anticipate the upcoming root canal with dread, for instance, but then feel relief once it is over. In other words, there is a special class of



tensed emotions—that is, emotions with an inherent past-or future-orientation, or even directly concerned with the fact that a certain event lies in the past, or in the future.

Philosophers have also used thought experiments to probe into ways in which people's attitudes towards events can vary depending on whether they are in the past or in the future. Here is David Brink's (2011: 377) version of a story originally due to Derek Parfit (1984: §64):

Imagine that there is a painful operation that requires the patient's cooperation and, hence, can only be performed without the use of anaesthetic. But doctors can and do induce (selective) amnesia after the operation to block memories of these painful experiences, which are themselves painful. I knew I was scheduled for this procedure. I wake up in my hospital bed and ask my nurse whether I have had the operation yet. He knows that I am one of two patients, but doesn't know which. Either I am patient A, who had the longest operation on record yesterday (10 hours), or I am patient B, who is due for a short operation (one hour) later today.

Like Parfit, Brink thinks that, while waiting for the nurse to check the record, he would have a strong preference to be patient A, even though A's overall suffering is greater than B's. Parfit's thought experiment seems to allow us to capture psychological past/future asymmetries in the language of preferences, and to speak of a preference people have for negative events to lie in the past (and conversely, for positive events to lie in the future).

This volume is concerned with these various types of ways in which human psychology exhibits past/future asymmetries—how exactly they should be characterized, what explains them, how they relate to one another, and to what extent they are rational, or at least rationally permissible. As the contributions to this volume show, these questions are not just of interest in their own right—pursuing them also has the potential to shed light on a wider set of questions, both about time itself and about rationality. In each case, there is particularly potential for interaction between work in philosophy and work in psychology to yield new insights.

Psychological past/future asymmetries and the metaphysics of time. One important aspect of the question as to how psychological past/future asymmetries arise is how exactly we should think of the relationship (if there is in fact any) between those ways in which human judgements and attitudes are themselves temporally asymmetrical and the idea that we singled out at the start of this introduction—the idea of the passage of time. We will shortly turn to one specific aspect of this issue of particular relevance within philosophy, but it is clearly also relevant to some of the empirical work in psychology, where the idea of the passage or flow of time has been invoked to explain some of the psychological past/future asymmetries observed. Thus, for instance, Caruso et al. (2013) suggest that people's tendency to judge future events to be closer in time as compared with equidistant past events is grounded in a subjective experience of movement through time in which 'the future . . . approaches the present, whereas the past recedes from the present' (ibid. 532, see also Van Boven and Caruso, 2015). In a similar vein, Ramos et al. (this volume) connect psychological past/future asymmetries to what they call the Direction axiom, by which they mean the fact that 'people experience time as advancing from the past to the future'.

From a philosophical point of view, part of what makes claims like these of interest is that the idea of the passage of time, as expressed in them, seems, at least on the face of it, to be a distinctively metaphysical idea, concerned with the nature of time itself. Moreover, the question as to whether there is actually anything in reality that corresponds to the idea of the passage of time is hotly debated within the philosophy of time. Thus, questions arise as to the extent to which psychological past/future asymmetries should be seen as responses to a genuine feature of time itself, or whether the experiences alluded to by Caruso et al. (2013) and Van Boven and Caruso (2015) can be explained in some other way—and if so, how. The general type of question we are ultimately facing



here is how we should think of the relationship between the psychology of people's experience of or reasoning about a domain and the metaphysics of that domain, with the specific domain in this instance being that of time. These fields of enquiry may at first seem quite remote from each other, but, as some of the contributions in this volume show, there are a number of ways in which metaphysical considerations might potentially bear on questions of psychological explanation, as well as important ways in which empirical findings can inform debates in metaphysics. Thus, this is an area in which both sides can gain a great deal from cross- and interdisciplinary dialogue.

Psychological past/future asymmetries and the question of temporal neutrality. There is also a second reason why interdisciplinary dialogue between philosophers and psychologists is important when it comes to psychological past/ future asymmetries. The question Parfit sought to press in connection with his thought experiment is whether psychological past/future asymmetries are rational, or at any rate rationally permissible. At least since Lucretius' *De rerum natura* (Smith, 1975), there has been a tradition of philosophers advocating an ideal of temporal neutrality, that is, the idea that our attitudes towards an event should not depend on the time at which the event happens (in particular whether it is in the past or in the future). Yet, as a number of contributions in this volume bring out, there is a range of different ways of understanding what that ideal comes to—in what ways, if any, rationality demands us to be temporally neutral. Here again, as Meghan Sullivan brings out in her chapter, interdisciplinary dialogue between philosophers and psychologists may be crucial. The need to get clearer about the normative question as to which principles of rationality people should follow is closely bound up with the need to get clearer about descriptive and explanatory questions such as which principles of rationality people do actually follow, why people are not, or do not seem to be, temporally neutral in their judgements and attitudes, what factors might explain how psychological past/ future asymmetries arise, and how they are modulated by different contexts.

This is a new field of interdisciplinary research. 'Temporally asymmetric psychology,' as Ramos, Caruso, and Van Boven refer to it in their contribution to this volume, has itself only recently emerged as a distinct field of empirical research in psychology. And whilst psychological past/future asymmetries have been discussed in various parts of philosophy for some time, until very recently the relevant debates have relied entirely on philosophers' intuitions regarding certain thought experiments, rather than empirical work on the extent to which people do exhibit psychological past/future asymmetries and the conditions under which they do so.<sup>5</sup>

In what follows, we discuss some of the key ideas that have emerged recently, as well as some of the important questions that remain, as reflected in the contributions to this volume. In particular, we will discuss four themes, which cut across different chapters: How the existence of psychological past/future asymmetries should be explained (section 2), the diversity of psychological past/future asymmetries (section 3), conceptions of temporal neutrality (section 4), and the role of the self in psychological past/future asymmetries (section 5).]

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## Memory and the Self

The papers collected in this volume document a recent growth of interest, in both philosophy and psychology, in psychological past/future asymmetries. However, what might appear to be the most obvious past/future asymmetry in human psychology has not featured prominently in our discussion so far—this is the fact that we can have episodic memories only for particular past events but not for future ones.<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, research on memory is actually one field in which there has been a recent trend, both philosophy and psychology, to downplay traditional conceptions of psychological past/future asymmetries (see e.g. Michaelian, 2016; Schacter et al., 2012). Based both on theoretical considerations and findings about shared neural underpinnings, researchers have suggested that

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episodic memory—traditionally seen as a *sui generis* capacity uniquely associated with the past—should instead be conceived of as just one manifestation of a broader capacity for mentally simulating episodes (sometimes referred to as ‘mental time travel’), which also includes the ability to envisage future episodes.

Felipe De Brigard, Maria Khoudary, and Samuel Murray, in their chapter, broadly subscribe to such an idea of a general capacity for mental time travel, of which episodic memory is just an instance. Part of what informs their stance is a functional conception of that capacity, according to which both episodic memory and episodic future thinking ultimately serve to prepare us for future action. One key question they ask is whether, even on such a conception, distinctive past/future asymmetries can be seen to emerge. Drawing on empirical work by De Brigard, Gessell, Yang, Stewart, and Marsh (2020), they focus especially on the way time is represented in episodic memory and episodic future thinking.

In the study by De Brigard et al. (2020), participants were asked to describe 24 individual episodic memories of events experienced within the past 10 years, as well as 24 imagined episodes of events they might expect to experience within the next 10 years. In each case, they were asked to identify a unique person and a unique object featuring in the relevant event as well as the precise location and time (month and year) of the event. The next day, participants then underwent a cued recall test. For each of the past and future events, they were provided with three of the four details identified (person, object, place, time) and asked to retrieve the fourth. The researchers found that episodic memory and episodic future thinking did not differ with respect to the ability to retrieve person-, object-, and place- information. In line with previous research, they also found that participants found it more difficult to retrieve the information about the time of the event. Importantly, though, they also found one key asymmetry between episodic memory and episodic future thought: participants were significantly worse at retrieving information about the time of projected future rather than remembered past events.

De Brigard et al. connect this finding with the idea that temporal information can be recalled better if ‘episodic mental simulations . . . are more integrated with the hierarchical representations provided by our autobiographical knowledge as well as more strongly associated with other episodic details’ (this volume, p. 290). There is more such integration, they suggest, in the case of episodic memory in contrast to episodic future thinking. Furthermore, they also suggest that this aspect of episodic future thinking might be connected in important ways to the tendency people have to discount future rewards when compared with immediate ones (as discussed in the context of Callender’s chapter, above), or to the effectiveness of certain implementation intentions. More specifically, their claim is that bolstering ‘memory for time’, by integrating one’s future thinking more strongly with hierarchical autobiographical knowledge, might facilitate better intertemporal choice and better recall of implementation intentions.

De Brigard et al.’s discussion here might be seen to bear on a question asked by Meghan Sullivan in her paper. As she says, traditionally, when temporal biases such as future discounting have been discussed in philosophy, these have been construed according to either what she calls a ‘perceptual model’ or an ‘evolved heuristic model’. The former type of model connects temporal biases to a failure to represent temporally distributed choice options accurately—for instance, on this view delayed rewards seem smaller just as an object seen from a distance may look small. The latter model, by contrast, connects temporal biases with failures of emotional self-regulation—for instance, on this view future discounting is explained as a manifestation of an emotional tendency towards impulsivity that evolved in a past environment where the future was much more uncertain than it is now.

One way of interpreting De Brigard et al.'s chapter is as offering an account of future discounting in the spirit of what Sullivan calls the perceptual model. Roughly speaking, the idea would be that episodic future thinking may fail to support prudential behaviour because it carries only impoverished temporal information, due to not being sufficiently integrated with hierarchical autobiographical knowledge. There are a number of reasons why this might lead people to choose smaller, sooner rewards over larger, later ones. For instance, it might make it more difficult for people to give significance to the difference between an episodic future simulation of the larger reward (i.e. of a reward they will actually get) and a mere counterfactual simulation of the reward, in which one merely imagines getting the reward. An interpretation along these lines would be consistent with De Brigard et al.'s own focus specifically on how a comparative lack of integration with hierarchical autobiographical knowledge, when compared with episodic memories, might mean that episodic future simulations carry at best very impoverished temporal information, and their suggestion that the latter fact, in turn, can explain biased patterns of intertemporal choice such as future discounting.

However, if episodic future simulations lack temporal information because they are less integrated with hierarchical autobiographical knowledge, as De Brigard et al. suggest, this might also be relevant to the topic of intertemporal choice in a different way. As Sullivan discusses in her chapter, one of the most prominent arguments that one should be temporally neutral in one's attitudes towards the immediate versus the distant future has been what she calls the Arbitrariness Argument against future discounting. According to it, future discounting is irrational because '[d]istant future pains, pleasures, financial windfalls and the like will all happen to you just as much as present ones, so self-interest dictates that you should care about them just as much' (this volume, p. 103). Yet, as Sullivan also points out, philosophers (most notably Parfit) have had a response to this. The argument, they have said, assumed that the rational basis for self-interest is identity; future discounting is not arbitrary if, instead, we take the rational basis for self-concern to be psychological connectedness: If one feels less psychologically connected with one's distant future self than one's self in the immediate future, it is then rationally permissible to prioritize satisfying the preferences of the latter over satisfying those of the former.

De Brigard's et al.'s study and its relevance for questions about intertemporal choice might perhaps be seen in a somewhat similar light. If they are right in saying that episodic future simulations lack integration with hierarchical autobiographical knowledge, this, too, might explain a sense in which events envisaged to happen in the more remote future are less clearly perceived as happening to oneself than events in the immediate future, which in turn might explain a tendency to choose immediate rewards over delayed ones. Interestingly, this might mean that De Brigard et al.'s approach, whilst in certain respects being an articulation of what Sullivan calls the perceptual model of temporal biases, has one important feature that Sullivan associates with the evolved heuristic model. A key part of the evolved heuristics model, at least as Sullivan understands it, is the idea that temporal biases are, at least primarily, a first-personal affair, so that we should expect differences in the judgements people make about their own intertemporal choices and the judgements they make when other people's intertemporal choices are at issue (see also Fernandes' chapter, as discussed below). This is due to the role evolved emotions play in the evolved heuristic model. Yet, if what we have just said about De Brigard et al.'s approach is along the right lines, it too, even though it locates the reason behind future discounting in a lack of informational integration rather than evolved emotional reactions, is one in which considerations about the self could play a crucial role in temporal discounting.

Returning now more specifically to psychological past/future asymmetries, here too we can ask whether they reflect just general differences in thinking about the past and the future, or whether the self plays some important role in them. A version of this question is the focus of Alison

Fernandes' chapter, which once again takes at its starting point existing evolutionary explanations of psychological past/future asymmetries. As Fernandes notes, such explanations often appeal to very general features of how people are related to all (or almost all) events in the past or future—such as that they can (in principle) control events in the future but no events in the past. For example, perhaps people feel more strongly about future events because they take themselves to have greater control over them (Ramos et al.'s Control axiom) or perhaps they sometimes prefer negative events to be in the future because future events can be mitigated (Greene et al.'s mitigation hypothesis, see Section 4). While the asymmetry of control might not be strict—it is certainly not the case that people can control all events in the future—people are arguably able, or take themselves to be able, at least in principle, to control future events, whereas they typically take themselves to be unable to exert any control over past events. Perhaps this control asymmetry directly explains psychological past/future asymmetries. As we have seen, considerations about the controllability of the future versus the past play a key role in a number of existing accounts of psychological past/future asymmetries.

Fernandes' contention in her chapter is that at least some cases of psychological past/future asymmetries are not due to an (even in principle) temporal asymmetry in what one can control. Instead, they are due to temporal asymmetries in the relations that order people's lives along a personal time- line and that distinguish one's earlier selves (oneself at earlier points in one's personal life history) from one's later selves (oneself at later points in one's personal life history). Consider the fact that people prefer pleasurable experiences to be in the future and painful experiences to be in the past. Fernandes argues that this temporal asymmetry cannot be explained by a control asymmetry, since, even in hypo theoretical cases where people can control past events, they would still prefer painful events to happen to their earlier selves rather than to their later selves (or so she argues). People have temporally asymmetric preferences independently of what events they can control but dependently on whether the events concern their earlier or later selves. Fernandes takes the ordering of one's 'selves' along one's personal time- line to be ultimately a causal phenomenon. As with control- based accounts, her account relates psychological past/future asymmetries to a temporal asymmetry in causal relations. But, as with Sullivan (this volume, proposal 2), she relates temporal dimensions in people's attitudes to features of personal identity—to what relations order people's lives and make them the same person over time.

A potential limitation of Fernandes' approach is that, like Parfit's original thought experiment, she appeals to the reader's intuition rather than using empirical evidence about how people might actually choose or behave. Part of the reason for this limitation is that, in the actual world, the order of events along people's own personal time- line always matches up with the temporal and causal order: what happens to people's later selves always takes place in the temporal and causal future. This fact makes it hard to disentangle the potential contributions from these different orders in the actual world. Cases where these orders come apart are possible- world cases of backwards causation and time travel. These cases are likely to remain merely hypothetical and require some theoretical knowledge to think through—making people's judgements as they imagine themselves in such cases difficult to test for.

That said, the reason to bring in time travel cases, even if they are only hypothetical, is that they have implications for how one should think about the psychological asymmetries in the actual world. Fernandes uses her case study to argue that some psychological asymmetries begun as 'person- relative' phenomena that held more strongly for events concerning oneself, even if they have now become more 'generalized' to include events concerning others. So, when considering the development of psychological past/future asymmetries, we should always consider the potential for this person- relative aspect. A person- relative approach is compatible with other approaches to psychological past/future asymmetries discussed in this volume, including Callender's focus on tense

and O'Brien's focus on past personal events (see Sections 3 and 4). It is also compatible with the control asymmetry having some role to play in explaining psychological past/future asymmetries. However, it underscores the idea—also present in other chapters such as those by Campbell and by Hoerl—that psychological past/future asymmetries form a diverse group, and that different such asymmetries may require quite different theoretical treatments, making this a very fertile area for further research. <>

## **D. G. LEAHY AND THE THINKING NOW OCCURRING** edited by Lissa McCullough and Elliot R. Wolfson [SUNY series in Theology and Continental Thought, SUNY Press, 9781438485072]

A critical introduction to the American philosopher D. G. Leahy (1937–2014), whose oeuvre sets forth a fundamental thinking in which change itself is revealed to be the very essence of reality and mind.

This book offers a critical introduction to the work of American philosopher D. G. Leahy (1937–2014). Leahy's fundamental thinking can be characterized as an absolute creativity in which all creating is "live"—a happening occurring now that manifests a supersaturated polyontological actuality that is essentially created by the logic that characterizes it. Leahy leaves behind the categorial presuppositions of modern thought, eclipsing both Cartesian and Hegelian subjectivities and introducing instead an essentially new form of thinking founded in a nondual logic of creation. The new thinking delineates the absolute unicity of existence as a creative interactivity beyond all traditional dichotomies (such as one vs. many, unity vs. plurality, identity vs. change): a fully "digitized" actuality that is nothing but newness, which inherently implies nothing but change. Through this new form of thinking, change itself is revealed to be the very essence of reality and mind. Any reader looking for a quantum leap beyond the thrall of modern and postmodern fixations is invited to hear and apprehend this new thinking that refuses to be conditioned by paradigms, categories, species, genera, walls, bridges, boundaries, or abstractions: an essentially free thinking that embodies creative novelty itself.

### **Review**

"D. G. Leahy is one of the most important yet commensurately most difficult of the post-Death of God theologians. So far there has been no volume to help readers into the dense yet deeply original labyrinth of Leahy's confrontation with contemporary philosophy and theology and his own thinking of an absolute beginning and of absolute creativity and objectivity. This will be the book for those attempting to find their way into Leahy's work, providing not only an entrance and orientation to his thought, but also critically confronting and reflecting on it." - Jason M. Wirth, Seattle University

"Leahy is a genuinely original thinker, extraordinarily intelligent on many different fronts, and someone who will, in my estimation, become a luminary for study in years and decades to come. This book is an excellent introduction towards that end." - Andrew W. Hass, author of *Auden's O: The Loss of One's Sovereignty in the Making of Nothing*

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## Introduction to D. G. Leahy: A Quick Start Guide for the Vexed and Perplexed by LISSA McCullough

The philosophical writings of D. G. Leahy are exceedingly demanding. They are highly technical, hard to read, recondite, often bewildering, even crazy sounding—especially at first when a reader comes to them cold. For the moment this is new territory and there are very few interpretive footsteps to walk in. In view of the exceptional difficulty faced by the novice, this "quick start guide" offers orientations to and prehensions of Leahy's thinking to serve as heuristic footholds where the learning curve is steepest: it is for first-time readers and anyone debating whether or how to begin the effort, as well as intermediate readers seeking to progress further. This guide is especially intended for those who are intrigued but frustrated from the get-go, already finding themselves vexed and perplexed. This guide, supplemented with the "Glossary of Key Terms" in the back of the volume, invites the patient reader to enter in and begin the process of acclimation, reading and rereading (see "Reading Strategies that Work," below) for the sake of the extraordinary benefits that are to be won by thinking this thinking along with Leahy. The twelve essays of the volume provide a diverse array of expository and critical approaches that readers will find differentially helpful from one time to another.

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## Quick Start Q&A

*Q1: Why read Leahy if it's so difficult? Why bother?*

A1: Certain thinkers are so original in their purpose that the critical question is not so much whether the reader stands in accord with the thinking, but whether she or he has genuinely encountered, absorbed, and been transformed by the intellectual and existential challenge that the thinking incites. One need not be wholly convinced or converted to receive the untold benefit of the thinking proposed. Anyone seriously reading the work of Leahy will be provoked out of habituated categories and projected into a "live" new realm of thinking / existing—an achievement most beneficial in our present globalizing era in the new millennium in which fresh, novel, uncanned thinking is more needful than ever. One might be resistant to Leahy's fundamental outlook and balk at accepting it, but one cannot seriously engage his thinking without being jarred alert, shaken out of intellectual complacency, and provoked to contend with the most fundamental matters on which it is possible to think and act today. Indeed, the deepest project of Leahy's essentially new logic and ethics is to provoke readers to think! act anew every moment precisely because every moment is a new creation, and because not to think/ act absolutely anew is unethical. There exists an ethical imperative to undertake this thinking in positive terms—as an X in which one has no choice but to participate—rather than mainly in terms of what it brings to an end, displaces, and renders a thinking of the past. A reader who does not (seek to) begin with the positive X will not get there—because it is categorically transformative of all earlier ontological and ethical thinking. That is what makes the challenge overwhelming. We embody the metanoia. The metanoia embodies us.

*Q2: First, how about a simple overview?*

A2: Yes, a functioning intuitive handle is indispensable. The "new world order" delineated in Leahy's works is characterized as an absolute creativity in which the creating is "live," a happening occurring now, a now that is an infinitely supersaturated polyontological actuality in which creation begins. The world is indeed created—but only beginning now. The universe is not precreated; its identity is not fixed but essentially new. To begin this thinking, apply your mind to think an absolute exteriority—an otherness than which none more all-inclusive and thoroughgoing can be thought—one so thorough that the very idea of subjectivity or "self" is canceled, driven out, forefended. Think this thought fully, along with all the reasons for which we can suppose that we have in fact arrived at this perception of the actually existing universe. Demonstrably, existence exists. We are in fact in this creative abyss of existence that is neither transcendent nor immanent but a unity beyond both, an absolutely actual unicity. The claim is, moreover, that this is not a matter of knowledge per se but of immediate perception. Certainly this involves comprehension and intelligibility, but in a manner "otherwise than knowledge," the beginning of the absolute transcendence of knowledge (FP 153). So then, Leahy implies, "don't blame Leahy." He is thinking something that is in fact happening for thinking, not his doing. The thinking now occurring is not Leahy's "own" thinking for the simple reason that (perception of) existence is gift, and it is for us to receive this gift via creative-receptive perception, but not to appropriate it as our own. In colloquial terms, the argument is saying, more or less: apply the powers of the mind until you naturally find that this thinking becomes a transparent intelligibility, even a freely acknowledged inevitability; using your mind expansively it becomes, in the colloquial sense, a "no brainer." The fully open mind's eye sees this absolute actuality, not something else. This actuality now manifest is essentially created by the logic (creative perception) that delineates it.

*Q3: What is important about this thinking?*

A3: The thinking now occurring commences an essentially newborn, universal, fully "digitized" actuality that is nothing but newness, novelty, which inherently also implies nothing but change. It is absolute change that powers all "seeming to stay the same." The claim of an essentially new reality may sound grandiose—even impossible or absurd—until one understands the logical basis of the claim to essential novelty. At issue is not any form of ideality but rather the full pragmatic fact of actuality, materiality, factuality as now fully thinkable in a way that was not heretofore conceivable—not, that is, before various forerunning breakthroughs in and realizations of ontological thought prepared the way. Thought hitherto has been wedded to conventionality, a system of categorizations and presuppositions, a tracing of fixations, a fixing of traces, because language has been conventional, logic has been conventional; logic is a social construct and a communal good. Anyone who feels attached to a rational / intellectual / scientific status quo, its conventional logics and categories, will be disinclined to welcome or embrace this deep dive into an anticonventional "change of mind" (metanoia) at work. By contrast, any who believe that humanity could do with a quantum leap beyond the thrall of modern and postmodern fixations should attempt to hear and understand this thinking for which the stases of conventionality are eliminated wholesale; a thinking that refuses to be conditioned by paradigms, categories, species, genera, walls, bridges, boundaries, and abstractions; a thinking that thinks (creates) novelty itself. For such new-thinking, the world is new.

Q4: *What is "thinking" for this thinking?*

A4: This is not a "thinking" that only philosophers do. All actual forms of mindfulness or consciousness are comprised under the catchall term thinking: thinking, seeing, imagining, perceiving, smelling, tasting, reminiscing, dreaming, daydreaming, ratiocinating, being absentminded. The thinking now occurring could just as well be called the perceiving now occurring or the creating of the world now occurring.

Q5: *Why the obsession with "beginning" in this thinking?*

A5: Only beginning anew permits creativity to function as an absolute (re)sourcefulness. Absolute creativity cannot work freely if it begins with something fixed or predetermined. To be absolute, creativity must always begin at the beginning. The beginning is now: now we begin. Even what we call the past—past beginnings memorialized—begin in the present and have sway only now. This is a philosophy of absolute creativity that is fully and only actual. "Past" and "future" are figurative features of actuality, of a thinking now.

Q6: *Why is the word "absolute" ubiquitous in this thinking?*

A6: Only absolute, and no other word, captures the understanding that nothing is left untouched by the sea-change of universal metanoia, the shift to thinking absolute creativity. Just as in Spinoza everything is understood sub specie aeternitatis because of the way everything springs directly from the nature of God, so in the thinking now occurring everything is understood as absolute beginning, a creative emergence ex abysso. Figuratively speaking, to touch any point of this absolutely new order is to touch the whole. It is a unicity: an absolute whole

that is absolutely "digitized." The categories of thought are burst by this unicity. There are no a priori categories, no preordained species: there is only a singular absolute existence itself absolutely particular.

Q7: *Why is the word "essential" ubiquitous in this thinking?*

A7: There is no such thing as precreated, canned essence. Thinking now creates essence ex nihilo. Thinking is the universe abiding. The abiding of the universe is thinking. The world subsists qua existence ready to be created essentially (free to be created qua essence, essentially free). When we

think, we create essence—like it or not. This is not to say that we create material existence by fiat; rather, we create the essential content of an existing substrate (substance). Substance is a given—the Body exists absolutely—but its identity emerges through our acts of productive receptivity. Everything that thinking does is essential. There is no inessential thinking. Therefore, think well; you are responsible for the universe. Bad thinking, botched universe.

*Q8: Why is the word "objectivity" ubiquitous in this thinking?*

A8: Imagine a thinking that thinks absolutely beyond (without, apart from, excluding) subjectivity, beyond every last vestige of every conceivable notion of "self." What would that thinking look like? Heuristically, it might call itself absolute objectivity. Absolute objectivity is beyond every trace of intentionality or purpose, prescinding from every origin or source (for an exemplary specification of this, see beyond beyond x in the glossary of key terms). When "^" think, this is not the work of a self. It is simply thinking that is occurring, specific and specifying, located in the now. It is the "apocalyptic P" that thinks, not myself—my presumed and presumptive "self." Who am ^ to grab and claim possession of this thinking as though it were mine? As though it belonged to me? As the actuality of the universe (identically universal consciousness) is received as gift, "manna from heaven," appropriation is inappropriate. This absolute gift is actually given in the receiving; this means that how it is received decides its essential nature.

*Q9: Why is the word "transcendental" ubiquitous in this thinking?*

A9: The term transcendental is absolutely essential, at the heart of the difficulty. The Incarnation means that God transcends into absolute pleromatic existence. The term transcendental characterizes an essentially creative order in which the fiat of live creation in the now is the advent of essence or identity: it is essence-in-the-making, or the active creating of identity. The primacy of the transcendental in the form of essentially new existence can be contrasted with modernity's formally transcendental mode of thinking, which presupposes essence in the form of metaphysical abstractions. Now an essentially transcendental synthetic "seeing" and "abiding" constitutes a world absolutely new, a pleroma-now-in-creation. Cognizant of being plunged in the deep end of the pool, thinking realizes its essential vocation as the active perception of a universal, unscripted actuality of absolute change, with the capacity to intervene in infinite ways.

*Q10: Does this thinking think transcendence or immanence?*

A10: This thinking thinks transcendence beyond the dichotomy immanence /transcendence. Thinking, qua creative reception, is the infinite transcendence of immanence. Creation that is essentially and categorically transcendent eliminates immanence in a transcendental intimacy. In an inversion of Gilles Deleuze, this is not the collapse of transcendence into a plane of immanence but the collapse of immanence into infinite planes of transcendence.

*Q11: If everything is actual, is everything permissible?*

A11: No, an ethical imperative is implied in the absolute asymmetry of existence and nothing (F 265, 383), and the absolute asymmetry of truth and falsehood, once the truth of falsehood is identified (F 287). This ethical imperative is worked out in *Beyond Sovereignty: ^ New Global Ethics and Morality* (2010) as the unconditional imperative to create the world, which precludes destructive activity (BS 6).

*Q12: Does this thinking require me to be religious, Christian, or Catholic?*

A12: No. If it did it would not be genuinely catholic, nor would it be free. Everything capable to be thought in the domains of science, politics, religion and irreligion, art, comedy, nonsense, and so on has a place qua thinking. The phenomenality of logic is everywhere at work including in the deepest

darkness. Yet certain forms of thinking are more fully consistent with beauty, truth, goodness—in short—the creative freedom that is on offer. Other forms of thinking deserve

to be outmoded, superseded judged, but not condemned—as they manifest their limitations. Let them receive their due. ^ default of creation is resolved with more creation.

*Q13: Does this thinking require me not to be religious, Christian, Catholic, or atheist?*

A13: Yes, if your existing religiosity or atheism blocks receptivity to this new form of thinking. Outdated forms of thinking act as constraints upon this essentially free new form of thinking.

*Q14: Is this just another totalizing thinking, like Hegel's, with the associated dangers?*

A14: No, because existence qua absolute polyontological in-finitude is miraculous birth. The limit of miracle is no limit. Hegel's Godhead is itself a limit: a container. The thinking now occurring is an absolute exteriority that cannot be limited or contained. It is that than which nothing greater or more unlimited can exist, which is to say: an absolute freedom. Leahy's preferred term for this freedom is created omnipotence.

*Q15: What do I need to understand about the trinary logic?*

A15: The trinary logic is a formal thinking that supplants and eliminates the uncreative binarity of one (1) and nothing (0). There is no nothing; nothing is unthinkable. Because nothing is not for this thinking, a logic is needed in which zero is not nothing. Creating begins from zero, but that zero is not nothing. All binaries, dichotomies, and oppositional dialectics (Being / nothing, good /evil, truth / falsehood, and so on) are eliminated by trinary thinking. The only dialectic that remains is an essential dialectic: "in the essential dialectic of matter itself, nothing is thought for the first time in history but existence itself ... matter itself is the integral perception of change itself existing in essence: motion itself: matter itself essentially dialectical" (F 52-53). For more, see "trinary logic" in the glossary.

*Q16: Why is there so much mathematics in this thinking (i.e., in Foundation)?*

A16: The claim is that this new universal consciousness /actuality can be demonstrated ad infinitum. The trinary logic and the mathematics are instantiations offered by Leahy to exemplify this claim to infinite demonstrability. The gematria employed extensively in Foundation is also a domain of this exemplary demonstration. For further exemplification, see chapter 11 in the present volume: Sarah Lilly Eaton, "T^ Think the Beginning: The Apocalyptic 'I.'"

*Q17: Which of Leahy's texts are most approachable?*

A17: Although clearly there is value in tracing the course of a thinker's ideas in their sequential development from the earliest works to the latest, this is perhaps not the best way to begin reading Leahy—except for the truly undaunted. The movement from first annunciation to further elaboration in Leahy is assuredly not a progression from simple to complex (they are all complex) or from "juvenile" to mature (they are all mature). The first two books in particular, *Novitas Mundi* and *Foundation*, can be an ordeal to attempt to read without critical assistance. The last two books, *Faith and Philosophy* and *Beyond Sovereignty*, are his most accessible and least intractable. But this is not to say they are easy. Many may find helpful the series of video interviews of Leahy conducted in March 2014, several months before his death, by his student and friend Todd Carter, links to which are available on Leahy's website and on the "D. G. Leahy" Wikipedia entry.

## Capsule Synopses of the Four Major Works

**NOVITAS MUMDI** (1980) first announces the thinking now occurring. Densely written and oracular, it declares that ontological thinking has arrived at an absolute historic watershed, and it proceeds to work through the history of thought that grounds this claim, engaging figures from Aristotle, Augustine, and Thomas Aquinas to Descartes, Leibniz, Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Husserl, and Heidegger. The three appendixes are particularly important for understanding the thinking now occurring in its first appearance, and above all the third appendix (gamma): "Missa Jubilaea: The Celebration of the Infinite Passover."

**FOUNDATION** (1996) is Leahy's most difficult book. It is also the most polythematic, comprising a congeries of topics and tempos. As his readership grows, it will be established as Leahy's magnum opus in view of the fact that all the core arguments are here: those addressing the death of God, the new world order, the body as foundation, the trinary logic, the geometry, the gematria, and the absolute edge on which creation occurs. In addition to the major modern continental philosophers who reappear (with Derrida a new addition), a focused engagement with American thought, including pragmatism, is special to this work: Peirce, James, Dewey, Altizer, McDermott.

**FAITH AND PHILOSOPHY** (2003) is Leahy's most accessible book for those who are trained in Western philosophy. It traces out the advent of Incarnation in the history of Western philosophical thought from Aristotle through Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Jefferson, Emerson, Nietzsche, and Levinas to an arrival "beyond modernity." The appendix, "Thinking in the Third Millennium: Looking Without the Looking Glass," is especially important for grasping the thinking now occurring, and may prove a fairly accessible and helpful entryway for many readers.

**BEYOND SOVEREIGNTY** (2010) offers an ethics of the thinking now occurring. Beyond modernity, a new ethics is needful that does not refer to self or have any qualifications related to the binaries and dualities that typify modern thought. Leahy specifies this as a physical ethics because it is an ethics of the existing body, not an ideality or projection of the mind. This is also the text in which he engages contemporary continental philosophers Alain Badiou and Giorgio Agamben.

## A Heuristic Entryway

Leahy's work is exceptionally original and maximally coherent in laying out a philosophical and religious thinking that goes beyond the "radical" in a rather literal sense; that is, rather than looking for roots (from the Latin *radix*) to reclaim, retrieve, renew, this thinking conceives an absolutely new departure: an essentially new form of thinking. It is beyond radical, an apocalyptic thinking in which absolute beginning and absolute ending coincide in a current actuality that is absolutely new. Everywhere we turn we face the unprecedentedly new. Whither the new beginning for thinking that would be adequate to the emerging global reality on which we are already actually embarked and in which we are profoundly engaged? What thinking is equal to this new reality? How does thinking come to terms with this infinitely multiplicitous yet singular world in which thinking witnesses itself to be existing? Recognizing the new reality brought on by the full logical implications of the death of God in modernity, Leahy's epochal works call for a categorically or essentially new thinking that would be congruent with the "new world order" that is actually taking shape globally. Here it must be carefully understood that Leahy employs the term "new world order" in an entirely original sense, referring to a philosophical order enacted by a new consciousness of the present historical state of affairs. To quote Leahy:

It is the writer's understanding that the new beginning [of the new world order, which is the end of modernity] is categorical, and that the categories and, indeed, the very structures of modern philosophical, theological, and scientific self-consciousness are essentially inadequate to the new beginning, and, further, that the most fundamental structure, the very notion of self—in any but a purely formal sense—is completely and essentially dysfunctional in the light

of the beginning of this new world.... For the first time the new reality of the world—world unity—is not a mere ideal.... The consciousness adequate to the beginning of real world consciousness is a universally new consciousness, in fact, a perfect other-consciousness, a consciousness categorically and essentially beyond the otherself relation.... It is possible to understand the beginning of absolute other-consciousness now actually occurring as finally the Incarnation assaulting thinking.... The mind-assaulting novelty of existence is of the essence of the thinking. (F, ix, xiii)

As indicated here, a signature feature of this new departure is that thinking is weaned of all attachment to modern subjectivity—an attachment that begins decisively with Descartes, passes to Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard, begins to perish with Nietzsche, and is brought to an apocalyptic end in Thomas J. J. Altizer. In the context of this trajectory, Leahy demonstrates not only what is ending (as Altizer does), but what is beginning (as Altizer does not). What is beginning for thought is an apocalyptic newness corresponding to that ending, an absolute novelty that is at once the newness of the world (*novitas mundi*) and the newness of mind (*novitas mentis*). Indeed, the full coincidence of these—new world, new mind—is imperative to be cognized. Leahy's work evinces a new thinking that embodies "absolute objectivity," categorically eliminating subjectivity and self along with all its derivatives (Descartes's *ego sum*, Hegel's self-consciousness,

Nietzsche's cosmic ego-body, Levinas's self in the accusative, Altizer's death of self-consciousness, and so on). The author's core claim concerns the "absolutely revelatory structure of existence itself" (BS, 49). Revelation occurs not in this or that selective event or moment; rather, the history of thinking reveals in due time that existence itself is universally and essentially revelatory. Matter, the Body itself—this absolutely particular, absolutely differentiated, infinitely finite poly-ontological existence—is holiness itself.

As this new thinking constitutes "a perfect other-consciousness," eliminating the very notion of self, it is indifferent to who begins thinking this way and where such thinking begins to occur. What matters is that this new thinking, adequate to the new world order, does indeed begin to occur as "the thinking now occurring." The thinking belongs to no one, yet it is the vocation of everyone. It is an objective thinking that occurs, but is not possessed. It thinks existence, an existence that is sheer gift, absolute gift. What gift wants to be possessed? Where it begins occurring, how and when it begins to occur more widely, are a matter of fortuitous circumstance; perhaps we might credit the cunning of the *zeitgeist*. But it is no accident that Leahy's books consistently speak of "the thinking now occurring," rather than "the thinker" or "the author" or "I." The sole term of self-reference occasionally employed is "the writer" (as exemplified in the quote above), as though the writer were a scribe for a thinking that is the true content, leaving the writer saturated with content yet perfectly empty of self-consciousness. Leahy's thinking is but one manifestation of the thinking now occurring; the thinking now occurring is not by any means limited to Leahy's thinking.

The core breakthrough of the thinking now occurring is that it grasps the essence of existence as transcendental, and existence itself (matter, the Body) as historically revealed fact. We face the enormous difficulty of trying to understand what this means, and in coming to understand this, we understand as well how this breakthrough transforms the task of thinking from the point of view of thinking itself. It means that all thinking is the beginning of essence, and essence begins in all thinking; hence all thinking is essentially creating the world, though essential creation does not imply material creation. Historically, thinking has discovered matter to be a matter of fact, whereas thinking has discovered essence to be a matter of continually new active creation. Materially there is one Body, infinitely polyontological, but essentially that Body is created *ex nihilo*, and we in our thinking are the creators. Because thinking is infinitely pluriform, the thinking now occurring inaugurates the "incipient existence of the absolute upbuilding of infinite totalities" (FP, 122). Where is God in this



picture? God is the logical foundation of this essential imperative to create. God is dead, we are all co-creators now.

### The Death of God: Segue to Absolute Newness

In Thomas J. J. Altizer's theology the divine self-sacrifice is the foundational primordial sacrifice that makes possible the actual enactment in time of the self-embodiment or incarnation of God. The Good Friday of kenotic dissolution of God at the end of modernity ushers in an apocalyptic midnight in which no daylight or "noon" of Zarathustra is envisionable: this absolute apocalypse is the final revelation of God in the form of our universal chaos or chaosmos. Altizer witnesses to the "dead Body of God" that remains with us as a consequence of the self-negation or self-annihilation of God, an event that has erupted in the universal apotheosis of Nothingness in our historical world. Being has progressively passed into Nothingness or absolute Abyss, its dialectical opposite. While this passing is recognized by Altizer as the absolute passion or self-sacrifice of God, it entails as well the passing or passion of subjective consciousness, modern self-consciousness, the perspectival cogito of the successive Cartesian-Kantian-Hegelian-Nietzschean subject—which has progressively subsumed and deconstructed "God" as its object. Here "I" am, the voided shadow of my former cogitative self, pervaded by the Nothing, engulfed in the infinite abyss of ratio—to the glory of the self-emptying God. As Leahy characterizes this moment, "Life perishes in the contradiction of its own subjectivity. Indeed, absolutely so, in the event of the Nothing" (NM, 299).

Leahy's fundamental critique of Altizer is comprised within a much broader critique of what he calls the "dialectic of the exhausted self" in modernity; indeed, the thinking now occurring prosecutes "a radical critique of modern thought's essence" (NM, 1). Examining the trajectory of modern thinking from Descartes and Kant through Hegel and Kierkegaard, culminating in Levinas and Altizer, Leahy ventures that "in no event is consciousness anywhere in modernity near being beyond subjectivity and the nothing" (F, xi); rather, modern consciousness reconstitutes itself in endless variation, novel repetitions of the same old song, bound within the essentially uncreative binary oppositions of Being / Nothing, subject / object, transcendent / immanent, noumena / phenomena, sameness / difference.

Pressing for liberation from the entombing solipsism of modern subjectivity, Altizer extends subjectivity to an extreme limit in a quest for its reduction beyond zero, where subjectivity would finally burst out of subjective solipsism into otherness. While Altizer's thought celebrates the death of God as the absolute opportunity for redemptive freedom and grace to abound, per Leahy's analysis his witness remains engulfed in the abyssal solitude and darkness of absolute Nothingness, unrelievedly, even stubbornly, like the proverbial Jewish grandmother who prefers to sit in the dark. Here, Leahy sees in Altizer a "refusal to put meaning into things ... a final refusal to re-establish essence in the wake of the disappearance of the divine substantiality of the world" (FP, 120). The apotheosis of Nothing in Altizer "is the perfect barrier of absolute inaction, the perfect elimination of every obstacle to the creation of a new world without in fact creating that order" (F, 577). Altizer heralds the possibility of a new faith (F, 603), which, by persisting as unrealized possibility, staves off the actuality of a new faith. It is as though Altizer's obsessive focus on bringing Nietzsche's death-of-God annunciation home to roost with utter finality, and his pure and relentless witness to the apocalyptic end (of God, of subjectivity, of modernity, of an ordered cosmos), forestalls the actual enactment of apocalyptic beginning, or the undertaking of the present task of incarnation, which is the task of new creation, a refusal that Leahy considers contra-Nietzschean (FP, 120, 102).

In Altizer's witness to "the solitude of the end" we observe the Kure ipseity of the self-annihilating subject, persisting ironically as I he spit and image of the self-annihilated God, now expanding to fill

the infinite expanse of God's own godless universal chaosmos or dead Body. Thus Altizer articulates "the beginning of the loss of God's own subjectivity in the very form of the self-consciousness of the Godhead of God in man" (F, 603). The dark night of the death of God provides passage to a new beginning beyond modernity. As Altizer's thinking brings us to the extremity of that ending (death of God realized as final apocalypse), Leahy's thinking brings us to the ending of that ending in beginning, the beginning of a new world (*novitas mundi*) in and for a new consciousness (*novitas mentis*). The apocalyptic imperative issuing from the midnight madness of the death of God is the imperative to create, to articulate novel essence in freedom. The question, "How can I create the world?" becomes, rather, "How can I not create the world?" inasmuch as "I" am no subject but in *medicus* res a world objectively and pragmatically creating itself. Not "I," then, but a particular world creating itself; the creating body, matter, forming itself specifically in thinking; body itself bodying itself, thinking itself essentially. By virtue of existing, we cannot not create the world, effectively, pragmatically, whether in a mentality of denial, disinclination, fear and trembling, or faith. The world is absolute objectivity, gift, matter itself existing, impeding on us as such, and all acts of consciousness (thinking) supply the formal logic of its creation.

### Beyond Beyond Modernity

For decades, modes of thinking have been purveyed as "postmodern" that concur in their recognition that modern envisionments of God, self, humanity, and world have grown moribund and unproductive. The postmodern imperative has been to get beyond the limiting and inhibiting constrictions of modern categories and problems, their abiding thrall. But to strive to overcome is not to overcome. On the contrary, as long as one is striving to overcome, one has not overcome. There is need not merely to get beyond modernity but, as Leahy puts it in *Beyond Sovereignty*, to get beyond beyond modernity. But how does one actually get beyond without falling into the vicious circle of striving to get beyond? How would one recognize when the moribund limitations and constrictions of modern categories and modes of thought have in actuality been overcome? One would necessarily see the world changed by a logical metanoia, a new spirit of beginning, a launching of creative act rather than a remaining beleaguered, entrapped, exhausted. Yet this is what has largely evaded postmodern thinking—the ability to open up a categorically new world. Every residual hint of striving to "get beyond" is the rub of not getting beyond in which postmodern reflection languishes, therein demonstrating that it is a late-late modern thinking in inherent relationship with the modern rather than a genuinely post-modern thinking.

Late modern thinkers—including Levinas, Badiou, Altizer, Agamben—have recognized the perspectival trap of post-Cartesian subjectivity and have sought a thinking that is emancipated from its limits. The thinking proposed by Leahy makes a clean break with this "curse" of modernity and eliminates wholesale the constrictions of the Cartesian legacy of the *cogito*. This thinking does so by grasping the modern legacy in its essential history and identifying its fatal error as viewed from a genuinely post-Cartesian, post-modern point of view. It does not just aspire to think otherwise than the modern, it actively commences to think otherwise than the modern, which makes this thinking difficult to come to terms with not only intellectually but morally and existentially. One must reorder one's mind, one's epochal habits of thinking, one's ethical orientation, and in effect become a visionary to understand it. Pervasive categories of mind and language are overthrown and a new (perception of) reality emerges. This thinking provides a new paradigmless paradigm (see the "non-paradigmatic," (BS, 254) that eliminates paradigm-thinking in principle.

### Thinking Is Creating: The Logic of Newness

In the new beginning, newness itself is a qualitative transformation in how consciousness understands what it is doing when it thinks, and the impact or import of doing it. This is clear in Leahy's answer to the question: What would be a categorically new logic? Hearing the question, we must understand that the term categorically new means originating discretely novel and unique categories

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in a way that eliminates paradigm-thinking in principle. "The category of a categorically new logic would be being for the first time. The logical category would be being beginning. Nothing other than being for the first time would be thought. Thought would be nothing other than being beginning. To think essentially would be to create" (F, 115).

How can we take stock of Leahy's claim that to think essentially would be to create? What does it mean to assert this? Heretofore, in pre-Enlightenment Western philosophical thinking—before the advent of Voltairean deism ceded to full-blown Nietzschean deicide—the world was created by God. If we now accept that "God is dead" and that traditional understandings of creation by God are defunct, who is creating the world? Or better expressed: How is world-creating happening? When God dies, essence evaporates. Is the world now uncreated? If so, is it now eternal *la* Aristotle? Is it uncreated as one of the infinite aspects of God *la* Spinoza? Is it essentially illusion *la* Hindu cosmology? Or is it chaos? Is it created by the big bang? All these *prima facie* answers have in common that an existing other-consciousness, a phenomenological content, is actual even if *qua* illusion or chaos. Wherefrom does it exist in the form that it constitutes? Rather than asking who is creating the world, more neutrally we may ask by what power or agency is world-creating happening, that is, letting being or the appearance of being be? The answer is: thinking. In the phenomenological functioning of existing consciousness, things appear in this form and that. How? Wherefrom?

An approach may be made through the essential failure of phenomenology. Merleau-Ponty, in the wake of Husserl's heroic struggles, characterizes the aims of Husserlian phenomenology. He writes that "the real is to be described, and neither constructed nor constituted." Twentieth-century phenomenological practice wants to abstain from abstraction, analysis, and interpretation to capture unmediated experience of lived environment, "the world as directly experienced," as the wellsprings of phenomenological analysis. What is not recognized here, what is glossed over without stringent examination, is the presupposition that to describe is not to construct or constitute. The thinking now occurring eliminates the distinction between conception and perception because it maintains that perception is, *per se*, patently a constructing and a forming; just as in geometry we "describe" a circle or a line, so thinking creates the world—not materially but formally, or rather essentially.

However deliberately or stubbornly phenomenological thinking may strive to pull back into a subtending experience that is "pure perception," *prevenient* to abstracting conception, that quixotic quest is no less a work of construction, or better, of constitution, of creation.

Perception *per se* is a forming and a constituting. There is no possibility for thought to recuse itself to an experience of existing that is prelogical, if here logic is understood in its broadest sense as consciousness at work. It is just as valid to insist that thinking is perceiving and describing as it is to assert that perceiving and describing are thinking.

Merleau-Ponty proceeds to write in the same passage: "The world is not an object whose law of constitution I have in my possession; it is the natural milieu and the field of all my thoughts and of all my explicit perceptions." But why this distance, this untenable distinction between world-constitution and world-perception? This persistent problem of the thing-in-itself must be—fully and finally—thought through to arrive at the thinking now occurring.

Jean-Paul Sartre's thought offers a correlative segue: if after the death of God existence precedes essence, then the decisive gift of the death of God is the apostolic responsibility of all actual thinking to create the world. Although, to be more accurate than Sartre, it is not possible for existence to "precede" essence; existence is an absolute content in *medicus res* of creating its essence. With respect to worlding, it's logic all the way down. The eclipse of God as creator entails the eclipse of all notions of precreated, intrinsic, or "canned" essence. These are eclipsed precisely by the infinite

particularity of existence itself, what Leahy calls the Body itself, the thoroughgoing materiality of the world, a body unified by its absolute differentiation (down to its sub-nanoparticles), now in essence available for new creation. In this sense, the death of God confers an absolute freedom in which the world is essentially uncreated until it is actually created *de novo* by existence (matter) thinking. Thinking this implication of the death of God, *Novitas Mundi* reads: "Now God himself suffers change itself in essence ... begins in essence to exist absolutely in the form of *exsistere ipsum*, the body itself" (NM, 383).

This new beginning can only be effected through a new logic, one that is essentially a logic of newness. The category of a categorically new logic would be being for the first time. But how are we to understand the category of being for the first time? A close parallel to this language is the ecstatic speech of Zarathustra's animals to the convalescent Zarathustra: "In every Now, being begins." But to explicate this logic of beginning Leahy turns not to Nietzsche but to Kierkegaard, who articulated the essential notion of Christianity that the eternal has come into time. "For Kierkegaard the beginning of existence essentially excludes thought, excludes sense perception & immediate cognition. [Whereas] in the form of the thinking now occurring for the first time, this Kierkegaardian beginning is thought categorically...: Thought is now thinking the beginning of being otherwise than thinking the beginning of thought" (FP, 115-16). Thought is never empty when it thinks; it thinks matter, an infinitely particular and universal matter, the Body. Does matter matter? Yes, absolutely. But matter is real and consequential as matter for thinking, for logic. There is no prelogical matter. It is for thinking that matter matters—as it absolutely does. We can shorten this logical path and cross this divide by saying: matter (qua existing) thinks itself materially mattering.

A deeply synthetic-syncretic co-engagement of philosophy and theology declares itself in this thinking. Since Kant, most philosophical/ethical thinking is sundered into two basic methodological camps: on the one hand, the "secular" makes its claims on the basis of naturalistic and/or cultural grounds (in the image of natural science argumentation), appealing to rational, empirical, or cultural factors rather than to faith, sacred scripture, or supernatural revelation for validity; on the other hand, the "religious" makes claims on overtly religious, often sectarian grounds. An essential claim of Leahy's thinking is that the postcritical distinction between philosophy and faith is outmoded and no longer pertains. Readers will likely have qualms with this stance until or unless they commence this new thinking themselves, but it bears noting that in order to begin essentially anew, thinking has to break absolutely with the categorial logic of the modern and begin beyond it, and this includes the faith-versus-reason diremption of modern thought. Thinking from this new locus (which is not a place but a logic, a newness of mind), the past is rendered past. It abides and informs as past but it has no hold on the task of thinking now. The essentially new thinking that Leahy articulates is an authentically post-modern thinking in that it actually ends modernity, leaves it in the past, declaring a categorical RIP and opening a *novitas mentis* beyond the modern.

### Leahy's Works Read as a Trajectory

The major works of Leahy trace out a progressively unfolding development of ideas, explicating a new synthesis after modernity, a modernity that in itself was created by the disintegration of the synthesis attempted by Thomas Aquinas between Aristotelian philosophy and *sacra doctrina* (revealed truth). **NOVITAS MUNDI** (1980) traces the development of "the perception of the history of being" in the essential history of thought from Aristotle and Aquinas through Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Husserl, and Heidegger. It diagnoses the essential passivity of modern self-consciousness, which began with Descartes's mistake (NM, 188-98). Modern consciousness is a paranoia (= madness, to think amiss, to misconceive, to misunderstand): a progressive displacement of reality itself (noumena) by appearances (phenomena), so that reason perceives itself beside itself, perceives beside things intelligible in themselves of which it knows nothing (noumena) appearances (phenomena) of which alone it has (purely subjective) knowledge. Pure reason is beside itself in a

structural schism by which it is objectively divided from itself by that infinite indifference to particularity, qua particularity, that constitutes its transcendental unity (for more, see "paranoia" in the glossary).

Pure reason's passive root is its inability to maintain itself face to face with its object's otherness, the mistake of madness being everywhere a substitution of appearance for reality. Modern science, accordingly, dissociates knowledge from reality itself. So then, within pure reason itself is reflected that external distinction between noumena and phenomena by which, through its particular "mistake," modern science dissociates knowledge from reality itself. *Novitas Mundi* recounts the story of what modern reason hath wrought, and where this history delivers us and our understanding of the task of reason now. The "backstage" but really "frontline" story is the Incarnation's historical occurrence having made its way surreptitiously into thought. The Incarnation's absolute objectivity ends the paranoia: "Absolutely nothing is thought except it be the existence of the absolute itself—the existence of existence" (F, 9).

**FOUNDATION: MATTER THE BODY ITSELF** (1996) is Leahy's magnum opus and also his most difficult book. It presents Leahy's most decisive expression of the thinking now occurring: the actuality of the Incarnation assaulting thinking (F, xiii). Making an important new innovation, it introduces the trinary logic that is the conceptual foundation of the thinking now occurring breaking absolutely with all modern dialectics, dualisms, and binarities. (See "trinary logic" in the glossary, and "The Law of Absolute Unity," F, 255-98.) *Foundation* celebrates matter, the Body itself, creating itself essentially in an absolutely free and objective thinking grounded in this trinary structure. This new consciousness embodies the pragmatic identity of conception and perception, of acting and thinking, of imagining and accomplishing (FP, 153). The advent of this absolutely objective consciousness obliterates the modern notion of subjectivity or self-consciousness, for "there is no subject-object distinction actually relevant to understanding the I now speaking and there is properly speaking no I now as subject" (FP, 144; see "apocalyptic I" in the glossary). Matter, qua absolute particularity, embodies an absolute pluralism of essence. Everything is body bodying itself at once materially, formally, and essentially, one absolutely complex-and-simple pluralistic body "existing" itself, articulating itself, specifying itself: "an absolute identification of the substance of thought and extension" (F, 521n94).

**FAITH AND PHILOSOPHY** (2003) provides a point of access to the more forbidding works of Leahy. Chapter 7 and the Appendix are the most original and constructive contributions. Leahy's own express agendum in this book is to examine, at the level of fundamental thinking, "the particular question as to just how Christian faith has impacted the notion of nous or divine mind in Western thought up to and including the present" (PF, ix) and this historical inquiry leads Leahy to undertake close textual analyses of the pertinent loci in Aristotle, Plotinus, Augustine, Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Jefferson, Emerson, Nietzsche, Peirce, Levinas, Altizer, and Leahy's own published work. These careful technical researches compose the bulk of the book (chapters 1-6), standing forth on their own critical-hermeneutical merit, quite independent of Leahy's constructive position. The essential clarifications wrought in these analyses alone make the book deeply valuable for anyone interested in fundamental philosophy in the West and its historical development.

**BEYOND SOVEREIGNTY** (2010) might be compared with Spinoza's *Ethics* or Kant's *Groundwork* for a *Metaphysics of Morals*; it stands alone as they stand alone, not continuous with or depending on any ethical thinking that came before. The utter elimination of subjectivity in the thinking now occurring is an innovation of such immense consequence that an entirely new approach to ethics becomes imperative: there is need for an ethics absolutely without self, entirely beyond the notion of self-consciousness, entirely beyond the "logic of Same & Other" (BS, 76). Manifesting this ethic is the purpose of *Beyond Sovereignty*. The "sovereignty" to be transcended is the sovereignty of



modern selfhood / self-identity, the realm of political / ethical autonomy presupposed by identity (Same/Other) politics, which has been formulated in the history of Western thought in the image of the sovereignty and autonomy of God, and justified thereby. All notions of this kind, grounded in the reign of a divine plan / natural law / autonomy theory, are ended in the new thinking proposed: "For the first time the 'natural law' is to create nature" (BS, 19); "beginning is the absolute undoing of the eternal support of the actual" (BS, 34); "the universe itself is essentially the beginning of the universe" (BS, 40). This means that every now of existence is a new creation *ex nihilo*, absolutely ungrounded in eternal Being, yet existing absolutely (imperishably) *qua* now beginning created omnipotence.

What the text does is articulate an absolutely new beginning for ethics, what might be characterized as a realized eschatology (see, for example, "the imperative to be in heaven," BS, 293). The ethical commission of this beginning is traced out in the "ethic of simplicity" (BS, 108ff.), which is detailed more specifically in the "morality of the new beginning" (BS, 279-99). The ethic of simplicity is formally parallel to Kierkegaard's idea that "purity of heart is to will one thing," but might be articulated essentially as "purity of mind is to create one (infinitely differentiated and absolutely particular) thing: the Body" (my paraphrase of Leahy). Now that existing is understood to be an essentially creative mode of being, creating indistinguishably in tandem a new world and newness of mind, ethics is now concerned with love that actually creates the other. This is perhaps not an entirely novel idea given that the French poet and essayist Paul Valéry wrote: "At its highest point, love is a determination to create the being which it has taken for its object"—but this deep intuition of Valéry is worked out seriously as a philosophical-ethical imperative in Leahy. For this new mode of existing there is only "alio-affection," nothing but attention to the other that is *per se* productive of the other (BS, xxiv, xviii). That is to say, I exist you, you exist me. Beneficence (doing the good), not benevolence (willing the good), is what love is (see "Index of the Ethic of Simplicity," BS, 88).

While the first part draws forth the new ethical imperative in light of the newness of the world (*novitas mundi*), the second and third parts undertake critical engagement with other philosophical-ethical thinkers (most intensively Badiou and Agamben) as a way of elaborating the new ethics more specifically. The author demonstrates the new thinking (*novitas mentis*) by showing how it differs from recent philosophical positions that are its strongest contenders. This strategy proves an effective method for enacting what is here the principal challenge for thought: to break with existing thinking and commence a new mentality that as such is a creative ethical act.

## Reading Strategies that Work

Because Leahy's foundational thinking remains for the time being relatively unknown and undiscovered, few complaints have arisen concerning the inherent difficulty of reading his writing. But as this new thinking becomes more widely known and studied, its difficulty will undoubtedly become as notorious as are the philosophical languages of Hegel and Heidegger—inviting satire from the good-humored and provoking offense among those of Cartesian taste, who prefer a language that is analytically plain, with sentences setting out clear and distinct bits of sense. To be sure, difficult language should not be put up with for its own sake; the effort has to prove worthwhile. But we do persist in reading Hegel and Heidegger because of the new modes of experiencing they induce us to discover. Leahy himself was well aware of this language problem, calling this categorically new manner of writing a "radical inconvenience" as a consequence of thinking categorically differently, essentially differently, beginning a new way of thinking for the first time: "the discomfiture is foundational" (F, xii). "The reader who will enter into this work will discover not only the discomfiture of beginning a new way of thinking, but that this initial discomfiture of thought never completely abates, since the mind-assaulting novelty of existence is of the essence of the thinking" (F, xiii).



How to read these writings, in terms of reading strategies? Think of it as a process that will progress with patient trust in the powers of mind. To begin the process, enter in and focus on achieving acclimation at first. It is the case that gradual acclimation to Leahy's language and reiterated themes is an essential avenue to gaining footholds and building up understanding. In this case—to ply an immersion metaphor—not being able to swim won't kill you, so just fearlessly bob around, feel the waters, tread a little, doggy paddle. The creative-synthetic powers of mind effect progress in mysterious ways. Trying and trying again eventually pays off, as does patiently cultivating one's ability to parse unwieldy and complex sentences. Although Leahy's expositions can seem *prima facie* impenetrable, the language is unfailingly attentive and considered, grammatically parseable, worked through with utmost exactitude to be semantically careful and technically precise. While the writing is highly demanding in its difficulty, any effort on the reader's part to understand is richly rewarded with intelligent, brilliant, mature, lucid thinking. Leahy offers the reader an apologia as follows:

The language of the new thinking possesses in its sparseness and precision a likeness to complex mathematical formulation. No doubt already the reader has encountered some difficulty. Perhaps one or more of the above sentences was not immediately understood. It has perhaps been necessary to reread a sentence several times to get the exact sense of the relationships described. This style-less style of language is wholly necessary in the attempt to precisely formulate in a rigorously consistent manner certain most fundamental ontological-historical relations. The writer therefore offers his apology to the reader for the inevitable inconvenience of having to read again in order to read. He apologizes to the reader for the inevitable embarrassment which the reader will feel in having to read slowly, and only wishes to add that he himself shares in this very embarrassment both as writer and reader. (F, xiii-xiv)

In my own experience as a Leahy reader, rereading—coming back to read again another day—repays far more than beating one's head against what seems (for the nonce) a semantic wall. It is productive ^^ listen attentively, absorb all implications as fully as possible, get familiarized with what one is encountering—and yet keep moving and don't get bogged down. Push forward patiently, resolving to understand more fully the next reading.

Specificity and concreteness are of the essence in a thinking of absolute particularity. Abstractions and generalizations disregard this to their own peril. Engage specific issues with technical care. Build carefully, step by step. When you reflect on the thinking, in solitude or in conversation with another, be on the alert for red-flag words or intuitions that inadvertently reintroduce modern categories: subjectivity, meaning or meaningfulness, perspectivalism and interpretation, the notion of necessitation or "must." This thinking is not concerned with what is "meaningful"—as though some things have "meaning" and other things don't. It is occupied with bona fide "live" creation of essence, not with meaning—a recursive and derivative bystander-notion—set apart from the primacy of existence. As light is the new black, essence is the new meaning. The thinking now occurring doesn't "struggle against" anything or take any stances "con" or "anti." Such opposition has no place in a polyontological creative pleroma. On the contrary, there is a logical-ethical imperative to recognize how this thinking in principle eliminates oppositionality. Every thinking is a (re)source, no thinking is "the enemy." To cite but one example of this, the thinking now occurring is not anti-technology but pro-technology. It claims, in fact, to be "absolute technology" (F, 461-62). The limitation it perceives with Heidegger, then, is that he has not arrived at an adequately free technological thinking; it is a deficit of freedom in the how, not the what of technologies per se, that calls for fundamentally new thinking.

## Where to Begin?

Begin at the beginning. The beginning is now, and there is no possibility to defer or deter it: there is no putting it off. How to begin? By beginning now, for the show (the showing of Being, the

Phenomenon) now begins absolutely. To understand this, or even try to understand this, is to begin.  
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## **THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF EVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION** edited by James R. Liddle, Todd K. Shackelford [Oxford Library of Psychology, Oxford University Press, 9780199397747]

**THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF EVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION** offers a comprehensive and compelling review of research in religious beliefs and practices from an evolutionary perspective on human psychology. The chapters, written by renowned experts on human behavior and religion, explore a number of subtopics within one of three themes: (1) the psychological mechanisms of religion, (2) evolutionary perspectives on the functionality of religion, and (3) evolutionary perspectives on religion and group living.

This handbook unites the theoretical and empirical work of leading scholars in the evolutionary, cognitive, and anthropological sciences to produce an extensive and authoritative review of this literature. Its interdisciplinary approach makes it an important resource for a broad spectrum of researchers, graduate students, and advanced undergraduates who are interested in studying the factors and mechanisms that underlie and/or affect religious beliefs and behaviors.

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Given that religious beliefs and behaviors are so pervasive and have such a powerful influence, it is vital to try to understand the psychological underpinnings of religiosity. This chapter introduces the topic of evolutionary perspectives on religion, beginning with an attempt to define “religion,” followed by a primer on evolutionary psychology and the concept of evolved psychological mechanisms. With this framework in place, the chapter then provides an overview of key adaptationist and byproduct hypotheses of various components of religion, highlighting the complementary nature of these hypotheses and their roles in forming a cohesive understanding of the evolution of religion. Concepts introduced in this chapter include hyperactive agency detection, minimally counterintuitive concepts, in-group cooperation, costly signaling theory, gods as moralizing agents, and cultural evolution.

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Religion has been and continues to be a powerful force throughout the world, having a substantive influence on individuals, communities, and even nations. Because religious beliefs and behaviors are so pervasive and have such a powerful influence, it is vital to try to understand the psychological underpinnings of religiosity. Psychologists have spent over a century examining religiosity (e.g., James, 2008/1902), but given the variety and complexity of religious beliefs and behaviors, there is still much that we do not understand. In recent years, an evolutionary psychological approach to religion has begun to add to our understanding, specifically by addressing the origins and functions of religion. The purpose of this chapter is to introduce much of the evolutionary psychological research on religion, setting the stage for the chapters that follow. By doing so, this chapter attempts to provide a coherent view of what we know about the origin and function of religious beliefs and behaviors, discuss what we do not know, and highlight directions for future research. However, before discussing these details, it is necessary to briefly discuss what is meant by “religion.”

## What Is Religion?

Religion consists of a complex suite of beliefs and behaviors, with much variability within and between particular religious worldviews. Slone (2008) illustrates this concept well, while only scratching the surface of religious diversity:

Nearly 2.5 billion of the world’s people belong to an institution that regularly serves its members a small meal of baked dough and fruit juice. The members are told that the meal is the flesh and blood of a dead-but-living fatherless god-man who has the superpowers to grant utopian immortality to those who eat him. Nearly 1.5 billion of the world’s people belong to a different institution that requires that five times a day members wash parts of their bodies with water, get down on their knees, bend over, and put their heads on the ground while repeating prescribed words. Members of this institution are also required to starve and parch themselves all day every day for a full lunar month. Some believe that taking even a sip of water during this time can result in eternal hellish punishment after death. (p. 181)

This description, while informative of the variability between two of the world’s major organized religions, leaves out an even greater degree of variability that can be found when one includes tribal religions, in which adherents often believe in several gods, ghosts, and/or spirits with various abilities,

personalities, and motivations, and have elaborate rituals and rules about how to interact with these agents.

Given the complexity of religious behavior and the degree to which religions can vary, generating a single definition of “religion” is extremely difficult. Indeed, there is no general consensus among those researching religion on how it should be defined (see Gervais, this volume; Cragun & Sumerau, this volume). Nevertheless, Atran has provided a definition of religion that serves as a useful starting point for the purposes of this chapter and is echoed throughout several chapters of this volume. Atran defines religion by providing a list of components that he argues converge in all societies to become what we refer to as religion. The four components are:

1. widespread counterfactual belief in supernatural agents (gods, ghosts, goblins, etc.);
2. hard-to-fake public expressions of costly material commitments to supernatural agents—that is, sacrifice (offerings of goods, time, other lives, one’s own life, etc.);
3. a central focus of supernatural agents on dealing with people’s existential anxieties (death, disease, catastrophe, pain, loneliness, injustice, want, loss, etc.); and
4. ritualized and often rhythmic coordination of 1, 2, and 3—that is, communion (congregation, intimate fellowship, etc.).

This definition strikes a balance between specificity and generality, such that it likely captures almost all worldviews that we would intuitively consider to be “religions” while excluding phenomena that should not be considered religions (e.g., political ideologies, devotion to one’s favorite sports team, empiricism, etc.).

Atran’s definition also above provides a useful roadmap for analyzing religion. Rather than attempting to analyze and explain religion as a whole, we can attempt to analyze and explain the individual components he identifies. The following sections of this chapter introduce how an evolutionary psychological perspective can aid in our understanding of these components of religion. But first it is worth clarifying what an evolutionary psychological perspective entails.

### Applying an Evolutionary Psychological Perspective to Religion

Evolutionary psychology is not a subdiscipline of psychology, such as social psychology or personality psychology, but rather an approach to psychology that applies evolutionary theory (Buss, 2019). Evolutionary psychology is founded on the premise that the brain, like every other organ, has evolved and is therefore open to analysis from an evolutionary perspective, which means that the products of the brain (i.e., thoughts, feelings, behaviors, psychology) are open to evolutionary analysis as well. For example, an evolutionary psychological approach has proven useful in examining social behavior (Cosmides, 1989), learning (MacDonald, 2007; Weber & Depew, 2003), memory (McBurney, Gaulin, Devineni, & Adams, 1997), and perception (Rhodes, 2006), to name only a few topics. In short, all aspects of human cognition can be better understood by applying an evolutionary analysis, and religious beliefs and behaviors are no exception.

More specifically, evolutionary psychologists posit that the mind is composed of domain-specific (and possibly a smaller number of domain-general) modules, or “evolved psychological mechanisms,” which evolved as solutions to specific and recurrent adaptive problems throughout our evolutionary history (Buss, 2019; see also Barkow, Cosmides, & Tooby, 1992). This is a particularly useful concept when attempting to understand religion. Given the complexity of religion, it makes sense that rather than attempting to understand religion as the result of the mind in general, we should expect that religion results from the activity of several domainspecific psychological mechanisms that evolved as a consequence of specific adaptive problems. However, an important question to consider is whether religious beliefs and behaviors themselves are the adaptive solutions that these mechanisms evolved to produce, or if they are better understood as byproducts of these or other mechanisms.

Despite what some critics of evolutionary psychology have suggested (e.g., Gould, 2000), evolutionary psychologists do not operate under the assumption that all behaviors are the product of specialized adaptations. In addition to adaptations, evolution by natural selection is capable of producing what are known as byproducts (Buss, Haselton, Shackelford, Bleske, & Wakefield, 1998), and evolutionary psychologists acknowledge and apply this concept to the study of the mind. In terms of evolutionary biology, an often-cited example of a byproduct is the whiteness of bones (Buss et al., 1998). This trait has no impact on survival or reproduction, but it inevitably results from increased calcium concentrations in bones, which is an adaptation to increase bone strength. In terms of evolutionary psychology, examples of byproduct hypotheses include the possibility that music and art are byproducts of language acquisition and habitat preference, respectively (Pinker, 1997).

This leads us to the question of whether religion is an adaptation or a byproduct. However, not only is this question difficult to answer, it may be unanswerable because it is overly simplistic. As Shariff (2008) notes:

Religions are complex. More than that, they are complexes, stitched together from many elements that have evolved at different times for different reasons. Some aspects of religion may be, or may have been, individually or culturally adaptive, whereas others may be more analogous to viruses. Asking whether religion, as a whole, is adaptive is a misleading question.

Therefore, instead of asking whether religion in general is an adaptation or a byproduct, a better approach is to ask whether particular components of religion are adaptations or byproducts. As the next two sections will show, approaching the problem from this perspective results in byproduct and adaptation arguments that are not mutually exclusive (see, e.g., Stagnaro & Rand, this volume), despite the fact that these different accounts of religiosity are often discussed as if they are pitted against each other (Kirkpatrick, 2008; Schloss, 2008). But even if byproduct and adaptationist accounts are not in competition, it is still useful to examine the arguments and evidence for each separately, and then one can attempt to unify them into a coherent account of religion.

### Byproduct Accounts of Religion

As Atran (2002) notes in his definition of religion, belief in supernatural agents is a universal component of religious worldviews. Therefore, a vital component of any thorough account of religion must explain why humans are predisposed to believing in supernatural agents. From an evolutionary perspective, the leading accounts of why people believe in supernatural agents suggest that these beliefs emerged as a byproduct of evolved psychological mechanisms designed for other purposes. This section discusses what some of those mechanisms may be, what their evolved functions may be, and how they contribute to religious beliefs.

Arguably the most important evolved psychological mechanism involved in the belief in supernatural agents is what Barrett (2000, 2004) has labeled the hyperactive agent-detection device, or HADD. Although not necessarily the first to recognize the human proclivity for detecting agency in the environment, this concept and the rationale behind it was developed by Guthrie (1980), who has since elaborated the idea (Guthrie, 1993, 2008, this volume). Guthrie's argument rests on three assumptions: "perception is interpretation, interpretation aims at significance, and significance generally corresponds to the degree of organization perceived" (1993, p. 41). These assumptions are explained in detail in what follows.

All stimuli that we perceive are necessarily ambiguous, in that they can be interpreted in an indefinite number of ways. This ambiguity is rarely noticed, though, because we have evolved predispositions to interpret stimuli in ways that were most beneficial to our ancestors. In other words, we have evolved mental heuristics that resulted, on average, in interpretations that were the least costly for



our ancestors relative to other interpretations. One such heuristic is to assume that agency is involved whenever this is a possibility, because agents are often the most significant interpretations possible, generating the greatest amount of inferential potential (Barrett, 2004). Even if we are wrong, a false-positive identification of agency is less costly than a false negative. For our ancestors, assuming that a particular stimulus was not an agent (or the result of an agent) could have resulted in the loss of a meal (if the stimulus was prey) or even severe injury or death (if the stimulus was a predator). These possibilities, while rare, would have been far costlier than the potential waste of time resulting from a false-positive detection of agency. As explained by error management theory (Haselton & Buss, 2000), such asymmetrical costs should result in evolved psychological mechanisms biased toward the less costly output. Therefore, we have likely inherited from our ancestors a mechanism best described as the HADD, a perceptual system that is designed to assume the presence of agency when faced with ambiguous stimuli.

There are many sources of evidence that support the existence of the HADD. For example, the logic behind the functionality of the HADD (i.e., that false-positives are less costly than false-negatives) can be observed in species other than humans. Guthrie (1993) notes that frogs respond to small moving objects with flicks of the tongue and large moving objects with leaps into the water, interpreting the stimuli as prey or predator, respectively. These interpretations are the best bets a frog can make, resulting in the greatest potential payoff and the smallest potential cost. Other animals are also predisposed to detect agency even when it is not necessarily there, as Darwin (2006/1871) observed while watching his dog:

[M]y dog . . . was lying on the lawn during a hot and still day; but at a little distance a slight breeze occasionally moved an open parasol, which would have been wholly disregarded by the dog, had any one stood near it. As it was, every time that parasol slightly moved, the dog growled fiercely and barked. He must, I think, have reasoned to himself in a rapid and unconscious manner, that movement without any apparent cause indicated the presence of some strange living agent, and no stranger had a right to be on his territory. (p. 815)

Darwin's account of the cognitive process resulting in the dog interpreting the stimuli as an indication of agency is impressively prescient with respect to Guthrie's account of agency detection: The dog was presented with an ambiguous stimulus that could be interpreted as the result of agency or natural causes, but ultimately interpreted it as an agent because this represents the most significant, potentially useful, interpretation.

While these examples provide support for hyperactive agency detection in other species, substantial evidence exists for humans as well. Not only are human infants capable of detecting agency but also this detection appears to be hypersensitive. A study by Gergely and Csibra (2003, as cited in Bering, 2011) indicates that stimuli as simple as dots on a computer screen can activate perceptions of agency in infants. When a dot is shown moving in a particular direction on a screen and continually appears to bump into a wall, infants appear to be surprised when the wall is removed and the dot continues to perform the same motion. As Bering (2011) describes it:

It's as if the baby is staring at the dot trying to figure out why the dot is acting as though it "thinks" the barrier is still there. By contrast, the infants are not especially interested . . . when the dot stops in front of the block, or when the dot continues along its path in the absence of the barrier. (p. 36)

Several other studies have also shown that both children and adults tend to view the movement of simple dots and geometric shapes as interacting agents with their own goals and motivations (for a review, see Atran & Norenzayan, 2004; Barrett, 2000, 2004; Bering, 2011). Infants are even capable of inferring moral behavior in geometric shapes. When shown a vignette of one shape moving up a hill, another shape "blocking" the first shape from reaching the top, and a third shape "helping" the first shape by pushing it up the hill from behind, infants prefer to play with the "helper" shape rather



than the “hinderer” shape, suggesting that they perceive these as good and bad agents, respectively (Hamlin, Wynn, & Bloom, 2007). Importantly, when adults are shown the same vignette, they easily can describe the events as if these shapes are agents with individual goals and moral attitudes. In summary, the ability to detect agency and apply it to inanimate objects (given that these objects exhibit simple signs of agency, such as seemingly voluntary movement) emerges very early in life and persists into adulthood, supporting the idea that humans possess a HADD. However, there are still several questions that need to be addressed before the HADD can be invoked to help explain religious beliefs.

Even if we have a predisposition for detecting agency, how would this lead to us believing in agents that are invisible or immaterial (i.e., supernatural)? For starters, it is important to note that not all gods throughout history have had the qualities of invisibility and/or immateriality (e.g., the Greek gods; Guthrie, 2008). Furthermore, Guthrie (2008) notes that invisibility and immateriality are not as unusual as one may initially think as characteristics of agents. For example, several animals have the ability to use camouflage that makes them, for all intents and purposes, invisible when in the proper environments or until they move. Intangibility can also be achieved, to a certain extent, in certain animals, such as those who travel in schools, flocks, and so forth, making it difficult to differentiate individual agents.

It is also important to emphasize that detecting agency does not always involve detecting the agent directly; agency can often be inferred by detecting the effects of agents. The HADD not only predisposes us to view certain ambiguous stimuli as agents, but it also predisposes us to view certain ambiguous stimuli as the results of agents, because the same rules of false-positives and false-negatives apply: If it is possible that a certain event was caused by an agent, it is potentially more costly to assume it was not caused by an agent than to assume that it was. Therefore, it is not necessary to actually perceive agents in order to infer their existence, leaving open the possibility that certain stimuli are the products of agents that cannot be seen, leading to belief in supernatural agents.

Although the HADD provides a possible explanation for why humans are capable of believing in supernatural agents, the explanation provided so far offers little understanding of the particular characteristics of these agents. For example, why are supernatural agents almost always perceived as having human traits (e.g., human emotions, desires, motivations, etc.; see Boyer, 2001)? Guthrie (1993) notes that when interpreting ambiguous stimuli, “The most significant possibilities are usually organisms, especially humans. Practically, humans are most significant because their organization makes them most powerful and able to generate the widest range of effects” (p. 241, *italics added*). Furthermore, humans seem to be naturally inclined to believe in mind-body dualism, or the belief that the mind can exist independently of the body. Bering (2011) argues that this belief is “an inevitable by-product of our theory of mind” (p. 113). More specifically, we are unable to imagine what it is like to not have consciousness, such as after we die, and are thus unable to “turn off” our theory of mind when imagining our own death or the deaths of others. This results in the universal belief in an afterlife of some kind (with the specific characteristics of the afterlife varying across cultures), and therefore the belief that the mind can exist independently of the body.

Studies by Bering and Bjorklund (2004) and Bering, Blasi, and Bjorklund (2005) indicate that the belief that certain mental states exist after death emerges in childhood and continues into adulthood. When asked questions following a puppet show of an anthropomorphized mouse being eaten by an alligator, most children 11–12 years old understand that biological, psychobiological, and perceptual abilities cease to function, but are less inclined to state that emotions, desires, and epistemic beliefs cease to function. This same trend is even stronger in adults, who are operating on the basis of afterlife beliefs that have been instilled in them for a greater length of time than for children. Even

adults who explicitly deny believing in an afterlife demonstrate a tendency (albeit weaker than other adults) to believe that these mental functions survive death (Bering, 2002). In summary, because humans are predisposed to believing that the mind can persist without a body, they are capable of perceiving human agents without bodies (i.e., supernatural agents).

Finally, to further explain how belief in supernatural agents emerged in our ancestors, it is necessary to invoke another byproduct account advanced by Boyer (2001), who argues that our memory systems are susceptible to minimally counterintuitive concepts (MCIs), and that a byproduct of this susceptibility is belief in supernatural agents (see also Greenway & Barrett, this volume). This concept fits nicely with Guthrie's (1993) account of agency detection, in that it builds on the premise that we are likely to detect supernatural agents that possess human minds. Boyer argues that when humans perceive a stimulus, the ontological category to which that stimulus belongs is automatically activated, and with it several assumptions are made about that stimulus. For example, when we detect human agents, that agent is automatically endowed with all the physical and mental capabilities that are typical to the category of "human" (e.g., our theory of mind is activated). Concepts of supernatural human agents are particularly memorable because they keep most of these characteristics intact, but violate a minimal number of our ontological expectations, making them MCIs.

The idea that MCIs are more memorable than other concepts has been supported empirically. Boyer and Ramble (2001) performed a series of experiments to determine the recall rates of concepts that varied in terms of their counterintuitiveness. They found that MCIs elicited greater recall rates than both intuitive concepts that did not violate any ontological assumptions and concepts that violated several ontological assumptions. These findings were replicated by Barrett and Nyhof (2001), and they were also replicated cross-culturally (Boyer & Ramble, 2001; see Barrett, 2004, and Boyer, 2001, for a review).

Also, it is important to note that not just any MCI will be easily remembered and transmitted; this is only likely to occur when the MCI has a high degree of inferential potential (Barrett, 2004). For example, a rock that turns invisible when you look at it is technically an MCI, but this concept is not useful at all for explaining or predicting events. Human MCIs, on the other hand, have the potential to be extremely useful, because humans are known to have beliefs, desires, motivations, and so forth, that can be used to predict their actions.

With the byproduct accounts described so far in this section, we can begin to assemble a hypothetical account of how belief in supernatural agents may have arisen in humans. Our ancestors were almost certainly exposed to many types of ambiguous stimuli that could have activated their predisposition for detecting agency. As Rossano (2006) notes, "Natural processes with no obvious explanation—storms, illness, animal behavior, and so forth—were all prime candidates for the actions of a supernatural agent" (p. 347). The best bet for attempting to explain such phenomena would be human-like agents, as humans were (and continue to be) viewed as the most capable agents for affecting the world. Even if these human-like agents could not be perceived directly, it would not have been difficult for our ancestors to assume their existence, because they most likely held the implicit belief that the human mind can exist independently of the body. Furthermore, beliefs in human-like agents who violated a minimal number of ontological assumptions, such as being able to control processes that normal humans have no control over, would have had a selective advantage over other interpretations, because our ancestors' memories were most susceptible to these kinds of beliefs. Therefore, beliefs in supernatural agents with human qualities who interact with the world were likely to be remembered and transmitted to others, laying a foundation for what would eventually become the supernatural agents found in tribal and organized religions today.

An additional byproduct account that has received comparatively little attention from those researching the evolution of religion has the potential to explain the emergence of ritualized behaviors, which Atran (2002) considers to be an important component of religion. Once our ancestors held the belief that supernatural agents were responsible for certain events, it is likely that they would have attempted to interact with these agents to attempt to influence their actions. This possibility was noted by Darwin (1871/2006), who reasoned that “The same high mental faculties which first led man to believe in unseen spiritual agencies . . . would infallibly lead him . . . to various strange superstitions and customs” (p. 816). However, if these supernatural agents did not actually exist, how could any behavior geared toward interacting with them persist? Would it not eventually be obvious that these attempts at interaction were futile? Not necessarily, due to the human predisposition to infer causation and the nature of reinforcement learning.

Much like our hypersensitivity to cues of agency, it appears that we are hypersensitive to cues of causation. It is reasonable to assume that this hypersensitivity exists for a similar reason that the HADD exists: Causal events provide a more significant, and therefore more useful, interpretation of events compared to randomness. Michotte (1963, as cited in Twardy & Bingham, 2002) was the first to demonstrate the ease with which individuals can be led to infer causation. For example, when shown a simple geometric shape on a screen moving toward another shape and touching it, followed by the touched shape moving, people assume that the first object caused the movement of the second. However, if there is a slight delay between the first shape touching the second and the second shape’s movement, causation is no longer inferred. Therefore, the human perception of causation alone seems insufficient to explain the origin of ritualized behavior directed toward supernatural agents. Although it is possible that the occasional pairing of behavior and desired outcomes (e.g., a rain dance paired with the ending of a drought) would elicit a causal interpretation, the many instances in which the two events are not paired would seemingly deter a causal interpretation. However, even rare pairings of behavior and reward can result in ritualized behavior because of the way our brains are designed to facilitate reinforcement learning.

Given that any behaviors aimed at influencing supernatural agents would have fallen on deaf ears, our ancestors would have been exposed to a random schedule of reinforcement, in which their actions would occasionally, but only rarely, correspond to desired outcomes, suggesting that their attempt at “communication” had been successful. The possibility for random reinforcement to elicit ritualized behavior was initially illustrated by Skinner (1948, as cited in Dennett, 2006) and his “superstitious” pigeons. Dennett (2006) provides an informative and entertaining interpretation of the series of events:

Every so often, no matter what the pigeon was doing at the moment, a click and a food-pellet reward were delivered. Soon the pigeons put on this random schedule were doing elaborate “dances,” bobbing and whirling and craning their necks. It’s hard to resist putting a soliloquy into these birds’ brains: “Now, let’s see: the last time I got the reward, I’d just spun around once and craned my neck. Let’s try it again. . . . Nope, no reward. Perhaps I didn’t spin enough. . . . Nope. Perhaps I should bob once before spinning and craning. . . . YESSS! OK, now what did I just do?”

Recent work in neuroscience provides an explanation for this phenomenon, which applies to humans as well as to pigeons and any organism capable of learning through conditioning. Studies by Niv and colleagues (Niv, Duff, & Dayan, 2005; Niv, Joel, Meilijson, & Ruppin, 2002; Niv & Schoenbaum, 2008) have documented that dopaminergic spikes are an important component for the establishment of classical and operant conditioning. Without reviewing the details, the key is that this release of dopamine plays an important role in synaptic plasticity and learning, namely by strengthening the neural connections associated with whatever neural activity preceded the reward, whether it was the perception of a stimulus (in classical conditioning) or the initiation of behavior (in operant

conditioning). The latter effect is of particular importance in explaining the emergence of ritualized behaviors. When our ancestors engaged in behaviors designed to influence supernatural agents, they were occasionally “rewarded” with desirable outcomes. When this happened, the neural connections associated with whatever behaviors they were engaging in at the time were strengthened, thereby increasing the likelihood of performing those behaviors in the future. Any elaborations added to the initial behaviors would be subsequently strengthened as well if they were initiated at a time when the reward was obtained again. In short, it seems feasible that reinforcement learning predisposed humans to develop rituals associated with attempting to communicate or otherwise interact with supernatural agents.

### Adaptationist Accounts of Religion

The psychological mechanisms described thus far—the HADD, susceptibility to MCIs, afterlife reasoning (i.e., belief in mind-body dualism), the perception of causality, and reinforcement learning—are the best candidates so far for explaining the origin of what would eventually become the complex religious beliefs and behaviors that exist today. More specifically, these mechanisms provide an explanation for how our ancestors originally developed a belief in supernatural agents and ritualized behaviors aimed at interacting with these agents. However, the complexity of supernatural agents and rituals as they exist in tribal and organized religions today cannot be adequately explained by these mechanisms alone. The adaptationist accounts that follow in this section complement—rather than disprove—these byproduct accounts for explaining how religious beliefs and behaviors reached the level of complexity observed today.

Arguably the most compelling adaptationist account of religiosity is that certain religious beliefs and behaviors (i.e., belief in omniscient and omnipresent supernatural agents that are concerned with human moral behavior, and hard-to-fake religious behaviors) are adaptive solutions to the problem of potential free-riding in large groups, facilitating in-group cooperation (Atran, 2002; Atran & Norenzayan, 2004; Boyer, 2001; Bulbulia, 2004; Shariff, 2008; see also Bourrat & Viciania, this volume; Shariff & Mercier, this volume; Shaver Fraser, & Bulbulia, this volume). For the majority of our evolutionary history, humans lived in small tribes of hunter-gatherers (Diamond, 1992). During this time, cooperation between humans within these small groups could be maintained via kin selection (Hamilton, 1964) and reciprocal altruism (Trivers, 1971). Because the members of these small tribes consisted mostly of genetically related individuals, cooperation could be maintained as a function of benefiting shared genes. In other words, although altruistic behavior toward another can be costly (i.e., resources that could have been invested in one’s own fitness are invested elsewhere), these costs can be canceled if applied to a genetic relative, because improving their fitness means benefiting their genes, and because you share a certain proportion of genes with this individual, your fitness is ultimately improved as well.

Furthermore, with small groups, even if not all members are not genetically related, it is unlikely that any of the members are strangers to each other. Therefore, cooperation can be maintained based on the premise that if you help an individual at some point, you can count on them to help you later. Because nobody in the group is a stranger and repeated interactions are the norm, the ability to freeride (i.e., receive benefits from others in the group, or from group living in general, without paying the same costs as other members) is unlikely, because a free-rider will be discovered as such and will be punished (e.g., by being ostracized and no longer bestowed benefits by the other group members).

With the advent of agriculture roughly 11,000 years ago, some groups of humans could afford to give up their nomadic lifestyles and settle in one area. More importantly, they could sustain larger and larger populations (Diamond, 2005). As group sizes increased, kin selection and reciprocal altruism became less sufficient for ensuring prosocial behavior within the group (but see Crespi, this

volume, for further consideration of kin selection's role in the evolution of religion). The chances of everyone in the group being related or knowing each other quickly decreased, and with anonymity came a greater potential for free-riding. This problem needed to be solved to prevent large groups from crumbling due to a lack of cooperation. In fact, Dunbar (2003) has estimated that if a group can not solve this problem, it will divide or collapse when the population exceeds 150 individuals. Whether this estimate is too conservative, several societal populations exceed this number by many magnitudes, and have done so for thousands of years. Humans have clearly managed to at least partially deal with the problem of free-riding, and religion may have been a key phenomenon in allowing this to happen (see Shaver et al., this volume).

Given that the belief in supernatural agents and rituals designed to interact with these agents were almost certainly already in place as a result of the psychological mechanisms described earlier in this chapter (i.e., the psychological mechanisms involved will have evolved prior to human group sizes increasing), these beliefs and behaviors could have been gradually molded via cultural evolution in such a way as to make them more suitable for reducing the possibility of free-riding. As Bering, Mcleod, and Shackelford (2005) put it:

The psychological foundations of some religious behaviors . . . may be co-opted spandrels (Andrews, Gangestad, & Matthews, 2002; Buss et al., 1998). They may be side effects of other design features that, quite by chance, had salutary effects of their own on the organism's ability to pass on its genes and, over time, were independently subjected to natural selection.

In other words, religious beliefs and behaviors that originally served no adaptive purpose were “exploited” to solve adaptive problems that did not exist when these beliefs and behaviors originally came into existence. Once this process began, cultural evolution molded these beliefs and behaviors into versions that were better suited to solve these new adaptive problems (see Shariff & Mercier, this volume). Adaptationist accounts of religiosity describe the end results of this process.

In smaller groups, free-riding can be eliminated (or greatly reduced) because one's reputation will determine whether others are willing to cooperate. If an individual has a reputation as a cheater or freerider, other members of the group will know this and be less likely to provide benefits to that individual. With increased group size and anonymity, an individual's reputation is less likely to be tarnished by acts of free-riding. Nevertheless, free-riders still need to be vigilant about avoiding a negative reputation and therefore should be sensitive to cues that their anonymity has been compromised. For example, the feeling of “being watched” should reduce one's willingness to free-ride and increase their prosocial behavior. Indeed, a study by Haley and Fessler (2005) confirmed this prediction. When strictly anonymous participants participated in a dictator game, exposure to stylized eye-like shapes on a computer desktop resulted in participants allocating a significantly greater amount of money to the other (unseen) participant, compared to those who were not exposed to the eye drawings.

The simple stimulus just described was apparently enough to invoke the feeling of being watched, but another stimulus that can be much stronger is the belief in a supernatural agent, because this belief will not be tied to any one location or time. However, it is first necessary to determine whether exposure to a supernatural agent concept, without any perceptual cues to that agent's existence or presence, can reduce cheating or antisocial behavior just as perceptual cues can (e.g., “eyes” that are “watching you”). A study by Bering et al. (2005) confirms this possibility. Each participant was instructed to complete a difficult test of spatial intelligence on a computer while alone in the testing room, and they were told that the person with the highest score would receive \$50. They were also told that this test was newly developed and occasionally might display the answer to a question by mistake, and that they should press the space bar when this occurs to clear the screen and solve the problem honestly. In reality, the test was designed to display this “opportunity for cheating” at five

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random and counterbalanced times, and cheating behavior was measured as the length of time taken to press the space bar.

The key manipulation in this study was that some participants, before beginning the test, were asked to read a brief statement indicating that Paul J. Kellogg, a graduate student who had helped design this test, died recently and unexpectedly. Of those participants who were given this statement to read, some were also told by the experimenter, prior to beginning the test, that the ghost of this graduate student had recently been seen in the very room in which the test was occurring. A third group of participants was not given any such statements prior to testing.

The results of this study indicated that participants primed with the ghost concept performed significantly worse than the control group and exhibited significantly shorter latencies for pressing the space bar during opportunities for cheating. According to Bering et al. (2005), “These findings appear to show, therefore, that supernatural primes dealing with dead agents genuinely reduce people’s willingness to intentionally cheat on a competitive task where the risk of social detection appears low” (p. 376, *italics in original*). In summary, it appears that the concept of a supernatural agency is enough to affect one’s behavior, even if there are no cues to suggest the agent’s presence. However, it is important to note that participants in the ghost condition were told that the supernatural agent had been previously detected in that testing room. In other words, it may not be enough to simply believe in a supernatural agent, but rather the agent must have the capability of watching you at the exact time you are tempted to behave antisocially. Therefore, for religious supernatural agents to be effective deterrents of cheating or free-riding, there are particular characteristics that they should possess, which are described in what follows.

When groups are too large to ensure proper social monitoring by members to reduce feelings of anonymity, supernatural agents can act as a powerful substitute, provided that these supernatural agents have particular qualities (see Bourrat & Viciano, this volume). For instance, belief in an omniscient and omnipresent agent could lead individuals to believe that they are being watched at any time and that any instances of cheating or freeriding could be detected. Furthermore, this agent should not only be interested in the moral behavior of humans, but also be able and willing to punish humans for moral transgressions (Shariff, 2008). The God of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam meets these criteria, and as Sanderson (2008) notes:

in 2250 BCE there were [estimated] only 8 cities in the world with a population of about 30,000, or a total urban population of about 240,000. By 650 BCE, there may have been some 20 cities ranging in population from 30,000 to 120,000, with a total urban population of approximately 1 million. . . . And 62 percent of the population of these cities in 650 BCE lived in or around the very small region that produced both Judaism and Christianity.

Further support for the notion that supernatural agents with particular qualities are selected for to combat free-riding is provided by Roes and Raymond (2003), who analyzed 167 societies from the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample (SCCC) in terms of whether they adhered to a belief in “a spiritual being who is believed to have created all reality and/or to be its ultimate governor,” and whether this being is “present, active, and specifically supportive of human morality” (p. 129). Roes and Raymond refer to a being with these qualities as a moralizing god, and they found a significant positive correlation between society size and belief in such a god.

Given the logical relationship between society size and the potential for free-riding, these results are consistent with the idea that, ultimately, moralizing gods serve the adaptive purpose of minimizing the threat of free-riding. Snarey (1996, as cited in Norenzayan & Shariff, 2008) provides additional support for this conclusion by demonstrating that when controlling for society size, moralizing gods are more common in societies with high water scarcity, which is a factor that would increase the potential societal costs associated with free-riding. Norenzayan and Shariff (2008) summarize the



results of this study and the study by Roes and Raymond (2003) by stating that “The cross-cultural evidence suggests that moralizing gods are culturally stabilized when freeloading is more prevalent or particularly detrimental to group stability” (p. 62).

Finally, although the studies by Snarey (1996) and Roes and Raymond (2003) demonstrate the importance of belief in moralizing gods for deterring free-riding by relying on results obtained at the societal level, a recent study by Atkinson and Bourrat (2011) provides additional cross-cultural support for this hypothesis at the individual level. Using the World Values Survey—specifically, responses to questions about belief in God and the justifiability of 14 moral transgressions—they showed that belief in God uniquely and significantly predicts the unjustifiability of moral transgressions, with stronger belief in God associated with stronger belief in the unjustifiability of all 14 moral transgressions. Furthermore, they found that among those who believe in God, those who believe in a personal God (who is even more likely to be viewed as a moralizing agent) have an even stronger belief in the unjustifiability of all 14 moral transgressions. Finally, they found that belief in a personal God significantly predicted belief in the unjustifiability of 11 of the 14 moral transgressions when controlling for religious participation, religious denomination, country, and level of education.

Taken together, the results of this and previous studies mentioned here suggest that the emergence of supernatural agents with particular qualities, especially an interest in the moral behavior of humans and the ability to keep a watchful eye over them, served the adaptive purpose of facilitating cooperation in groups that have the potential for free-riding, even if beliefs in supernatural agents in general did not originate to solve any adaptive problem (see Teehan, this volume, for further discussion of the evolution of religion and morality). However, it is not just religious beliefs that researchers argue have been under selective pressure, but religious behaviors as well.

As described earlier, it seems plausible that at least some forms of religious ritualized behavior emerged as a byproduct of reinforcement learning. With some religious rituals likely already established before group sizes began to expand, another opportunity to reduce the possibility of free-riding and facilitate in-group prosocial behavior existed, as these rituals could be shaped into reliable signals of commitment to the group, thereby indicating that one is not likely to be a free-rider. In order for religious behaviors to be reliable signals of commitment, they must be hard to fake, and one way to achieve this is to make the behaviors costly.

The idea of religious rituals as costly signals of commitment was originally proposed by Irons (2001) and expanded on by Sosis (2003). The logic behind this idea is that if someone is willing to perform costly behaviors (e.g., elaborate, time-consuming, and energy-consuming religious rituals) to be part of a group, the other members of the group can safely assume this person is not a freerider, since they are already paying costs to be a member. A more specific proximate mechanism through which this process may work is cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1956, 1957). Religious rituals not only signal that one is willing to pay the costs necessary to be a part of the group, but also that they share the same beliefs and values of other group members. If one does not share these beliefs, but nevertheless engages in costly behaviors associated with the particular religion, they will likely experience cognitive dissonance because their thoughts and actions are incongruent. One option would be to stop engaging in the behaviors, but this is not an option if one still wants to be part of the group. Therefore, cognitive dissonance will be reduced by changing one's thoughts to be in line with one's behaviors; in other words, costly religious rituals signal that one has the same religious beliefs as others, and as such should be trusted as a fellow member of the group (Sosis, 2003). Of course, group members need not be aware of any of the logic underlying costly signals but should simply be more likely to accept someone as a member of their group if they display such signals.

In recent years, empirical support for the idea of religious behaviors serving as a costly signal of commitment has begun to accumulate. For example, a study by Soler (2008) examined followers of

Candomblé, a religion in Brazil that arose out of a mix of faiths introduced by African slaves in the 19th century. The participants in the study came from 13 different terreiros, or houses of worship. Most important for the purposes of this study is the fact that costly displays are an important component of Candomblé. As Soler (2008) describes:

Communication with the supernatural occurs through various rituals, including elaborate feasts during which the orixás [deities that are directly involved in human affairs] possess the faithful in a music-induced trance. Feasts consume a large proportion of the terreiro's income and require the coordination and cooperation of all members. . . . A devotee of Candomblé must also follow an exacting regime that includes proscriptions on food, dress, and codes of behavior related to terreiro hierarchy. (p. 168, italics in original)

Using a 14-item 7-point Likert scale survey of religious commitment and participation in a public-goods economic game, Soler (2008) investigated how much of an initial \$10 participants were willing to invest in the group. The more money that is donated, the more money everyone in the group receives, but individuals who do not donate can benefit the most by free-riding. The results of this experiment indicated that religious commitment was a significant predictor of donation amount, with those who scored higher on the commitment scale (e.g., those who participated the most often in terreiro feasts) donating significantly more money than those with lower commitment scores. Furthermore, when a factor analysis performed on the results of the commitment scale indicated a "group commitment subscale" (e.g., "I have never missed a feast in my terreiro") and a "personal commitment subscale" (e.g., "There are certain foods I do not eat because of my orixá"), a regression analysis indicated that only group commitment predicted donation amounts. This is consistent with the costly signaling hypothesis, because group commitment behaviors are those that can be more easily monitored by others, thereby serving as more reliable signals than personal commitment behaviors.

Additional support for the costly signaling hypothesis can be found in a study by Ruffle and Sosis (2007). This study examined religious rituals and in-group cooperative behavior in several Israeli kibbutzim, which are essentially modern communes that were originally conceived as "small collective farming settlement[s] in which members based their social and cultural lives on the collective ownership of property and wealth" (Ruffle & Sosis, 2007, p. 3). Although kibbutzim have changed from focusing on farming to being involved in a wide range of industries, religious kibbutzim have maintained an equal distribution of income among all members regardless of their profession, which generates a "tragedy of the commons" problem that must be avoided by a high degree of cooperation and self-restraint. Most secular kibbutzim, on the other hand, have abandoned the practice of equally distributing wealth among their members.

By using a matched-pairs design, in which seven religious kibbutzim were each matched with one or more secular kibbutzim in terms of population size, year of establishment, degree of economic success, and degree of privatization, Ruffle and Sosis (2007) were able to compare cooperative behavior between religious and secular kibbutzim. They developed a two-player economic game in which anonymous participants are asked how much of a shared pot of 100 shekels they want to keep for themselves. They are told that if the amount chosen by both participants is greater than 100, they both will receive nothing, but whatever money, if any, is left over after they have made their choices will be multiplied by 1.5 and equally distributed to both of them. Therefore, greater cooperative behavior is demonstrated by taking fewer shekels initially. As predicted, members of religious kibbutzim demonstrated significantly greater cooperative behavior than members of secular kibbutzim, claiming on average 10 shekels fewer than secularists.

In addition to comparing members of religious and secular kibbutzim, Ruffle and Sosis (2007) also compared the cooperative behavior of men and women within religious kibbutzim. In religious kibbutzim, even though both men and women engage in many costly religious behaviors, the costly

behaviors required of men are generally more publicly oriented. For example, men must engage in public prayer three times daily, which requires roughly two hours every day (and up to 3.5 hours on the Sabbath). Women are not required to engage in this behavior, and even women who do wish to participate are separated from the men during the prayer and are not viewed as being a part of the ritual. Conversely, the rituals that women are exclusively required to engage in, namely the “laws of family purity” (Ruffle & Sosis, 2007, p. 5), are not performed publicly. Ruffle and Sosis therefore predicted, and found, that religious men were significantly more cooperative in the economic game than religious women, claiming 29.9 shekels on average, while women claimed 33.7 shekels. Furthermore, among religious men, those who attend synagogue daily claimed an average of 27.2 shekels, while those who do not attend daily claimed 33.1 shekels, indicating that the more frequently men engage in public rituals, the more cooperative they are likely to behave.

Finally, another study that supports the costly signaling hypothesis—but also suggests an important caveat—was conducted by Sosis and Bressler (2003). They analyzed the longevity of 83 (30 religious and 53 secular) 19th-century US communes and determined the degree of costly signaling in each by gathering data on the presence or absence of 22 costly requirements or constraints (e.g., constraints on certain foods and beverages, constraints on technology use or other material items, particular clothing or hairstyle requirements, fasting requirements, etc.). They found that secular communes were three times more likely to dissolve in a given year than religious communes, and that religious communes imposed twice as many constraints or requirements on their members compared to secular communes. In general, the number of costly requirements was found to be strongly positively correlated with commune longevity. However, this effect was found to be produced exclusively by religious communes. In other words, the number of costly requirements imposed on secular communes did not have any impact on their longevity. This is partially explained by the fact that secular communes had fewer costly requirements on average than religious communes, but even secular communes with a greater number of costly requirements than most reaped no benefit to their longevity as a result of this. This suggests, as Sosis and Bressler (2003) note, that “costliness is not the only feature of rituals that enable them to promote solidarity” (p. 227). They suggest that “the shortcoming of the costly signaling theory of religion . . . is [the] failure to capture some critical elements of religious belief that distinguish it from belief in a secular ideology” (p. 227). But what might this element—or elements—be?

One possible answer to this question requires a revision to the costly signaling hypothesis by acknowledging that what matters most is not whether a signal of commitment is costly, but whether it is hard to fake. Costly behaviors are certainly an important category of hard-to-fake signals of commitment, but another reliable signal may be emotional displays. Emotions are processed outside of the neocortex and are, therefore, largely outside of conscious control (Ramachandran, 1997), making it difficult to generate false emotions or to hide genuine emotions (Pinker, 1997). Other important qualities of emotions are that they are easy to perceive in others and often provide accurate information about an individual’s motivational state (Bulbulia, 2004, 2008). Emotional signals may not be perfect and can be faked to some extent, but as Bulbulia (2008) reminds us, “we have seen that selection can work with imperfect materials, if their average benefits exceed their average costs” (p. 156).

Even if emotions represent hard-to-fake signals, how does this help to explain the results of Sosis and Bressler (2003)? Shouldn’t members of secular communes have the same ability to express emotions as members of religious communes? Certainly, but the key difference, or “critical element” that Sosis and Bressler eluded to, may be that religions have the ability to elicit strong emotional states. According to Bulbulia (2004), some examples of emotions elicited by religious beliefs include, but are not limited to, “hard to fake expressions of gratitude, shrinking before great authority, maternal and filial piety, fear of reprisal, hopeful expectation, [and] sibling love for co-religionists” (p.

28). Furthermore, religious rituals in particular are often capable of eliciting high physiological arousal (Schloss, 2008; Xygalatas, 2008). Although this specific hypothesis has yet to be tested directly, it may be that religious societies are successful because both costly rituals and strongly elicited emotional displays interact synergistically to create even stronger signals of commitment than either type of signal in isolation, thereby explaining why the religious communes analyzed by Sosis and Bressler were more successful than secular communes.

Another adaptationist account that some researchers have recently proffered is that certain religious beliefs serve an adaptive purpose as a result of being molded by sexual selection (Pyysiäinen, 2008; Slone, 2008; Sela & Barbaro, this volume; Weeden, Kurzban, & Kenrick, this volume). This idea is based primarily on the handicap principle (Zahavi & Zahavi, 1997), which can be viewed as a more specific version of costly-signaling theory. The handicap principle states that traits that are costly to develop and maintain can be used as signals of high mate quality, because one must be of high quality to

survive and thrive in spite of these “handicaps.” A common example is the peacock’s tail, which requires a large store of biological resources to develop and maintain while making it easier to be spotted by predators and more difficult to escape predators due to its burdensome size and extravagant color. In short, if a peacock can develop and maintain a large tail and still survive, this indicates the peacock has “good genes,” and as such peahens have evolved a preference for peacocks with the largest tails.

Applying the handicap principle to religious beliefs, Pyysiäinen (2008) argues that ritual behaviors, which may have emerged for other reasons (as discussed earlier in this chapter), were “seized” by sexual selection as signals of mate quality. For example, “Men who could dance longer than others, who sacrificed more than their competitors, or who could memorize longer and more elaborate narratives, excited the interest of females, which meant a better reproductive success for these males” (Pyysiäinen, 2008, p. 177).

Slone (2008) focuses less on religious beliefs and behaviors that may be “handicaps” and more on how they might signal qualities that are desired in potential mates. Based on research conducted by Buss and colleagues (see Buss, 2003, for a review), women tend to be particularly interested in lonterm mates who can be relied on and display a willingness to provide for them and their offspring. Slone argues that:

By being committed to a religious system (as evidenced by being willing to engage in its costly and apparently useless behaviors) and its ethical demands, which typically includes prohibitions against selfish, anti-social behavior, a man signals that he possesses the types of characteristics that a woman would find desirable.

In other words, in addition to costly religious displays signaling mate quality via the handicap principle (i.e., signaling good genes), the specific costly displays often expressed in a religion may offer additional information about whether one has desired mate qualities. These sexual selection hypotheses of religion (Pyysiäinen, 2008; Slone, 2008) represent another example of how specific religious beliefs and behaviors may have been shaped into their present forms because of selection pressures to solve particular adaptive problems.

Finally, another component of religion—as defined by Atran (2002)—that has yet to be discussed but may be explained with an adaptationist account is “a central focus of supernatural agents on dealing with people’s existential anxieties (death, disease, catastrophe, pain, loneliness, injustice, want, loss, etc.)” (p. 13). In attempting to understand how and why this component of religion emerged, it is useful to begin by determining what most, if not all, of the phenomena labeled as “existential anxieties” have in common. One possibility is that they refer to events or states that can

be characterized by a lack of personal control, and religious beliefs may serve the adaptive function of reducing the anxiety associated with lack of control (see Liddle, this volume).

Several studies, using a variety of methodologies and addressing different levels of analysis, have provided empirical support for the compensatory effect religiosity has on an individual's perceived lack of control. For example, a series of studies by Kay and colleagues (Kay, Gaucher, McGregor, & Nash, 2009; Kay, Gaucher, Napier, Callan, & Laurin, 2008; Kay, Moscovitch, & Laurin, 2010; Kay, Shepherd, Blatz, Chua, & Galinsky, 2010; Kay, Whitson, Gaucher, & Galinsky, 2009) indicate that when an individual's feeling of personal control is decreased through experimental manipulations (e.g., asking participants to remember events from their life that they had no control over), the reported strength of belief in a personal God increases. Additionally, a study by Norenzayan and Atran (2004) demonstrated that inducing mortality salience—death being an inevitability that we have no control over—resulted in higher self-reported religiosity, particular belief in a personal God and supernatural intervention (i.e., external sources of control). Finally, societal level support for the idea that religiosity serves as compensation against the feeling of lack of control comes from a series of analyses by Norris and Inglehart (2004), as well as studies by Paul (2005, 2009) and Rees (2009), which have documented that as indicators of societal insecurity (e.g., economic inequality, lack of access to healthcare and education, crime, high infant mortality rates—all factors that could increase an individual's feeling of lack of control) increase, religiosity increases (see Liddle, this volume). Importantly, these results also indicate that societies with the lowest levels of societal insecurity are also the most secular, a conclusion further supported by a series of informal interviews conducted by Zuckerman (2008), who found that many people in Denmark and Sweden (i.e., nations with very low levels of societal insecurity) apparently have little interest in or need for religion. This suggests that compensatory control is an adaptive function of religious beliefs, because these beliefs seem to lose their appeal when this function is no longer required.

### Religious Beliefs as Memes

The byproduct and adaptationist accounts discussed thus far provide a great deal of information for explaining some of the fundamental components of religion, but they do not explain why some religious worldviews are restricted to a small part of the world while others have spread to many societies. One controversial, but potentially useful, concept for explaining this is memetics. The term “meme” was coined by Dawkins (1976), who suggested that “units” of cultural transmission could be thought of as subject to the same rules of natural selection as genes. In other words, “Ideas can be thought of as competing with one another for residence in the minds of people, and those ideas that are most successful at being remembered will survive, get passed on and possibly change (i.e., evolve) over time” (Liddle, Bush, & Shackelford, 2011, p. 187). This concept has been expanded by several authors (Blackmore, 1999; Brodie, 2009, as cited in Liddle et al., 2011; see also Dennett, 2006, for a discussion of memetics in reference to religion) but remains controversial due to the speculative nature of memetics.

Importantly, the theory of memetics moves the focus of fitness from the individuals holding the ideas to the ideas themselves. In terms of religion, this suggests that particular religious beliefs may survive and evolve independently of their effects on the fitness of humans, even if they are ultimately detrimental to human fitness. Memes are capable of being either symbiotic, parasitic, or neutral with respect to the fitness of their “hosts.” However, as with the byproduct and adaptationist arguments of religion discussed earlier, it is best not to apply this logic to religion as a whole. In other words, rather than saying, for example, that religion in general is a parasitic meme, flourishing at the expense of human fitness, it makes more sense to discuss whether particular religious beliefs and behaviors are parasitic (or symbiotic or neutral). For example, the adaptationist arguments discussed earlier suggest that belief in a moralizing god may be a symbiotic meme, because it benefits its hosts by facilitating in-group cooperative behavior, and one can look to Christianity and Islam to see how



successful this meme has been at spreading around the world. However, this does not mean that all of the beliefs and behaviors associated with Christianity and Islam are symbiotic memes. Therefore, applying memetics to religion would require an examination of specific beliefs and behaviors, rather than examining the transmission of an organized religion as a whole.

Research by Fincher and Thornhill (2008) provides an interesting account of religious diversity that can be interpreted within a memetic perspective. Using data on the total number of religions in each of 219 countries/territories, and the pathogen prevalence of these regions, they predicted and found that religious diversity was strongly positively associated with pathogen prevalence. This is presumably because pathogen-rich environments increase the potential costs associated with interacting with neighboring societies (e.g., exposure to pathogens to which one has not evolved immunity), and so humans living in such environments have evolved predispositions that minimize intergroup contact (e.g., collectivist attitudes and xenophobia). Liddle et al. (2011) describe how these findings may be understood in terms of memetics:

If high pathogen stress limits contact between groups, there is less direct competition between different religious beliefs, which means that these different beliefs will continue to survive. Conversely, low pathogen stress translates into greater cultural transmission, which leads to competition between beliefs, and only the “fittest” beliefs survive.

Despite its speculative nature, memetics provides a unique evolutionary perspective on religion that may be useful in explaining the spread of particular religious beliefs and behaviors around the world. More specifically, the “pathogen-stress” model mentioned earlier (see Terrizzi & Shook, this volume, for further discussion) provides a compelling account of differing levels of religiosity internationally and a key factor that may have influenced the spread of religious beliefs throughout history.

## Conclusion

The usefulness of applying evolutionary theory to explaining religion was noted by Darwin (2006/1871) himself, who reasoned that:

As soon as the important faculties of the imagination, wonder, and curiosity, together with some power of reasoning, had become partially developed, man would naturally have craved to understand what was passing around him, and have vaguely speculated on his own existence.

In recent years, evolutionary psychologists have begun to demonstrate how evolutionary theory can aid in our understanding of both the origin of religious beliefs and behaviors and the possible functions that they may have evolved to serve. A coherent picture of religion begins to emerge when several byproduct and adaptationist accounts are integrated together.

Beginning with a reasonable definition of religion provided by Atran (2002), an evolutionary perspective can provide explanations for what are arguably important components of nearly all religions. Belief in supernatural agency may have emerged as a result of hyperactive agency detection, the belief in mind-body dualism, and susceptibility to MCIs. These supernatural agent concepts then evolved to include certain characteristics that made them suitable for partially solving the adaptive problem of free-riding in large groups. Religious rituals may have emerged as a result of human perceptions of causality and the neurological nature of reinforcement learning, as well as their impact on group cohesion via synchronized activities. These rituals then evolved to become more elaborate, more difficult to fake, in some cases costly, and in some cases capable of eliciting strong emotional reactions. All

of these qualities serve the adaptive purpose of signaling commitment to the group, thereby reducing the possibility that an individual who engages in these behaviors is a free rider. Costly displays in particular may also have been sexually selected, in that they satisfy the handicap principle (see



Weeden et al., this volume, for further consideration of sexual selection's role in religiosity). Finally, religious beliefs may function to reduce existential anxiety by serving as a potent source of compensatory control, such that when an individual's feeling of personal control is reduced, whether by events in life, insecurity in the environment, or mortality salience, the resulting anxiety is diminished by adhering to particular religious beliefs, such as belief in a personal god.

The description and explanation of religion provided here is by no means complete. Such a complex topic needs to continue to be analyzed from a variety of perspectives. This chapter has hopefully provided a convincing argument that an evolutionary psychological perspective has much to offer to the study of religion and will likely continue to aid in our understanding of religion in the years to come—an argument further strengthened by the remainder of this handbook. <>

## **THE BOUNDARIES OF HUMAN NATURE: THE PHILOSOPHICAL ANIMAL FROM PLATO TO HARAWAY**

by Matthew Calarco [Columbia University Press, 9780231194723]

Are animals capable of wonder? Can they be said to possess language and reason? What can animals teach us about how to live well? How can they help us to see the limitations of human civilization? Is it possible to draw firm distinctions between humans and animals? And how might asking and answering questions like these lead us to rethink human-animal relations in an age of catastrophic ecological destruction?

In this accessible and engaging book, Matthew Calarco explores key issues in the philosophy of animals and their significance for our contemporary world. He leads readers on a spirited tour of historical and contemporary philosophy, ranging from Plato to Donna Haraway and from the Cynics to the Jains. Calarco unearths surprising insights about animals from a number of philosophers while also underscoring ways in which the philosophical tradition has failed to challenge the dogma of human-centeredness. Along the way, he indicates how mainstream Western philosophy is both complemented and challenged by non-Western traditions and noncanonical theories about animals. Throughout, Calarco uses examples from contemporary culture to illustrate how philosophical theories about animals are deeply relevant to our lives today. *The Boundaries of Human Nature* shows readers why philosophy can help transform not just the way we think about animals but also how we interact with them.

### **Review**

An elegant dive into philosophical perspectives on the human and the animal, ranging from ancient traditions to ecofeminism. Calarco intersperses new insights on animal capacities for moral agency, emotions, and language to support an argument for veganism. The result is a compelling read that invokes a sense of wonder before the mysteries of our fellow creatures. -- Cynthia Willett, author of *Interspecies Ethics*

Matthew Calarco is a leading voice in philosophical animal studies. This book offers an accessible overview of diverse philosophical perspectives on animals, ranging from ancient sources to some of the most cutting-edge contemporary perspectives. Throughout Calarco writes with passionate clarity, encompassing warmth and compassion. -- Dinesh Wadiwel, author of *The War Against Animals*

From Plato to Haraway, Matthew Calarco's philosophical travelogue explores the pitfalls of human exceptionalism and the promise of a less violent future in which humans and more-than-humans can collectively thrive. At a time of ecological meltdown, philosophy is the *pharmakon*: both poison and cure in the life-saving quest for multispecies flourishing. -- Anat Pick, author of *Creaturely Poetics: Animality and Vulnerability in Literature and Film*

In this fascinating and thoughtful book, Calarco assembles a menagerie of animals and their philosophers to offer an engaging exploration of the many diverse, unequal, and often highly consequential ways in which human lives are made both meaningful and liveable in company with our animal others. -- Thom van Dooren, author of *The Wake of Crows: Living and Dying in Shared Worlds*

**THE BOUNDARIES OF HUMAN NATURE** presents in elegant and succinct prose how animals have been regarded by leading thinkers from the Jains and early Greek thinkers to modern and late modern philosophers. Calarco gleans from this array of diverse authors a profound lesson: namely, that animals require our utmost regard and appreciation rather than being made subject to slaughter and mass extermination. -- Edward S. Casey, author of *The World on Edge*

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We are living through a simultaneously thrilling and fraught era with regard to animals. On one hand, our knowledge of animals is more extensive and expanding more rapidly than perhaps in any other age in human history. Living animals are subjects of detailed ethological studies that lead daily to remarkable discoveries concerning their cognitive abilities and social lives. In addition, archaeology and evolutionary science have helped to reconstruct the rich history of animal life on earth at a level of detail that was unthinkable even fifty years ago. On the other hand, animals are today suffering from unprecedented rates of extinction and unthinkable forms of violence. If current trends continue, the earth could lose 30 percent of its animal species in the coming decades and rates of animal slaughter could double by 2050. Given the increasing appreciation many people have for the richness and wonders of animal life, there has been a corresponding desire to find a way collectively to change course and build a more promising future with our planetary kin.

Although increased scientific knowledge of animals is certainly crucial to such a project, one of the main claims of this book is that acquiring this knowledge is insufficient for generating the change of heart and transformation in values and practices required to address these problems. I argue that philosophy figures prominently in any project of reorienting our individual and collective lives. As I hope to show, philosophical discourse and practice contain essential resources for helping us to

reimagine not only who human beings are (one of its traditional concerns) but who animals are as well. It can also help us think through how human-animal relationships might be reconfigured in a more respectful and joyful manner. In brief, philosophy provides us with important tools for helping bring about an ontological and ethical revolution in our way of life.

I do not wish to claim that philosophy alone suffices for transforming the current situation regarding animals; a wide variety of discourses and perspectives are required for such a massive task. Consequently, here I try to demonstrate how philosophy can be supplemented by other approaches and perspectives. Likewise, I do not suggest that the philosophical tradition has been uniformly helpful for thinking about human-animal relations in a more respectful manner. Philosophers have served, on more than one occasion, as the ideological support for dogmatic forms of human-centeredness as well as problematic acts of violence against animals. Rather than providing a simple endorsement or rejection of philosophy, I argue for an acknowledgment of the mixed heritage that philosophy bequeaths to us and a sense of responsibility for working through that heritage in view of both its critical promises and its limitations.

The philosophers I analyze here belong primarily but not exclusively to the Western tradition. The decision to include non-Western traditions and perspectives has not been made solely with an eye toward addressing the ethnocentricity of the philosophical canon (which is undoubtedly a critical limitation) but also with the recognition that novel and insightful approaches and ideas can be garnered from other heritages. Furthermore, I suggest that additional, crucial resources for rethinking animal life and relations in contemporary critical theories and bodies of knowledge circulate on the edges of mainstream philosophy. In taking this broad approach to theory, I join a whole host of practitioners in the field of animal studies who have been making the case for the past two decades that doing justice to the richness and complexity of the more-than-human world requires development of a correspondingly rich and complex set of theoretical frameworks and perspectives. Although I am not able to touch on all the fields that might be used to supplement and challenge traditional philosophies, I hope to introduce you to some of the more influential perspectives in this regard.

Another overarching aim is to suggest, echoing Jacques Derrida (whose work is discussed in chapter 10), that the animal question is one of the central axes that organizes philosophical reflection. To be sure, such centrality is not often explicitly affirmed, even by philosophers who spend a significant amount of time reflecting on animals. But I aim to help make the case that several of the central areas of philosophical inquiry—from ethics and politics to epistemology and ontology—are grounded on claims about human and animal natures and their relative value and importance. In brief, it should be evident throughout the text that even in their most abstract speculations philosophers never stray far from animals.

I cannot hope to offer a comprehensive treatment of the place of animals in philosophy in this brief book, so the tour is necessarily selective.<sup>1</sup> Ultimately, my aim is to help you think with, through, and against certain key philosophers who have important and influential ideas to offer in the ongoing development of animal philosophy. This approach is guided by certain normative commitments, central among them being that we are today called to develop a more thoughtful understanding of animal life and better, more joyful relations with our animal kin. It is also informed by the conviction that the contemporary breakdown of the traditional human-animal distinction and the blurring of the boundaries of human nature is something to be affirmed. Indeed, I believe this ongoing conceptual and institutional transformation creates the conditions for fundamentally rethinking the nature of human and animal existence and for reconsidering what might constitute meaningful, worthwhile lives for ourselves and our planetary kin.

## Chapter Overviews

This journey begins with a consideration of what the ancient Greek philosopher Plato might have to offer us concerning human-animal relations in an age of massive meat consumption and ecological destruction (chapter 1). I then examine Aristotle's rather mixed discourse on animals, which encourages us to study animals with reverence and wonder on one hand while justifying the violent use and killing of animals on the other (chapter 2). The Cynics (chapter 3) and the Jams (chapter 4) are noteworthy for placing animal life at the very center of philosophical reflection. In these chapters, I attempt to bring these traditions into dialogue with contemporary concerns about the well-being of animals and to examine the importance of personal change in transforming human-animal relations. Among classical philosophers, Plutarch (chapter 5) is perhaps the most radical and progressive in his outlook on animals, and I focus on his playful dialogue "Gryllus," in which he employs the character of a pig with the capacity for human language to make the case that animals are not just the equals of human beings but are, in many respects, our superiors.

After this survey of classical philosophy, I leap to the modern philosophical tradition, which was founded in large part by Rene Descartes (chapter 6). With Descartes, I examine the question of whether animals have language and rationality by studying his famous thought experiments to this end. I then turn to a consideration of Immanuel Kant's ideas about the distinction between human beings and animals and the ethical dimensions and implications of the manner in which he draws this division (chapter 7). In contrast to Descartes and Kant, Jeremy Bentham (chapter 8) shifts the focus of the philosophical discussion away from human-animal differences to the shared dimensions of human and animal existence, especially our shared suffering. Friedrich Nietzsche (chapter 9) deepens our thinking about human and animal similarities by having us reflect on how human flourishing ultimately requires an affirmation of our animal and earthly natures.

With Jacques Derrida (chapter 10), the contemporary scene of animal philosophy and the recently established field of animal studies is examined. The path opened up by Bentham and Nietzsche, an approach that emphasizes the shared animality and embodiment of human beings, is decisive for Derrida. But Derrida also suggests that this shared form of existence does not take away the otherness and difference of animals themselves. They still remain unique centers of individual life with their own perspectives and interiority. The work of Carol Adams (chapter ix) brings the issue of the relations between gender-based interhuman injustice and injustice toward animals to the fore by exploring long-standing links between these two forms of exploitation in the dominant culture. The intersection of violence against animals and against other marginalized groups of human beings is also examined in this chapter from the perspectives of disability, race, and settler colonialism. Val Plumwood (chapter 12) offers us a unique perspective from which to think about animals, namely, from the perspective of someone who has been violently attacked by an animal (in her case, a crocodile) and survived. For Plumwood, the attack led, somewhat paradoxically, to a deepening of her commitment to vegetarianism and ethical respect for animals. Finally, Donna Haraway (chapter 13) develops a deeply relational vision of human and animal coexistence with her notion of "companion species." The chapter concludes by contrasting the practical implications of Haraway's work with the classical animal rights approach developed by Tom Regan. I also consider the promises and challenges of developing better human-animal relations in the context of the contemporary global pandemic. <>

## **AUTONOMOUS KNOWLEDGE: RADICAL ENHANCEMENT, AUTONOMY, AND THE FUTURE OF KNOWING** by J. Adam Carter [Oxford University Press, 9780192846921]

A central conclusion developed and defended throughout the book is that epistemic autonomy is necessary for knowledge (both knowledge-that and knowledge-how) and in ways that epistemologists have not yet fully appreciated. The book is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 motivates (using a series of twists on Lehrer's TrueTemp case) the claim that propositional knowledge requires autonomous belief. Chapters 2 and 3 flesh out this proposal in two ways, by defending a specific form of history-sensitive externalism with respect to propositional knowledge—apt autonomous belief (Chapter 2) and by showing how the idea that knowledge requires autonomous belief—understood along the externalist lines proposed—corresponds with an entirely new class of knowledge defeaters (Chapter 3). Chapter 4 extends the proposal to (both intellectualist and anti-intellectualist) knowledge-how and performance enhancement, and in a way that combines insights from virtue epistemology with research on freedom, responsibility, and manipulation. Chapter 5 concludes with a new twist on the Value of Knowledge debate, by vindicating the value of epistemically autonomous knowledge over that which falls short, including (mere) heteronomous but otherwise epistemically impeccable justified true belief.

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#### Preface

1. Radical Enhancement, Knowledge, and Autonomous Belief
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The 1999 film *The Matrix* has become almost a cliché in mainstream epistemology as a way of 'updating' Descartes' evil-genius radical sceptical thought experiment from the First Meditation—a thought experiment where we are invited to entertain a kind of hypothesis where everything seems normal to us and yet, due to an elaborate deception, all of our beliefs about what is around us are false. At least from the perspective of mainstream epistemology, The Wachowski's sceptical question (can we know that what we see around us isn't just part of the Matrix?) is really just reheated cabbage.

However, elsewhere in film, a comparatively more novel kind of knowledge-related thought experiment often flies under the epistemological radar—a kind we should arguably take more seriously than, say, whether our hand in front of us is just a Matrix projection.

I'm referring here to the scene where Neo lies back in a metal chair, hooks some electrodes to his head, and—less than a minute later—says 'I know kung fu!' (On this point, I think Morpheus would have agreed.) Trinity, you might recall, does more or less the same thing as Neo when (despite knowing nothing about helicopters) she needs to requisition a very specific kind of chopper while enemies are quickly approaching.

Could knowledge ever be ‘uploaded’ in the way the film (admittedly, pretty crudely) suggests? Put another way—would it be possible to come to gain propositional knowledge and knowledge-how (as the Neo/Trinity cases seem to suggest) in ways that would appear to ‘bypass’ mostly or even entirely our normal learning mechanisms? More generally, is radical cognitive enhancement possible—and is what we would gain cognitively as a result of such a thing genuine knowledge, or something less valuable?

These are big questions, but—as we’ll see in Chapter 1—it is (surprisingly in some cases) sooner rather than later that we need to be able to theorize clearly about questions in exactly this vicinity, including specific questions about the relationship between knowledge and various new kinds of high-tech epistemic dependence (e.g. brain–computer interfaces, neuromodulation, smart drugs, and other kinds of cognitive enhancement) that for better or worse are on the cards. To complicate matters, we’ll see that mainstream epistemology will require some new innovations in order to do this kind of theorizing in a principled way.

*Autonomous Knowledge: Radical Enhancement, Autonomy, and the Future of Knowing* is the first book-length attempt to figure out what these updates will need to look like, and what they mean for our theories of (among other things) propositional knowledge, epistemic defeat, know-how, and epistemic value. A central theme of the book is a concept I’ll call epistemic autonomy, and how it is distinctively important for both knowledge-that and knowledge-how.

Chapter 1 has two main goals. First, I clarify why it would be culpably naive for epistemologists to kick various kinds of ‘extreme’ cognitive enhancement cases (even those that many of us would regard as purely sci-fi or fantasy) into the long grass when doing epistemological theory. The practical (as well as purely theoretical) possibility of such radical enhancement cases, I’ll argue in the remainder of Chapter 1, reveals the need for what I’ll call an autonomous belief condition on propositional knowledge—a condition the satisfaction of which (it will be shown) is neither entailed by nor entails the satisfaction of either a belief condition or, importantly, an epistemic justification condition. This transition from a ‘JTB + X’ to a ‘JTAB + X’ template marks an important and necessary update to the received thinking about what knowing involves. (And an appendix for knowledge-firsters explains why they should care about this as well.) But what exactly must be the case for an autonomous belief condition on knowledge to be satisfied by a knower? Chapter 2 takes up this question by investigating whether or not the knowledge-relevant (viz. epistemic) autonomy of a belief is determined entirely by the subject’s present mental structure. What I’ll call ‘internalists’ in relation to epistemically autonomous belief say ‘yes’, and externalists say ‘no’. Internalism about epistemic autonomous belief turns out to be problematic for reasons entirely independent from those we might have for rejecting internalist approaches to epistemically justified belief.

What is shown to fare much better is a kind of ‘history-sensitive’ externalist approach to epistemically autonomous belief. On the particular account I go in for, which draws from externalist thinking about attitudinal autonomy more generally<sup>5</sup> (as well as from virtue epistemology), a belief lacks the kind of epistemic autonomy that’s needed for propositional knowledge if the subject comes to possess the belief in a way that (put simply) bypasses or pre-empts the subject’s cognitive abilities and is such that the subject lacks easy (enough) opportunities to competently shed that belief.

Chapter 3 highlights an important epistemological implication of the view developed so far—which is that the inclusion of an autonomous belief condition on knowledge implies that knowledge can be defeated in ways other than via the standard modes of rebutting and undercutting. An account of two types of what I call heteronomous defeat for propositional knowledge is developed and defended, one on which knowledge is defeated when the subject acquires a belief that either indicates that the target belief is epistemically heteronymous (i.e. Type 1) or calls into doubt the reliability of the subject’s belief-forming process as one that would (reliably enough) result in an



epistemically autonomous belief (i.e. Type 2). Recognizing heteronymous defeat as a genuine form of knowledge defeat fits snugly with the wider idea that knowledge defeaters, as such, are indicators of ignorance.

So how does knowledge-how fit into the picture developed so far? Is there a kind of epistemic autonomy condition on know-how as well— e.g. one that might rule out certain kinds of radical performance enhancement cases as genuine cases of know-how? If intellectualism about knowledge-how is true (and so, if knowledge-how is a species of knowledge-that), then to the extent that we need an autonomy condition on know-how, it will be (simply) an autonomy condition on know-that: a condition on propositional knowledge-apt belief.

However, the anti-intellectualist—according to whom know-how is fundamentally dispositional rather than propositional—would need an entirely different story here—one that places an autonomy-related restriction not on propositional-knowledge-apt belief, but instead on know-how-apt dispositions. Chapter 4 develops exactly this kind of restriction, by cobbling together some ideas about know-how and virtue epistemology with recent thinking in the moral responsibility literature about freedom, responsibility, and manipulation. The proposal is that one is in a state of knowing how to something,  $\wedge$ , only if one has the skill to  $q$  successfully with guidance control, and one's  $q$ -ing exhibits guidance control (and furthermore, manifests know-how) only if one's  $q$ -ing is caused by a reasons-responsive mechanism that one owns. Unsurprisingly, the devil is in these details—and my goal in the chapter is to spell them out in a way that rules out certain kinds of radical performance-enhancing cases while not ruling out that, say, one knows how to do a maths problem when one's performance is just mildly boosted by Adderall.

Taken together, Chapters 1–4 offer a picture according to which autonomy is crucial to knowledge—both knowledge-that and knowledge-how—and in what are thus far unappreciated ways. The main theoretical upshot has been epistemic autonomy conditions on our analyses of knowledge-that and knowledge-how, conditions that are entirely necessary, and important to get right, if we are going to take enhancement cases, actual and possible, seriously. (Something, I stress, we'll need to do soon for better or worse.)

Taking recent debates in epistemic value as a starting point, Chapter 5 sets out to solve a remaining key problem. How does satisfying the epistemic autonomy condition on propositional knowledge (Chapters 1 and 2) add value to an otherwise unknown belief (including a justified, true, non-Gettiered but epistemically heteronomous belief)? This question isn't some kind of afterthought. As work on the value of knowledge would suggest, lacking a good answer here actually counts as a mark against the adequacy of the JTAB + X template account.

Several strategies are canvassed for attempting to vindicate the idea that epistemic autonomy adds value to an otherwise unknown justified, true non-Gettiered belief. Pragmatic and instrumentalist arguments are considered and shown to fail. A variation on a recent non-instrumentalist argument strategy developed by Kurt Sylvan (2017) is given special attention, but it too is shown to come up short. Finally, and by suggesting new twists on some ideas in value theory (e.g. Rabinowicz and Rønnow-Rasmussen 2000) and action theory (e.g. Korsgaard 2009), I outline an answer that works. Key to the answer I defend is that knowledge makes us the knowers we are in a way that equally justified and anti-Gettiered true beliefs that lack epistemic autonomy do not and cannot.

The result is a book that offers a view (or package of views) about knowledge that can handle today's enhancements, but which also offer the resources to deal in a principled way with what's further down the road. It also places the concept epistemic autonomy front and centre, as worthy of serious and further study in epistemology.

Most of this book has been written from scratch. The only overlap with previous work is Chapter 4, which draws (albeit with major changes) on some earlier ideas I've had about smart drugs and guidance control which appear in 'Virtue Epistemology, Enhancement, and Control' (2018). My earliest thinking about some of the themes that ended up being central to the book are reflected in a pair of papers from around 2016, which are 'Intellectual Autonomy, Epistemic Dependence and Cognitive Enhancement' (2020) and 'The Epistemology of Cognitive Enhancement' (2019) (co-authored with Duncan Pritchard). It wasn't until a long flight back from Beijing in August 2018, though, that the key ideas for the book started to come together. (There is a close possible world where the in-flight entertainment on that KLM flight was not broken that day, which is also a world in which I instead watched Top Gun and you are not reading any of this.)

I'm grateful to many people who have helped either read or discuss draft material of this book with me over the past year or so. This includes Peter Momtchiloff and two very helpful referees at OUP, Mark Alfano (and an audience at Delft University of Technology), Gloria Andrada de Gregorio, Michael Brady, Andy Clark, Robert Cowan, Ben Colburn (thanks also, Ben, for relief from tutorials during autumn 2018!), Jesper Kallestrup, Neil Levy, Jon Matheson, Neil McDonnell, Glen Pettigrove, Jesús Navarro, Duncan Pritchard, Jesús Vega, Ju Wang, and participants at Glasgow's COGITO Work in Progress seminars. This includes my excellent PhD students Daniel Abrahams, Lysette Chaprionere, Ruairidh Gilmartin, Finn McCardel, Daniella Meehan, Martin Miragoli, Dario Mortini, Daniel Pino, and Daniela Rusu. I'm also grateful to Charles Côté-Bouchard, Jesús Vega, John Tillson, and Waldomiro J. Silva Filho for the opportunity to present material from this book in Montreal (November 2019), Madrid (March 2020), Liverpool Hope (March 2021), and Salvador (September 2021), respectively, and to a 2018 MSc Epistemology class at Glasgow, which read and discussed first drafts of Chapters 1, 2, and 4.

A very special thanks to my COGITO comrades and co-founders Chris Kelp and Mona Simion, whose friendship, support, and discussion (philosophical and otherwise) during the writing of this book has been invaluable.

Finally, the biggest thanks of all goes to my wonderful and loving partner, Emma Gordon. Along with providing feedback, encouragement, and patience throughout, Emma also convinced me to change the subtitle of the book, which was originally 'Knowledge in a Digital Age', a locution she gently explained to me sounded as though it was from the 1990s. <>

## **SPIRITUALITY FOR THE GODLESS by Michael McGhee** [Cambridge Studies in Religion, Philosophy, and Society, 9781107162013]

Many people describe themselves as secular rather than religious, but they often qualify this statement by claiming an interest in spirituality. But what kind of spirituality is possible in the absence of religion? In this book, Michael McGhee shows how religious traditions and secular humanism function as 'schools of wisdom' whose aim is to expose and overcome the forces that obstruct justice. He examines the ancient conception of philosophy as a form of ethical self-inquiry and spiritual practice conducted by a community, showing how it helps us to reconceive the philosophy of religion in terms of philosophy as a way of life. McGhee discusses the idea of a dialogue between religion and atheism in terms of Buddhist practice and demonstrates how a non-theistic Buddhism can address itself to theistic traditions as well as to secular humanism. His book also explores how to shift the centre of gravity from religious belief towards states of mind and conduct.

## Book Description

A non-theistic contribution to the dialogue between religion and secular humanism through the medium of Buddhist spiritual practice.

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This is an essay in the philosophy of religion — a discipline within Anglophone philosophy that has, for obvious historical reasons, been owned by Christians and ex-Christians, atheist or agnostic, with scant regard for, or attention to, other traditions. I had originally sought to explore ways in which Buddhist practice might be integrated into a reconceiving of the philosophy of religion in terms of spirituality, but an essay is a trial, a testing or 'proving', and the one who genuinely essays does not know in advance where the path will lead. An Introduction is best written last, and what has emerged in the end is a modest set of proposals about how Buddhism can offer a non-theistic contribution to an intercultural conception of the philosophy of religion. I have been influenced by the work of the philosopher David E. Cooper, who has written extensively on Buddhism and 'World Philosophy', and by that of the theologian Nicholas Lash, who has talked illuminatingly of the religions as 'schools of wisdom'. I have come to the conclusion that among these 'schools' must be included secular humanism, and I want to explore the possibility of such a humanism in conversation with the religious traditions, albeit with a Buddhist inflection; an inflection, that is to say, that offers not just a common language but also a conception of spiritual practice that is both continuous with and augments the ancient idea of philosophy as a way of life.

Over fifty years ago, an Indian philosopher, Daya Krishna, attended a symposium in the West on the philosophy of religion. In an insightful paper, he reflected on his experience, and mildly remarked

how skewed the discussions were by an unself-conscious concentration on Christianity. He was drawing attention to a bias that has hardly changed since:

The other great limitation of the discussion ... was its confinement, perhaps naturally, to Christianity alone. It was as if one were to reflect on aesthetic experience and confine one's discussion to Greek art or the Renaissance masters only ... That no one challenged this implicit limitation shows once again the difficulty of getting beyond the perspective of the culture one happens to be born in.

The main work of philosophers of religion would have been on the efficacy of the proofs for the existence of God and on the rationality of belief as these issues were received through the European traditions. They would mostly acknowledge, if nudged, their debt to the Jewish and Arab philosophers, but would return then to focus on the fine detail of the current state of the argument as represented by their contemporaries. The Eastern traditions were largely ignored by philosophers of religion, but also by Western philosophers generally, who would fail to see much 'philosophy' there at all. Things have certainly shifted: there is less likelihood now of Indian philosophy at least being dismissed as it once was as merely 'mystical'. Nevertheless, it can hardly be said that Eastern sources have been integrated into the philosophy of religion. The African traditions languished longer on the Procrustean bed of Western colonial perceptions. The point about integration, as opposed to assimilation, is that each of the parties to the integration have to change, and I seek in what follows to offer a Buddhist voice in the conversations that are starting to take place, between the religious traditions, but also between them and secular humanism.

The demographics have decisively shifted, and there is now a cultural and religious diversity in the West that is yet to be properly addressed or accommodated. Strangely, 'belief' is both stronger and more diverse in its cultural expressions, and non-belief and religious ignorance are also increasingly widespread. I put 'belief' in inverted commas because we almost automatically connect 'religion' with 'religious belief'. But that particular emphasis is peculiar to the Abrahamic traditions, and what

'believers' believed, if we can insert ourselves into these traditions, was both that God would deliver on the promises he made to his people and that his people should trust his word and be faithful to his commandments. Belief in that sense was a particular cultural form of that 'venture of the spirit' exemplified in the figure of Abraham 'going into a place that was not his own, not knowing whither he went'. This was a route into a particular way of life, a moral engagement to which a long line of Prophets felt impelled to recall a 'faithless' people. And at least some aspects of that moral engagement provide a point of intersection with other traditions, including those of a non-theistic Buddhism, which never thought in terms of God or that particular conception of a precarious mutual fidelity to a Covenant, where God could be trusted but human beings could not.

Many philosophers will raise their hand in protest at this point and say that we have missed an obvious and vital step, the first step, indeed — the question whether we have reason to believe at all that there is a God who makes promises and to whom we should be faithful in the conduct of our lives. In his book on Kant, *The Bounds of Sense*, Sir Peter Strawson had remarked that it was 'only with moderate enthusiasm' that a philosopher of the twentieth century turned to philosophical theology, and it is certainly true that although this is an unkind assessment, it has largely been treated, in British universities at least, as a logical nursery for first year undergraduates, learning about quantifier shifts and the forms of valid and invalid argument.

Although — pace Strawson and perhaps to his posthumous surprise — philosophical theology remains alive and well in the twenty-first century, with renewed versions of analytic Thomism and Reformed Epistemology, there has been a countermovement towards the 'philosophy of spirituality' which seeks to put questions of belief to one side, in favour of attention to the forms of interiority and their relation to demeanour and conduct; a countermovement well enough aware, perhaps, that

those who insist that we need to establish the rationality of belief will consider this, of interest though it may be, merely as a distraction from this essential prior issue, even a slightly dishonest evasion, and will insist, for instance, that a spirituality without religion is a degraded if not incoherent notion.

Nevertheless, advocates of this countermovement will reply that religious belief is now either 'unbelievable' or simply not available, and the philosophy of spirituality is an attempt to assemble what can properly be preserved of a broken or expired belief system. The brutal truth is that this is not evasion or dishonesty but loss of interest: a weary sense that these matters have long been settled, that the parties have moved on, along with the imagination, and are no longer listening to each other. But reflection on 'spirituality' might also provide the forum for a new culture of listening, away from the old intemperate debates between 'religionists' and atheists, 'new' and old, irenic dialogue rather than the clash of certitudes, a search for common ground, not in terms of 'belief' but at least in terms of the moral possibilities of which such belief was at its best a cultural vehicle. I say 'at its best' because there was also a worst. Nearly a century ago, the writer John Buchan remarked satirically of the divines of the seventeenth-century Scottish Kirk that, 'Finding little warrant for force in the New Testament (they) had recourse to the Old Testament, where they discovered encouraging precedents in the doings of Elijah and Hezekiah and Josiah'.

The calumny lies not in these particular references but in the Marcionite reduction of the Hebrew Bible to what we too readily think of as 'the God of the Old Testament', whereas it is clear that such scriptures are a place of contention between very different minds. The Irish Catholic theologian James P. Mackey trenchantly expresses a similar point, one which is about the prior sensibility of the writers:

As any careful reader of what Christians call the New Testament can see, the picture of God painted in the life, death and teaching of the seer Jesus, was tampered with, and it was reduced to their measure and sometimes corrupted, even from the very outset of his public mission, by the closest and most trusted who called themselves 'sons of the prophets.

I draw attention to particular 'minds' and 'sensibilities' because their formation determines the conditions of moral agency in a time of unprecedented need, a time in which we need clarity about what promotes and what undermines our capacity to act: a clarity, in other words, that has practical consequences. This is one point of a necessary dialogue between the traditions — a well-established dialogue, indeed, but the philosophers lag behind. I have sought to establish a Buddhist inflection, a particular Buddhist voice, in the expectation that, as the conversation proceeds, new and sometimes unexpected voices will make themselves heard. This crux of moral agency — what promotes it, what undermines it — defines the turn towards a philosophy of spirituality, under the influence of the ancient conception of philosophy as it has been received in recent decades through the work of the French philosopher Pierre Hadot, though in my own case it was the work of my Liverpool colleague Stephen R. L. Clark that led me to see the significance of a tradition that grew out of the complex cultural confrontations and engagements of the ancient Mediterranean world. In our own times, postcolonial migrations and other diasporas make possible a similar kind of intellectual engagement between cultural and religious traditions, including now a secular humanism largely, but not exclusively, conceived in specifically post-Christian terms. To use Richard Dawkins' expression, there are not only cultural Jews, Christians, and Muslims, but also Hindus, Buddhists, and others, more or less interior to their traditions, whose contributions will affect the language, the resources, and the self-understanding of secular humanism as it engages with religion in its attempt to achieve clarity about the power of action and what undermines it. I examine the common charge that humanism is essentially hubristic. The best that can be said for my amateurish discussions of Islam and Advaita Vedanta, and my bare reference to Patrice Haynes' work on African philosophy and the idea of an animist humanism, is that it might prompt contributions from those who are better

informed. What I attempt myself is to see the necessary integration of the five indriyas as a Buddhist or dharmic form of the idea of philosophy as a way of life — the five 'powers' of concentration, mindfulness, energy, 'faith', and wisdom. I also make pivotal use of a central Buddhist distinction between two kinds of 'truth', the one presented as 'ultimate', the other as 'conventional', except that this latter translation strays from the Sanskrit sense of 'concealment' which allows us to make Heideggerian connections with the idea of a concealing framework that prevents us from seeing what nevertheless lies open to view, including the living presence of other human beings and our profound relatedness to the environment. This allows me to use the **KARANIYAMETTA SUTTA**, with its famous central image of the love of a mother for her infant, as a model for a concern for justice and the well-being of others, in a way that determines a moral language I want sharply to distinguish from a received language of requirement and prohibition. I make use of a question raised by Stephen Mulhall of the work of Raimond Gaita: what is the difference between love and God's love? And I use the Sutta to represent a non-theistic version of the vision enshrined at the beginning of Genesis. In early chapters, I seek to find some elements of a concern for spiritual practice in Spinoza, Kant, Wittgenstein, and Freud, and I make use of the work of the poets Blake, Rilke, Yeats, Eliot, Hopkins, Ted Hughes, and Shakespeare, on the grounds that they are frequently more conceptually adventurous and closer in their thinking to lived experience than the philosophers.

I have many intellectual debts, most particularly to Anthony Gash and David Cockburn. I also owe a great deal to John Cornwell for his generous encouragement, and to Nicholas Lash for generous and detailed correspondence, as well as to the late James P. Mackey, another theologian from whom I have learned much. I have benefited also from conversations over the years with Jonardon Ganeri and Paul O'Grady. It will be apparent that I am no Buddhist scholar, but my Liverpool colleague Christopher Bartley has done his best to save me from my grosser errors and my culpable ignorance, as have David Burton and my friends Robert Morrison and John Peacock. Philip Goodchild generously waded through an early draft and made perceptive comments and I have benefited from conversations in Edinburgh with him and Mark Wynn, Pauline Phemister, the late Pamela Sue Anderson, and our much-missed Liverpool colleague Gillian Howie; and in Papa Westray with Beverley Clack, Harriet Harris, Jane Macnaughton, and Paul Maharg; and in India with Probal Dasgupta, Mrinal Miri, Sanjay Palshikar, Prabodh Parikh, Syed Sayeed, Jyotirmaya Sharma, Sanil V., and Aparna Vincent. <>

## **LIFE AND WORK OF ERICH NEUMANN: ON THE SIDE OF THE INNER VOICE** by Angelica Löwe, translated by Mark Kyburz, Foreword by Micha Neumann [Routledge, 9780815382355]

**LIFE AND WORK OF ERICH NEUMANN: ON THE SIDE OF THE INNER VOICE** is the first book to discuss Erich Neumann's life, work and relationship with C.G. Jung. Neumann (1905–1960) is considered Jung's most important student, and in this deeply personal and unique volume, Angelica Löwe casts Neumann's comprehensive work in a completely new light.

Based on conversations with Neumann's children, Rali Loewenthal-Neumann and Professor Micha Neumann, Löwe explores Neumann's childhood and adolescent years in Part I, including how he met his wife and muse Julie Blumenfeld. In Part II the book traces their life and work in Tel Aviv, where they moved in the early 1930s amid growing anti-Jewish tensions in Hitler's Germany. Finally, in Part III, Löwe analyses Neumann's most famous works.



This is the first book-length discussion of the existential questions motivating Neumann's work, as well as the socio-historical circumstances pertaining to the problem of Jewish identity formation against rising anti-Semitism in the early 20th century. It will be essential reading for Jungian analysts and analytical psychologists in practice and in training, as well as scholars of Jungian and post-Jungian studies and Jewish studies.

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Angelica Löwe has undertaken the difficult task of writing the first-ever book-length account of the work and life of Erich Neumann. This volume is now before us, thanks to Ms Löwe's courage, spirited inquiry, patience and attention to detail. She has gathered an unprecedented wealth of information about Neumann, through which she brings to life his personality and his hitherto unexplored and hence unknown life. This book also provides the interested reader with access to

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Neumann's work, which includes many of his unpublished writings about Judaism. After more than 50 years, which have passed since Neumann's premature death in 1960, we now finally have a work before us that offers so many insights of which I, as his son, was unaware.

My father was a very busy man. He was always at his desk, writing, and could not be disturbed. When he was not writing, he looked after his many patients. The breaks from work that he granted himself, and during which he found time to talk to me, were few and far between. The exception was Sabbath, when he enjoyed playing with me and told me stories, in particular from the Bible. He would sometimes paint beautiful colour pictures to accompany those stories.

In the battle for my father's attention, I had numerous rivals, including some of great importance—first and foremost my mother, Julie Neumann, of course. My sister and I knew that our father's relationship with our mother took priority. Others rivals included C.G. Jung and Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn, with whom my father corresponded for many years, and then of course his favourite places: Moscia on Lago Maggiore, where the Eranos conferences were held every year; and Sils Maria in the Upper Engadin, where my mother and he went to recuperate. Last but not least, there were his other children: his books.

My father was not at all like my friends' fathers. I felt and knew that he loved me and that I mattered a lot to him. Yet from an early age I also realised that his life was determined by great and important tasks. Because I understood this, I never reproached him. Often, I identified with him and imagined that, at some stage, I might also matter to so many people.

Of particular value in Angelica Löwe's book are her excellent interpretations of my father's work. She helps us feel our way into and thus to experience Erich Neumann's inner world. The language and structure of her book provide subtle access to his complex and at times difficult ideas. Of all the interpretations that I have read, those presented in this volume are the most profound. I am most grateful to Ms Löwe for her work. This is a very well-written, highly absorbing and beautiful book. It makes exciting and gratifying reading. Not once did I feel like putting it down.

For me, as Erich Neumann's son, this book is therefore of particular importance. It gives me great pleasure to wish that *Life and Work of Erich Neumann* will attract the large and interested readership it fully deserves.

\*\*\*

Erich Neumann is widely considered C.G. Jung's most important student. His extensive work, translated into many languages, is still read today. Of particular importance are *The Origins and History of Consciousness*, *Depth Psychology and a New Ethic*, *The Great Mother* and *Amor and Psyche*. And yet the fact that Neumann's life, his relationship with C.G. Jung or the evolution of his work have received precious little attention (or indeed none) is striking as much as it is baffling. Thus, we have engaged with an important body of work, not only for the Jungian world, without the slightest knowledge of its creator. This has suggested that this lack of knowledge was a blind spot, reflective of historical obliviousness and symptomatic of failing to recall the exodus of the Jewish intellect brought about by National Socialism.

In essence, the development of this book is closely linked to the activities of the working group for "Analytical Psychology and History." One of the group's main concerns is to remember the Jewish colleagues who were persecuted by the Nazi regime. A conference held in Vienna in 2005, entitled "100 Years of Erich Neumann, 130 Years of C.G. Jung," provided further impetus for pursuing the project of a book about Neumann's life and work. The children of Erich and Julie Neumann—Micha Neumann and Rali Loewenthal-Neumann (who both reside in Israel)—were invited to the conference to deliver lectures, which provided an initial opportunity for discussion. Further

interviews and research took place at a later stage in Israel, Moscia near Ascona, the site of the Eranos conferences, and London, where I met Julie Neumann's youngest (and now deceased) sister.

This project began with an admission: I realised that not only I knew almost nothing about Neumann's Jewish background, but that very little was known about his life in either Germany or Israel. The outcome of my research is a book whose main sources are my conversations with those people who knew Neumann, as well as his unpublished letters and manuscripts; it is an attempt to paint a lively picture of the life and work of a man who was characterised by his strong desire for independence, by his immense creativity and by tremendous intuition. He was a scholar and writer whose work, in his own assessment, "sits between all faculties." Neumann himself did not see his cultural, philosophical and critical writings in the context of the emergence of psychoanalytic theory, but as contributions to "cultural therapy" or metapsychology. They were the work of "a proud Jew," as Gershom Scholem described Neumann in his obituary.

To return to the strange misalignment between the active reception of Neumann's work and a lack of biographical knowledge: Neumann and C.G. Jung engaged in an intense and at times even dramatic correspondence. These letters, whose publication in 2015 will mark one of the most important events in the history of analytical psychology, bears witness to a complex intellectual dialogue, an essential part of which concerns the examination of Jewish identity. For this reason, Erich Neumann's life can only be adequately retraced if it is understood as a historical-critical examination of Jewish life and of the political situation prevailing in Germany before and after the Nazi's rise to power in 1933. This perspective also means taking into account the history of German Zionism, which exercised a lasting influence on Neumann. The present examination of Neumann's biography places personal statements and aspects of his work in the context of the massive rupture caused by a series of political catastrophes. No such inquiry can be guided by the idea of a "German-Jewish conversation," which, as Gershom Scholem observed, takes place "in an empty fictitious space." It attempts, instead, to reveal the fault lines of a dialogue that is in many respects inadequate, and even severed. Thus, this biographical account of Neumann's life and work also contributes to the historiography of psychoanalysis.

I have divided this book into three parts:

Part I traces the origins of Erich and Julie Neumann. It considers the historical and socio-political conditions of Jewish life in Germany, in particular in Berlin during the first quarter of the 20th century. It reviews the key intellectual currents that shaped Neumann's thinking, first and foremost Martin Buber's "Jewish Renaissance" and Kurt Blumenfeld's concept of post-assimilation (Chapter 1). Chapter 2 discusses Julie Blumenfeld's family background and social engagement at the beginning of her career as an analyst. Chapter 3 illumines Neumann's early writings, including his doctoral dissertation, his (unpublished) studies on Franz Kafka and excerpts from his (also unpublished) novel *Der Anfang* (The Beginning). On the one hand, it is important to delineate the lines running between Neumann's early and later work, and on the other to convey a palpable sense of the young Neumann's intellectual independence, which later led him to develop the concept of "mystical anthropology." My main purpose throughout is to trace the emergence of Neumann's key concepts from his early, unpublished works to his later writings. Those early works were, as becomes evident, a "quarry" for the later ones.

Part II explores the correspondence between Erich Neumann and C.G. Jung, in order to bring into view Neumann's chief concern: his struggle for Jewish identity. We will, however, be able to assess the definitive scope of the Jung–Neumann correspondence only after the publication of Neumann's complete letters. Chapters 4, 6 and 7 explore Neumann's intellectual debate with Jung. These chapters consider Jung's examination of Judaism, his statements in various publications, which are nothing other than anti-Semitic, and also his theorising of the unconscious and its effect on the

young Jewish intellectual, who had decided to place Jungian theory over others. Jung's theory of the Jewish unconscious is particularly significant in this respect. Chapter 6 involves a brief excursion into the history of ideas. It provides a brief overview of Martin Buber's *Reden an das Judentum* (On Judaism), which concerns emigration to Palestine, in comparison with Jung's deliberations on the relationship between the collective unconscious and the "soil." Chapter 8, which considers Neumann's life in Tel Aviv, draws on manuscripts gratefully provided by Rali Loewenthal-Neumann and Dvora Kutzinski, and on Neumann's unpublished letters to Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn, the founder of the Eranos conferences. Chapter 9, which conjures up the spirit and flair of the annual Eranos conferences on Lake Maggiore in southern Switzerland, is also based on a close reading of Neumann's unpublished letters to Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn, the "Magna Mater" of Eranos. Neumann was one of the most important speakers at the gathering, from 1948 until his untimely death in 1960.

Part III discusses Neumann's key works in the context of his long unpublished manuscripts on the *Psychologie des jüdischen Menschen* (Psychology of the Jewish Person), which he began writing in the 1930s. Published in 2019 as *The Roots of Jewish Consciousness*, only this early work enables one to open up the impressive and highly significant world of thought that would emerge in Neumann's later work. Here, in these early manuscripts, Neumann devotes himself to the fundamental philosophical question of how consciousness forms time and space. The crucial concept of time in Jewish thought is *messianism*, from which Neumann developed his concept of *actualised messianism* (Chapter 10).

Neumann places the theme of space within the highly charged, dichotomous debate over "land, home, earth, soil," which Martin Buber and C.G. Jung both addressed from their different ideological perspectives (Chapter 6). Here, Neumann develops, not least as part of his critique of Jewish theology, which he believes fails to respect the feminine, and influenced by Rilke's *Duino Elegies*, a line of thought that addresses *the transparency of the earthly* (Chapter 11). The chapter on his *Depth Psychology and a New Ethics* examines Neumann's "new ethic" in terms of its Nietzschean influence and places this work in the context of *Jewish Nietzscheanism* (Chapter 12). Chapter 12 discusses a vision that Neumann wrote to Jung about in one of his letters. Its interpretation is based on the philosophy and basic ideas of the French philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas (Chapter 13). The last two chapters are dedicated to the "heroic path" of the modern human being. This theme assumes many mythological guises, in which Neumann found the development of human consciousness (i.e. ego complex) delineated in metaphorical terms. Characteristic of Neumann's work in this respect is his distinction between the development of male and female consciousness. Thus, Chapter 14, in discussing the central theses of his *Origins and History of Consciousness*, focuses on Neumann's critique of the Freudian concept of the Oedipus complex. The final chapter, an account of Apuleius's tale of *Amor and Psyche*, traces woman's "heroic path." <>

## **JUNGIAN PSYCHOLOGY IN THE EAST AND WEST: CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES FROM JAPAN** edited by Konoyu Nakamura and Stefano Carta [Routledge, 9780367766894]

It is well known that Jung's investigation of Eastern religions and cultures supplied him with an abundance of cross-cultural comparative material, useful to support his hypotheses of the existence of archetypes, the collective unconscious and other manifestations of psychic reality. However, the specific literature dealing with this aspect has previously been quite scarce. This unique edited collection brings together contributors writing on a range of topics that represent an introduction to the differences between Eastern and Western approaches to Jungian psychology.

Readers will discover that one interesting feature of this book is the realization of how much Western Jungians are implicitly or explicitly inspired by Eastern traditions – including Japanese – and, at the same time, how Jungian psychology – the product of a Western author – has been widely accepted and developed by Japanese scholars and clinicians.

Scholars and students of Jungian studies will find many new ideas, theories and practices gravitating around Jungian psychology, generated by the encounter between East and West. Another feature that will be appealing to many readers is that this book may represent an introduction to Japanese philosophy and clinical techniques related to Jungian psychology.

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This is a collection of papers presented by prominent analysts, analytical psychologists, and scholars from all over the world at the 2019 International Association for Jungian Studies (IAJS) Regional Conference, titled "Jungian Psychology: East and West, encountering differences", in Osaka, Japan, the first such meeting held by the International Association for Jungian Studies (IAJS) in Asia. This event was held at Otemon Gakuin University and was supported by the Japan Association of Jungian Psychology (JAFP). I had the honor of hosting the conference as chair.

Kiley Laughlin and I came up with the theme. As is well known, in the early 1920s C. G. Jung's interests drifted toward Eastern religion and culture (Jung 1936, 1939, 1944, 1948, 1953, 1954). This turning point in Jung's career serendipitously coincided with his study of Richard Wilhelm's *Secret of the Golden Flower* and Heinrich Zimmer's *Artistic Form and Yoga in the Sacred Images of India*. Jung's investigation of Eastern religion and culture supplied him with an abundance of cross-cultural material to compare with his hypotheses of archetypes, the collective unconscious, and other manifestations of psychic reality. There was something else in the East, however, that seemed to form the nucleus of his personal myth. In fact, this myth seems to have culminated with a figurative journey to the East, where the sun is continuously reborn, a motif that Jung referred to as a night sea journey, symbolizing an effort to adapt to the conditions of psychic life. The wisdom found in the East seems to have provided Jung with a sense of psychic orientation, and a partial road map, to navigate his own journey of individuation. Based on this, Jung further adapted his theories and practices and applied them to his psychology. His encounter with Eastern culture thus marked an attempt to synthesize a greater whole by showing what we can learn from differences.

Our conference, therefore, focused on what is created when differences are encountered, a difficult task indeed. In Japan alone there are various traditions, religions, social systems, and cultures, developed over a long history that has involved adapting science, religious, and cultural influences from abroad (Reischauer 1970). Jung noted:

To us [in the West], consciousness is inconceivable without an ego.... If there is no ego there is nobody to be conscious of anything. The ego is therefore indispensable to conscious processes. The eastern mind, however, has no difficulty in conceiving of a consciousness without an ego. Consciousness is deemed capable of transcending its ego condition; indeed, in its "higher" forms, the ego disappears altogether. (1954, para 774)

On the other hand, Kawai (1976) opined that Japan is a "maternal society" differing from the Western paternal one in that the Japanese ego is nearer unconsciousness. This theme aptly suited the first IAJS conference held in Japan.

A lot of excellent papers were presented, including four keynote presentations, by Iwao Akita, Stefano Carta, Andrew Samuels, and Megumi Yama, plus 25 speeches by Jungian analysts, psychotherapists, and scholars from places as diverse as America, United Kingdom, China, Italy,

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Japan, Latvia, and Taiwan. It was attended by more than a hundred participants from around the globe. It lasted only two days but led to sparkling discussions and sparked enduring friendships. It thus literally embodied meaningful bonds between East and West in the name of Jungian psychology.

This book includes some of the notable papers presented, divided into four sections:

Part I: East and West, Part II: Images, Part III: Clinical Issues, and Part IV: Identity and Individuation. The separate chapters are introduced in detail by Professor Stefano Carta. Readers will note how widespread and deeply rooted Jungian psychology is in Japan. At the same time, they will note how relevant this Eastern perspective is for scholars and clinicians around the world, especially those involved in psychotherapy and cross-cultural studies. Naturally, this group includes more than three thousand members in IAAP, the four hundred members in IAJIS, and the six hundred members in JAJIP, as well as trainees and university students in analytical psychology. It should also appeal to psychiatrists, sociologists, and medical anthropologists. We expect this book will be recommended reading in university courses in clinical and analytical psychology, both undergraduate and postgraduate, both in Japan and internationally. It will also surely draw the interest of the 30,000 certificated clinical psychologists in Japan, and I believe it will provide new horizons for the whole Jungian community.

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This book represents a further step in a dialogue between two quite complex subjects: the so-called East and the so-called West. The very fact that the contributions that follow this introduction may be seen as a dialogue is perfectly in line with the essence of Jungian thought. In fact, the Jungian paradigm is dialectic and dialogical all the way down: from the fundamental epistemological principle of the structural relationship between a pair of opposites, from which a third – a symbol – may arise (a symbol eventually incarnated in and yet transcending the “material” reality into a fourth), to the clinical setting seen by Jung as a dialectic process between two subjects.

Now, as in the title of this collection of chapters, the two subjects that will weave such a dialogue are the “East” and the “West.” From this very first fact I would like to point out one of the essential challenges of Jungian thought – the relationship between similarities (the archetypal level) and differences (the individual level). In fact, it may well be that neither of them may actually be found in the world – in the object – but only “in the eyes of the beholder.” This becomes immediately apparent when we compare the main attitude of anthropology and of analytical psychology in reference to the symbolic world, as I doubt that any anthropologist would agree to recognize something as “East” and “West” as realistic autonomous, homogeneous, and comparable subjects.

This issue, which deeply regards Jung’s thought, may be exemplified by a passage such as the following:

Even a superficial acquaintance with Eastern thought is sufficient to show that a fundamental difference divides East and West. The East bases itself upon the psyche as the main and unique condition of existence. It seems as if the Eastern recognition were a psychological or temperamental fact rather than a result of philosophical reasoning. It is a typically introverted point of view contrasted with the typically extroverted point of view of the West. (Jung, 1969, §770)

Here, the point is not only whether this interpretation about the “typical” introversion of the East or extroversion of the West actually adheres to reality (which would imply that there should be a definitely reduced minority of extroverted individuals in the East and of introverted ones in the West, therefore making of these anthropological worlds wholly disadaptive cultures and anti-symbolic milieus for those who do not fit the typological majority) but also how much, on a

hermeneutic level, this reference to such “typical” characteristics – this way of looking at reality through similarities – instead of revealing actually conceals the complexities of our object of enquiry.

I think that a well-tempered attitude must keep the tension between the two opposite polarities of sameness and difference, for which something like “the East” or “the West” at the same time exists and does not exist. In fact, when we approach our subject from a unifying attitude, we decide to look at the forest from far away in order not only to search but actually see what all its parts have in common. Yet, at the same time we must also accept to deconstruct this unity into its multiple differences and into the process of their historical unfolding. Therefore, my recommendation is to read this book with this double perspective in mind, for which what may be recognized as the “same” – in our case belonging to an “East,” or to a “West” – may be recognized only through different individual vantage points, whose symbolic and historical specificity must be cherished and protected. After all, this may be one of the ways to describe what Jung called the individuation process itself.

For instance, in the first chapter of this book Megumi Yama writes:

In this era of rapid globalization, it is sometimes heard that it may be doubtful that the concepts of “the West” and “the East” are as applicable as they were in the past. However, I would like to posit that however borderless our globe seems to be at a superficial level, if we go down deep to the roots, we can see a fundamental difference in the structure of each culture’s psyche. This is perhaps because they were established on a basis of their own unique psychological histories and backgrounds that should not be ignored.

This issue regarding sameness, difference and identity is specifically discussed by Kazunori Kono in Chapter 5.

Discussing the Freudian concept of “narcissism of minor differences” in clinical and social situations, Kono revisits the concept of narcissism from the perspective of Freudian-Lacanian psychoanalysis and Jungian analytical psychology. For him,

The concept of narcissism has been misunderstood and abused. Contrary to common belief, narcissism as well as sublimation is at the intersection of the individual and society. Encountering differences through others causes us to react in a variety of ways. Worrying about differences, we may fall into the pursuit of objects beyond our reach. Or, the pursuit of differences itself would lead to the denial and annihilation of others. In this regard, we can point out that the pursuit of difference is tied to fear of uniformity. Therefore, it is also important to be aware of that fear and accept the fact that you are, to some extent, the same as others. And yet, we continue to reconstruct our identity with minor differences.

In my opinion, this dialectical movement between sameness and otherness through big or little differences is a key issue that we must always take into consideration when we deal with comparative issues such as the ones this collection of writings is dealing with. In fact, this is the fundamental starting point for this whole book – the recognition of fundamental differences between the Eastern and the Western psyche and similarities within them while keeping in mind that also what seems similar will eventually reveal specific “individual” differences that are as precious as the similarities. Seen this way, this is not a just good starting point, but it actually is a necessary one.

If we go back to the Jungian paradigm of the dialectic relationship between opposites, we may describe it in psychodynamic terms as the relationship between consciousness and the unconscious. The more the Eastern psyche seems “introverted” to the Westerner (or the other way around, extroverted for the Easterner), the more probable it is that the latter is actually coming into contact with his own introversion through his extroverted conscious attitude. In this regard, I find quite telling that the text that perhaps was the most revelatory for Jung, a protestant Swiss, was the

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Secret of the Golden Flower, a Chinese treatise that Richard Wilhelm brought to his attention in 1928.

In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1989) Jung wrote:

I devoured the manuscript at once, for the text gave me undreamed-of confirmation of my ideas about the mandala and the circumambulation of the center. That was the first event which broke through my isolation. I became aware of an affinity; I could establish ties with something and someone. (p. 197)

I think that through the Eastern psyche Jung could come into contact with his personal and his anthropological unconscious. Similarly, the most influential Japanese Jungian analyst and author, Hayao Kawai, could initiate his own dialogue with himself and his unconscious through a dream:

In the dream, I picked up many Hungarian coins. These coins had the design of an old Taoist sage on them. Given my association to Hungary, the dream seemed to suggest that, to me, Hungary was a bridge to East and West. My analyst said that, to judge from this dream, I eventually might gain insights of great value for the relationship between East and West. When I reflect on the course of my life, I recognize that what my analyst surmised indeed has been realized. (1996, p. 17)

I find this dream, and what it meant for Kawai, very moving and meaningful, as it represents a special form, very noticeable indeed, of Jung's "transcendent function" at work, for which the opposites – in this case Kawai's own Easternness and Westernness – were recognized and transcended.

From many of Kawai's invaluable contributions, another very important feature of the unfolding of this process is that, through his own West, Kawai found his own East in a deeper and highly personal (individual) form. Perhaps, the most interesting example is his reference to Buddhism as something that he did not wholly understand, something that he could not really be. Yet, through his pages one may appreciate how much of such Buddhism he had discovered and recognized in himself. This is to say that the dialogue between West and East may well bring a Westerner to be more conscious of his own Western nature through his own unconscious East and vice versa.

In the case of Jung, this relationship with the unconscious, seen as the relationship with one's other side of the world, has been described in Chapter I of this book by Megumi Yama as a descent into the world of the dead, that Jung commenced in his Gnostic diary *Septem Sermones ad Mortuos* (in Jung, 1989). Therefore, if from an Ego point of view we are dealing with an East–West relationship, for the point of view of the Self we are actually transiting between the world of the living and the world of the dead.

From my Westerner perspective, reading the chapters that I am trying to introduce I often felt to be in contact with a deep dialogue between differences which have been contaminating each other. In fact, while through these pages the authors were describing the specificities and peculiarities of the East and the West, I kept recognizing also many striking underpinning similarities. This may well be caused by the very nature of my training, profession, and, perhaps, individual inclination, but it may also be due to the very fabric of analytical psychology itself which, together with other psychodynamic currents of thought, such as those by Fromm, Bion, or Winnicott, are able to come closer to a core common to all humans, belonging to the West as to the East.

One example is the reference to the fact that in the Japanese psyche the boundary between consciousness and unconsciousness is much vaguer than in that of Westerners, and that it may actually lack a center at all. Megumi Yama describes this condition through some wonderful examples and images of gardens and art (Chapter I), yet, while reading her contribution, I could recognize the "Western" trace of Hilman's position, for whom there is no need to posit any center of the psyche. In this situation we experience a fundamental shift of psychological perspectives –

from an ego-centric monotheist one to a polycentric polytheist one. Once again, here Hilman and his archetypal approach develop Jung's idea of the plurality of souls/images that compose the psyche/world and idea that we will find again described in other terms in Chapters 6, 8, and 16.

Another essential difference, often discussed in these contributions between the East and the West, is the status and the position of the Ego. It seems that in the West and the East the Ego, as described and discussed in the pages that follow, is quite different. Yet, such differences may also produce projections and, therefore, faulty forms of dichotomic understanding: if in the East the Ego is different, the Westerner may think that there is no Ego in the East. Nevertheless, from the discussions that will follow, we will learn that this state of affairs is not at all true, as differences do not mean any yes/no, either/or approach.

In Chapter 2 Lynlee Lyckberg discusses this issue. She quotes Mokusen Miyuki, who

suggested in Buddhism and Psychology, this is an erroneous assumption and common error in Western thinking. From an Eastern perspective, Buddhism does not require a dissolution of the ego; rather, "the ego is strengthened in meditation, and what gets dissolved is ego-centricity.

Now, when, in her discussion of the symbol of the mirror she writes:

The underlying sensibility in Japan is simply that of impermanence, where the brief moment of existence framed by a unique and personal identity is conceptually nothing more than a mirage (mirror illusion) without substance, arising from the place of no-thing (emptiness) and returning to no-thing, symbolically represented by both the sacred mirror as a most auspicious symbol in Buddhism and by the Zen Enso circle.

I find a very similar trace of such a description of the Enso circle in Bion's concept of O, and when Lyckberg writes about the two conditions of nothingness and no-thingness, I, once again, recognize Bion's reference to "nothing" and "nothing" as discussed in his *Attention and Interpretation* (1970). Also, Winnicott's concept of the true self as a potential, implicit, innate space from which reality (and the Ego) flows into the material, relational and historical world flow, seems to me something like a Western version of an Eastern image. Furthermore, in her comparison between Daoist qualitative numbers to the Western quantitative numbers, Lyckberg herself rightly mentions Jung's and M.L. von Franz's adherence to Eastern thought. To this I may add that throughout Western history, its deep counter current (fundamentally Gnostic and Alchemical) always maintained a qualitative understanding of numbers. The shift from the qualitative numbers to the purely quantitative ones was a product of a historical process, which culminated with the querelle between Kepler and Fludd in the seventeenth century. If, as we know, Kepler's position won and mathematics was since then thought more mathematic ("mathematically"), today it is hard not to see the qualitative aspect of numbers in quantum physics – for instance, the numbers associated with the spin of an elementary particle.

Once again, it seems that the East and the West are contaminating each other in a wonderfully fruitful way.

"Emptiness in Western and Eastern cultures" is the title of Tsuyoshi Inomata's Chapter 15, in which the author draws a history of nothingness, which, in the West wholly devoid of its symbolic pregnancy eventually turned into nihilism.

Quoting W. Giegerich, the author writes:

Paradoxically, it is the Western way of the soul that – with its process of consecutive negations finally leading to what has been crudely and summarily condensed in the term

“nihilism” – in fact produced an “emptiness consciousness,” an “emptiness consciousness” as a real (i.e., inescapable) condition of the subject in real social reality and an objectively prevailing cultural mindset.

The connection of the emptiness of the modern Western psyche with the sacred, creative void of the Eastern one may transform Western nihilism into “a precondition for the creation of a rich animated world in which diversity is tolerated, if attitudes towards it change from pessimistic and rejective to empathic and receptive.”

In order for this to occur, a change should also take place within the Eastern – in this case the Japanese – psyche, as its empty center (Kawai, 1996) lacks a subject “with its own will and freedom.” This is something that, again quoting Giegerich, Inomata describes as “the Arctic vortex, a force of nature that swallows everything,” which may be a concurrent cause of the spreading of autism (and perhaps, I might add, the hikikomori condition, now present also in the West?) within the Japanese psyche.

The image of the Enso is also discussed by Kojiro Miwa in Chapter 11.

Referring to the theories of Jung and of the Zen philosopher Shinichi Hisamatsu, Miwa discusses the encounter between the Western Jung and the Eastern Hisamatsu. His contribution deals with the fundamental component of silence and nonverbal communication within psychotherapy, such as the use of the Tree Test, or, in more general terms, the use of nonverbal approaches, such as art therapy or sandplay. Equating the Self with the “Buddha nature,” Miwa discusses the transformative, productive density of silence and of apparent void of nonverbal communication.

The clinical meaning of the tree and the use of the Tree Test is also discussed in Chapter 12 by Himeka Matsushita. In both these chapters, the theme of compassion emerges. A theme thoroughly discussed, in comparative terms, also by Shoichi Kato in Chapter 10.

Through two moving clinical cases, Kato highlights the fundamental importance of compassion. Once again referring to the transformative power of silence, Kato writes:

in the depth of self-consuming emotions, a silent moment would arrive in which we could see the person so far recognized as the source of our misfortune in a new light, as a genuinely Other person. It is in this I – Thou relationship that Compassion would rise from our deep psyche to surround the two remotely separated individuals with silence.

In Buddhist scriptures, compassion (in Mahayana Buddhism: /karun,ā/) is often coupled with sadness and friendship. Reading Kato’s chapter my mind went to Heinz Kohut’s contributions on empathy and to the fundamental nature of the analytical relationship in analytical psychology, which is indeed based on a sort of friendship between two human beings – analyst and patient – who try to integrate the emotional meaning of life and its challenging, sad, mournful aspects (Carta, 2013).

Such a deep attitude of mutual understanding, the key to the Jungian psychological method, for which the analyst should “go where is the patient” and for which any real encounter implies a mutual transformation, is echoed in Ryutaro Nishi’s Chapter 17, in which he discusses “Makoto Tsumori’s philosophy of care and education in relation to Jungian psychology.” For Nishi, both Jung and Tsumori “emphasised the need to understand children’s inner world, without reducing it to the limited confines of past experiences.” In fact, both demonstrated how children’s expressions are always meaningful and should never be rejected or refused through a castrating form of education.

These considerations show some important common features of Tsumori’s early childhood care and education (ECCE) method – based on play and imagination and a sustained relationship between

children and practitioners – and play therapy, although the latter is conducted within the confines of a playroom.

In Chapter 14 Evija Volfa Vestergaard explores “leadership styles in Japan (East Asia) and Latvia (which is on the boundary between East and West) as an important element in creating a sustainable future for humanity.”

Analyzing the apparent overlapping of the mythological images of the dragon in Latvian and Chinese cultures, she suggests that

in general, both the Japanese and Latvian psyches are characterized by a greater permeability between their conscious and unconscious layers, expressed in a heightened sense of embeddedness with their surroundings, and the multiplicity of perspectives held by their leaders. Using the language of myths, these leaders find ways to dance with the dragons rather than slaying them. They form a relationship with the surrounding natural environment and human-made worlds, rather than striving to separate and cut away one from the other. While, from a Western perspective, this permeability may be viewed as lacking a healthy ego, [she argues] that a sense of interconnectedness is beneficial in a world of expanding global interdependencies.

For Vestergaard, the mythological beneficial kinship with dragons is connected with a life well-balanced with nature in agrarian Latvia and with the Yin/Yang opposites in the East. It describes an Ego development that resembles that of both the Latvian and the Eastern Egos.

Quoting Akita Iwao (2017), Vestergaard describes the Ego’s relationship with the unconscious as a “dancing with the shadows,” instead of “integrating the shadow in the Ego.” Quite a compelling image, indeed.

In Chapter 13, Hirofumi Kuroda also focuses her contribution on the peculiar nature of the relationship between subject and object and its representations in the East versus the West.

She writes:

In the Western individualistic perspective, the focus is on subject and object, and the one-to-one interaction between subject and object. There is a center point where the image of self/I resides, which is the ego. However, in the Eastern collectivistic perspective, the focus is on the context, the circumference, and the many-to-many interactions in foreground and background.

In Chinese, the central field, in which the relationship between subject and object takes place, is expressed by the expression “心,” (heart, soul, and mind), which, in ancient times, was represented by the image “方寸/fāngcùn,” which literally means square inches.

Through a clinical case with a psychotic patient Kuroda describes the progressive reintegration of the psychotic patient’s Ego, which took place along the development of recurrent images of the house imago:

[From this case] we learn that the constellation of the house imago is an attempt for reintegration, which brings the individual back to “方寸 / fāngcùn,” the heart and the Self. The creation of circumference provides a sense of being grounded without locating the center point. This is consistent with Jung’s statement that “the Eastern mind, however, has no difficulty in conceiving of a consciousness without an ego.” Because of this core difference, I would propose that the process and product of symbol formation (in Jungian’s term, the “constellation”) should be different between Western psyche and Eastern psyche.

In Chapter 3, David Fisher discusses the “Implications for Japan’s maternal culture” of the meeting – indeed a clashing – of West and East. His starting point is Hayao Kawai’s description of the Japanese



psyche as essentially based on a strong maternal principle and of the discussions that have arisen out of such an interpretation.

He writes:

If we take Kawai's assertion at face value, how does that square with Japan's very masculine Bushido and martial Imperial past? It seems that we have a very different thing, a radical restructuring of psychic energy that occurred rapidly, violently, and emerged from the extreme tension between two things of opposite polarity: in short, an enantiodromia.

A valuable aspect of Fisher's contribution is its historical perspective, which places the Japanese psyche within the flow of events that ultimately led Japan to the catastrophic defeat of World War II. Japan's "unconditional surrender," unbearably humiliating, caused an archetypal trauma which led to the enantiodromia of the Father principle into the Mother.

The issue of the relationship between the Father and the Mother principles is also discussed by Elly Lin in Chapter 4. In her contribution, the author gives two clinical examples of the very deep divide between a male American patient (from the United States of America) and a female patient living in the United States but of Asian origin.

She writes:

In my experience, cultural differences, if ignored or interpreted in a narrow, personalistic frame, fall flat and meaningless at best; at worst, they are cause for misunderstandings and mishaps. The archetypal considerations, however, can expand the interpersonal dyad into a much larger and deeper context where differences become portals into a previously unknown psychic realm of richness and aliveness.

This becomes particularly true since

While, according to Neumann, the image of the Mother remains relatively constant across cultures, the image of the Father tends to vary from culture to culture. (Neumann, 1970)

In the case of the Asian patient, the Father archetype and complex were structured along Confucian principles based on filial piety, family and social hierarchy, and shame. Using Edinger's model of the Ego-Self axis, Elly Lin shows us how such an overly dominant, in this case negative "Confucian Father complex," was hindering the patient's development and individuation process. This was the opposite for the American man, for whom the weakness, if not absence, of the Father image was equally blocking his individuation for the opposite reason.

In the case of this interesting contribution, as a Westerner my mind goes to such a pervasive issue of the historical evaporation of the Father that has taken place in the last 50 years. Yet, I also see that within the West there still exist quite many differences between, for instance, the Protestant and the Catholic ethics. This plural aspect of a shared phenomenon such as the crisis of the Father image (a crisis which today is slowly finding new avenues and potential symbolic solutions) shows us how important it is to place our psychology within a historical and (trans)cultural perspective.

Such a perspective is wholly assumed by Andrew Samuels, who, in Chapter 9, discusses another extremely complex and quickly evolving issue of the intimate relationship between genders, i.e., between differences.

He writes:

The very idea of gender also has a hidden bridge-building function: it sits on a threshold half-way between the inner and outer worlds, and thus is already half-way out into the world of politics.

On the one hand, gender is a private, secret, sacred, mysterious story that we tell ourselves and are told by others about who we are. But it is also a set of experiences deeply implicated in and irradiated by the political and socioeconomic realities of the outer world. The notion of gender, therefore, not only marries the inner and outer worlds, but actually calls into dispute the validity of the division.

This perspective, which unites such apparently far realms of human life – gender intimacy and politics – has a truly invaluable epistemic significance, as it makes it possible to produce new metaphors to express the human complexity and therefore deal with fundamental questions such as those which Andrew Samuels discusses in his contribution: “Can men change? Are men powerful? Do men hate women?”

A number of the chapters of this book deal with images, as the affect-laden image is considered in analytical psychology the building block of the psyche.

The historical perspective on images is discussed by my colleague and coeditor Konoyu Nakamura, who, in Chapter 7, draws a short history of what today are known all over the world as manga. Mangas are symbolic manifestation of images that have often taken the form of monsters. Nakamura compares such images with Jung’s contact with the “Others,” the inhabitants of his (our) unconscious – the complexes and archetypal images that form our psychological universe. The Shinto Japanese description is that of a universe full of spirits – kami – everywhere.

A very striking fact regarding these Japanese manga monsters is their enormous impact in the contemporary world, both in the East and in the West. Somehow, the Japanese and the Eastern psyche seems to be communicating something not just understandable but actually urgently needed by the Western psyche.

It seems as if, after the war lost by Japan, the psyche of the winners – that of the West and most of all the American psyche – has eventually been conquered by the Japanese manga, some of which actually represent the long and difficult elaboration of the post-traumatic effect of the defeat (for a thorough discussion, see also Allison, 2006).

The mythical-historical roots of such a universe full of soul is also described in Chapter 16 by Mayumi Furukawa, as she discusses the importance of the Ainu culture, which thrived for 10,000 years, for the Japanese psyche.

Furukawa writes:

the Ainu had a worldview that the very essence of all human beings, all animate beings, including animals, and all inanimate beings had an eternal and immortal soul that was part of their very essence. The word “Ainu,” means human beings and “Kamuy,” deities. The Ainu believed that human beings had their unique afterlife and so as Kamuy, as divine, had the ability to circulate back and forth between their respective present life and afterlife. Kamuy for the Ainu, however, is not equal to God or Gods, the higher deity of many faiths. Kamuy is not an overarching “master” of human beings but rather on an equal footing with human beings. Nakagawa (1997), a linguist, stated that Kamuy should be close to “nature.” In other words, sparrows do not have their own divine nature. Every sparrow is Kamuy and every tree is also Kamuy.

Furukawa connects this “animistic” worldview with the dream phenomenon that Hayao Kawai (1995) called “interpenetration,” in which Kawai noted that the distinction between oneself and others was ambiguous in medieval Japanese tales. In fact, as Furukawa writes:

these tales portrayed a state of mind where realities and dreams, and life and death, could freely communicate with each other. [Kawai] continued, “The remarkable synchronicity of events in dreams, this world, and the land of death was not considered unusual.”

As I have already noted, this deep layer of an Eastern culture such as Japan not only is expressed through literature (for instance Murakami) or cinema (Miyazaki) but, along with the Mangas discussed in Chapter 6 by Konoyu Nakamura, seems to act as a powerful compensative symbolic force for the Western psyche, as the immense success of these Japanese forms of art have literally conquered the contemporary Western psyche.

The Shinto view of the world as a wholly animate reality is somehow similar to the Italian Saint Francis, whose story of conversion is discussed in Chapter 8 by Jun Kitayama. It is impossible to underestimate the stature of Francis of Assisi, who anticipated the second millennium after Christ to come (which marked the end of the Age of Aries and the beginning of the Age of Pisces). The dawn of the second millennium AD marked the inversion of the vertical orientation of the Spirit – for which God was far and alien to the material world and nature – therefore spiritualizing what is horizontal – this natural, physical world. As I wrote, it is of course impossible to summarize the complexity of the figure of Saint Francis, yet, within this book it is interesting to notice how much some of fundamental views of the Japanese Shinto religion, for which everything is alive and full of soul, was one of the key factors that, through St. Francis’ re-sacralization of nature, radically transformed the Western psyche of the Middle Ages into the modern one. Today, it seems that this aeonic movement has exhausted its path and, while the Age of Pisces enters in the Age of Aquarius, the spirit that had to animate matter in the West seems to have wholly drowned into materialism.

In Chapter 7, Adelina Wei Kwan Wong formulates the hypothesis that Chinese hieroglyphs are a stylized form of archetypal pattern, similar to the archetypal themes of the myths and fairy tales. Following this interesting hypothesis, she carried out two clinical researches using clinical expressive materials, sand pictures and drawings, created by patients who are well versed in Chinese written characters. The therapeutic modes for the patients with early-life traumas often involve non-verbal expression and imagination like body movement, imagery painting, or Sand-play with 3D images on the sand (Manuhin 1992, Bradway 1997, Klaff 2003, Malchiodi 2014). All these are means for the patients to access the instinctual emotions of their “wounded inner child,” to create images embodying the emotions, and to be acknowledged by the consciousness.

In conclusion, I hope that these collections of writings, so rich in contents and comparisons, may interest and stimulate the readers as an incentive for further discussions on such fundamental issues that involve the potential totality of the psyche, embedded, as it is, within the symbolic, cultural world and its historical development. <>

## **JUNG, DELEUZE, AND THE PROBLEMATIC WHOLE** edited by Roderick Main Christian McMillan David Henderson [Philosophy and Psychoanalysis, Routledge, 9780367428747]

This book of expert essays explores the concept of the whole as it operates within the psychology of Jung, the philosophy of Deleuze, and selected areas of wider twentieth-century Western culture, which provided the context within which these two seminal thinkers worked.

Addressing this topic from a variety of perspectives and disciplines and with an eye to contemporary social, political, and environmental crises, the contributors aim to clarify some of the epistemological and ethical issues surrounding attempts, such as those of Jung and Deleuze, to think in terms of the

whole, whether the whole in question is a particular bounded system (such as an organism, person, society, or ecosystem) or, most broadly, reality as a whole.

**JUNG, DELEUZE, AND THE PROBLEMATIC WHOLE** will contribute to enhancing critical self-reflection among the many contemporary theorists and practitioners in whose work thinking in terms of the whole plays a significant role.

## Review

'This extraordinary, edited volume is based on key papers from the first conference of its kind exploring the problematic arising from the writings of C. G. Jung, and Gilles Deleuze on holism. The wealth of expertise offered here provides a much-needed in-depth exploration of rhizomatic holism found in Jung and Deleuze, but is also further expanded to assist readers in realizing the tremendous implications for 21<sup>st</sup>-century psychology and philosophy. The editors are to be celebrated for crafting this remarkable collection; it will not disappoint!' **Joseph Cambray**, PhD, President/CEO, Pacifica Graduate Institute

'The configuration of systems and the relationships of interconnecting parts to a whole is a fascinating conceptual puzzle, and one vital to our understanding of the functioning of society and our relationship with ourselves, others, and the world at large. *Jung, Deleuze, and the Problematic Whole* asks important epistemological and ethical questions of wholeness through the lens of heavyweight thinkers, Gilles Deleuze and C. G. Jung. Written by experts in continental philosophy and Jungian studies, this book is insightful in its scrutiny of a variety of interrelated issues, including reductionism, totalitarianism, privilege and exclusion, identity, creativity, and personal and social transformation. A wholly compelling book.' **Lucy Huskinson**, Professor of Philosophy, Bangor University, UK; author of *Architecture and the Mimetic Self* (Routledge, 2018)

'*Jung, Deleuze, and the Problematic Whole* is essential reading for those interested in the flourishing area of Jung/Deleuze studies. From a Jungian perspective, Deleuze's ideas allow an interpretation of Jung's writing on the *unus mundus* that both critiques and revitalizes his work. For those who study Deleuze, this is added evidence of the potential for a psychology consonant with the ideas of schizoanalysis. Overall, this book marks an important contribution to the ongoing exploration of Jung's influence on the philosopher of the rhizome.' **Barbara Jenkins**, Professor, Department of Communication Studies, Wilfred Laurier University; author of *Eros and Economy: Jung, Deleuze, Sexual Difference* (Routledge, 2016)

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This book explores the concept of the whole as it operates within the psychology of Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961), the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze (1925–1995), and selected areas of wider twentieth-century Western culture, which provided the context within which Jung and Deleuze worked. Addressing this topic from a variety of perspectives and disciplines, the book aims to clarify some of the epistemological and ethical issues surrounding attempts, such as those of Jung and Deleuze, to think in terms of the whole, whether the whole in question is a particular bounded system (such as an organism, person, society, or ecosystem) or, most broadly, reality as a whole.

While reflection on the concept of the whole and its relations to the elements that constitute the whole has been a staple of Western philosophical and cultural traditions since the ancient Greeks (Dusek 1999: 19–22; Esfeld 2003: 10), such reflection has had, from the beginning of the twentieth century, several moments of particular salience. The significance of wholeness was much discussed, for example, in the life and mind sciences as well as in the physical sciences of the first half of the twentieth century, especially within the German-speaking world (Harrington 1996) but also more broadly (Lawrence and Weisz 1998). Ideas about wholeness were later a prominent influence on the countercultural movements of the 1960s and 1970s (Wood 2010), and continue to be so in the alternative spiritualities, therapies, and work practices that have proliferated since the 1980s (Hanegraaff 1998; Heelas and Woodhead 2005). Concern with how to think in terms of wholes also underpins much of the current preoccupation with complexity theory (Cambray 2009), transdisciplinarity (Nicolescu 2002, 2008; Rowland 2017), and, certainly not least, ecology (Marietta 1994; Fellows 2019).

In most of these contexts, concern with the concept of the whole has been both epistemological and ethical. On the one hand, scientists and researchers have been taxed with how to acquire adequate knowledge and understanding of phenomena, such as those relating to life, consciousness, or culture, whose complexity does not readily lend itself to the kind of reductive analyses that have proven so successful in physics and chemistry (Phillips 1976). On the other hand, cultural commentators have argued that many of the environmental, political, economic, social, and psychological problems besetting the modern world have their deep roots in forms of thinking that embed divisive and fragmenting dualisms – for example, between humans and nature, spirit and matter, Creator and creation – and have advanced concepts of wholeness as means to foster a greater sense of interconnectedness, reconciliation, and unity (Berman 1981; Hanegraaff 1998: 119).

Perspectives giving central importance to the concept of the whole have also acquired, especially in the English-speaking world, an influential new moniker: holism (Smuts 1926). Coined by Jan Smuts in 1926, the term ‘holism’ and its adjectival form ‘holistic’ are now used, with varying emotional loading and varying degrees of clarity and emphasis, in practically every area of contemporary life, including academic as well as popular contexts (Main, McMillan, and Henderson 2020: 1–6). Reflecting this widespread usage, the terms ‘holism’ and ‘holistic’ are also used at many points in the present work, even though Jung seems never to have employed the German translation of holism (Holismus) nor Deleuze its French translation (holisme) – they wrote instead in terms of the German and French words for ‘the whole’: *die Ganzheit* (and its cognates) and *le Tout*, respectively.

Whether dubbed holism or not, thinking in terms of the whole has a presence in recent and contemporary academic and popular thought that could benefit from being more fully examined. Despite the salience their ideas have achieved in some quarters, advocates of holistic thinking have been charged with unrealisable epistemological ambitions, with misrepresenting reductionism, and with logical absurdity (Phillips 1976), as well as with claiming desirable outcomes, such as environmental outcomes, that are attributable to other factors (James 2007). Again, contrary to the claims that holistic thinking has beneficial ethical and political implications because of its reconciliation of deleterious dualisms, other commentators have charged holism with fostering 'totalitarian intuitions' (Popper 1957: 73). Again, the irony has not gone unnoticed that Smuts himself, for all that he promoted unity and wholeness on the highest international stage through his involvement in establishing both the League of Nations after the First World War and the United Nations after the Second World War, nevertheless was a proponent of segregation between whites and blacks in his home country of South Africa (Shelley 2008: 103). Although attempts have been made to address these epistemological and ethical criticisms (Bailis 1984–85; Harrington 1996), there continues to be deep intellectual suspicion of holistic perspectives.

With these and related issues in mind, the present book is a contribution towards clarifying the status of holistic thought through comparing relevant aspects of the work of Jung and Deleuze.<sup>1</sup> In focusing on Jung and Deleuze we have selected two influential twentieth-century thinkers whose work has in crucial respects been governed by the concept of the whole. For Jung, psychological wholeness, signified by the archetype of the self, was the goal of individual development, abetted where necessary by therapy (1928, 1944). Furthermore, in his later work he theorised that the wholeness whose realisation was aimed at was not just psychological but included also the world beyond the individual psyche: psyche and matter were considered two aspects of a single underlying reality which he referred to as the *unus mundus* or 'one world' (1955–56: §662). The process of realising wholeness was for Jung central not only to therapy and individual development but also to addressing many social, cultural, and political ills, which he considered largely to stem from thinking in a one-sidedly conscious (usually materialistic and rationalistic) way, without taking due account of the unconscious (1957). In his early work, the concept of the whole was an implicit concern for Jung, inasmuch as his work at that time was devoted to understanding what could be considered the opposite of wholeness, namely, psychic fragmentation that manifested as pathology (Smith 1990: 27–46). However, from the time of the experiences that led to his writing *The Red Book* (2009), wholeness became increasingly explicit as the central focus of Jung's psychological model and psychotherapy, and in the guise of the concepts of individuation and the self it pervades all of his mature writing.

Only a few prior works have explored the connections between Jung and Deleuze in any detail. Of seminal importance among these is Christian Kerslake's *Deleuze and the Unconscious* (2007), which meticulously uncovers the substantial influence of Jung on Deleuze's development of a conception of the unconscious that had more affinity with symbolist and occultist thought and the work of Janet and Bergson than with Freud's psychoanalysis. Although Deleuze was not explicit about this Jungian influence, Kerslake shows that it continued 'to shape his theory of the unconscious right up to *Difference and Repetition*' (ibid.: 69). Nor, arguably, is Kerslake's book important only for enriching understanding of Deleuze; it has also recently been hailed as '[t]he real turning point for a more comprehensive understanding of Jung's theorizing' (Hogenson 2019: 692).

Also significant, in this case for demonstrating the productivity of jointly applying the ideas of Jung and Deleuze, are works by Inna Semetsky and Barbara Jenkins. Semetsky, in a series of books going back over a decade, has applied concepts from Jung and Deleuze in developing a theory of 'edusemiotics', on the role of signs and their interpretation in education. Her focus has been sometimes on Deleuze (Semetsky 2006), sometimes on Jung (Semetsky 2013), and sometimes on



both (Semetsky 2011, 2020). No less insightfully, Jenkins (2016) has drawn on both thinkers to offer a highly original exploration of how the ‘social relations between things’ can illuminate the role of desire and sexual difference in culture and the economy.

Kerslake’s, Semetsky’s, and Jenkins’s books touch on many issues germane to the concept of the whole, but it is not their main focus. The same can be said of the various shorter discussions of connections between Jung and Deleuze that have been slowly increasing in number over the past couple of decades (e.g., Hauke 2000: 80–83; Kazarian 2010; Pint 2011; Holland 2012; Semetsky and Ramey 2013; Henderson 2014: 113–18; Cambray 2017; Hogenson 2019). There have also been several substantial works that have addressed the concept of the whole and/or holism either in Jung (Smith 1990; Kelly 1993; Huskinson 2004; Cambray 2009) or, albeit often via implicated terms rather than directly, in Deleuze (Ansell-Pearson 1999, 2007; Badiou 2000; Hallward 2006; Ramey 2012; Justaert 2012). However, these works have not brought the two thinkers together.

Most relevant to the present book are several works that were either a prelude to or part of the same overall project. The prelude was a study by McMillan (2015), which undertook a Deleuzian critique of Jung’s concept of the whole and compellingly flagged some potential ethical problems with Jung’s formulations, raising the question of whether and how these problems might be addressed. In a later work, focusing on late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century debates about vitalism that were of interest to both Jung and Deleuze, McMillan identified the importance of relations of interiority or exteriority in determining different kinds of holism and their ethical implications (McMillan 2020). The relations of interiority in organicistic holism imply that the whole is pre-given and closed, which could potentially give rise to forms of totalitarian and exclusionary thought. In Deleuze’s criticisms of organicism and postulation of relations of exteriority, McMillan argues, it is possible to identify an alternative form of rhizomatic or ‘transversal’ holism, as well as a corresponding ‘material vitalism’, in which the whole remains always open and creative (ibid.: 122–23). Despite Jung’s affinity with a range of pre-modern organicistic thinkers, his own dynamic concept of the whole can, McMillan argues (2018, 2019), also be understood as open and creative, with concepts such as psychic reality (*esse in anima*), the psychoid archetype, and synchronicity providing openings onto relations of exteriority. These studies show how an encounter between Jung’s psychology and Deleuze’s philosophy can foster an enhanced reflexivity in both, ensuring that any holism ascribed to these thinkers is a critical holism, one that challenges rather than reinforces the boundaries of systems.

In a paper complementary to his chapter in the present volume, Main (2017) has argued that, contrary to disenchantment, which is rooted in the metaphysics of theism whereby nature and the divine are considered ontologically separate, much holistic thought, including Jung’s, has its roots in panentheistic metaphysics, in which nature is considered to be an expression or aspect of the divine. This metaphysics underpins, usually implicitly, many of the positive claims made for holism in relation to, for example, ecology, healthcare, education, social and political relations, and spirituality. It also, negatively for some, associates holism with heterodox traditions of Hermetic and mystical thought. In this context, both Main (2019) and McMillan (2018) have discussed the relevance for holism of Jung’s concept of synchronicity – which is also a feature of several essays in the present volume (Semetsky, Hogenson, and Atmanspacher).

Also complementary to the present book is the same team of editors’ *Holism: Possibilities and Problems* (McMillan, Main, and Henderson 2020). This companion volume focuses specifically on the concept of holism, and it encompasses a wider range of theoretical perspectives than just those of Jung and Deleuze, although the latter are well represented. The present book, however, is the first to focus specifically and in depth on the problem of the whole as it jointly figures in the works of Jung and Deleuze.

The contributors to the present book, as already noted, are all experts on the thought of either Jung or Deleuze, if not both. All are, or have been, academics, while some are also practitioners (Henderson, Hogenson, Semetsky, Ramey). Between them they represent a significant array of disciplines: philosophy (Ramey), psychotherapy/analysis (Henderson, Hogenson), education (Semetsky), physics (Atmanspacher), German studies (Bishop), and psychosocial and psychoanalytic studies (Main, McMillan). Some of the contributed essays explore the tensions between Jung's and Deleuze's different concepts of the whole and their respective ethical implications (Main, McMillan, Bishop). Others use the two authors primarily to amplify each other's thought (Henderson, Semetsky, Atmanspacher). Others again focus on contexts or topics equally informed by or equally relevant to both authors (Ramey, Hogenson). Among the epistemological, ethical, and methodological questions relating to the concept of the whole that are raised by the essays are the following:

- What is the relationship between a particular concept of ultimate wholeness and the multiplicities of experience?
- Can unitary reality be experienced directly?
- What is the status of symbolic knowledge of the whole?
- What are the ethical (including social, cultural, and political) implications of different concepts of the whole?
- Is there an intrinsic relationship between concepts of the whole and totalitarian thinking?
- Is it possible to avoid totalitarian dangers of holism by developing a form of critical holism based on the concept of an open whole?
- What is gained for the thought of Jung and Deleuze by staging an encounter between them?
- Can psychotherapeutic concepts such as Jung's be usefully appropriated by a philosophy such as Deleuze's, and can philosophical concepts such as Deleuze's be usefully appropriated by a psychology such as Jung's?
- How do the preoccupations of Jung and Deleuze in relation to the whole connect with other thinkers (such as Kant, Bergson, Klages, and Pauli) and other fields (such as complexity theory, physics, political economy, esotericism, and cultural history)?

Considering the magnitude of the questions being posed, the answers given to them are inevitably partial and provisional, and each essay refracts the questions through the author's own specific preoccupations and expertise. Nevertheless, there are many convergences among the essays. Important points that connect several of the contributions, even if they do not explicitly connect them all, include, far from exhaustively: that for both Jung and Deleuze wholeness is important because it helps to keep thought open to creativity and relationship; that wholes, or even the ultimate whole, can be creatively expressed through symbols (including symptoms, signs, and images); that these symbols are generated by estranging 'encounters', whether with art, exceptional experiences, or expressions of otherness or the unconscious more generally, each of which disturbs static patterns of thought; that knowledge of the whole can be direct (through immanent experience) as well as symbolic; that in either case knowledge of the whole is transformative, making ethical demands on the knower; that symbols of the whole are not just conscious constructions but are expressions of a natural process; that attempts to reify symbols of the whole result in one-sided or static representational thinking, and attempts to capture the practice of generating symbols are vulnerable to institutional control; and that many paths lead back from thinking about the whole to traditions of esoteric and mystical thought.

There are, of course, many aspects of thinking in terms of the whole that this book, largely for contingent reasons, has not been able to address as fully as we would have liked. The two most significant omissions are probably gender issues (useful resources would be Jenkins 2016 and Rowland 2017) and issues relating to environmentalism and the Anthropocene (see, for example, Fellows 2019). Another neglected topic is the relation between holistic thinking and Eastern thought (see, however, Yama 2020 and Main 2019: 67–68). Additional work could be usefully undertaken in each of these areas, as well as many others. Meanwhile, we hope that the following essays will, each in its way, spur further reflection both on the problem of the whole and on the thought of Jung and Deleuze, especially as the two thinkers creatively connect with each other.

In the opening chapter,<sup>2</sup> Roderick Main examines the disputed ethical status of holism through comparing aspects of the thought of Jung and Deleuze on the concept of wholeness. He first highlights relevant holistic features of Jung's psychological model, especially the concepts of the self and *unus mundus* (one world), and traces the cultural and social benefits that are claimed to flow from such a version of holism. He then confronts Jung's model with Deleuze's more constructivist way of thinking about wholes and totality in terms of difference, multiplicity, and pure immanence, which aims to ensure that his concept of the whole remains open. The Deleuzian perspective arguably exposes a number of questionable philosophical assumptions and ethical implications in Jung's holism – especially concerning the notions of original and restored wholes, organicism, and internal relations, with their implicit appeals to transcendence. In order to assess whether this Deleuzian critique is answerable, Main focuses attention on the understanding of transcendence and immanence within each thinker's model. Distinguishing between theism, pantheism, and panentheism, he proposes that the metaphysical logic of panentheism can provide a framework that is capable of reconciling the two thinkers' concepts of the whole. In light of this, Jung's position turns out to be an ally of the Deleuzian critique whose real target is the kind of strong transcendence characteristic of classical theism, which both thinkers eschew.

Focusing more explicitly on political issues, Christian McMillan (Chapter 2) also explores conceptual affinities between Jung's work and that of Deleuze together with his co-writer Guattari. McMillan draws extensively from one of Jung's final essays, 'The undiscovered self (present and future)' (1957), which was first published after the two world wars and in the immediate aftermath of the Red Scare in the United States. Jung's essay is noteworthy for its critique of the role of the State in modern times. It analyses the ways in which the State organises and orientates thought in a one-sided, ethically deleterious manner that excludes alternative forms of organisation. McMillan parallels this with Deleuze's critical focus on the organisation and distribution of relations within thought systems, of which the State is one variation. In the first half of the chapter, McMillan examines various concepts that Jung presents in his essay: positive concepts such as 'individual' and 'whole man' and negative concepts such as 'mass man', 'statistical man', and 'State'. In the second half of the chapter, McMillan relates Jung's analysis of the ways in which thought is orientated by the abstract idea of the modern State to Deleuze's critique of the image of thought, which formed a crucial part of his *Difference and Repetition* (1968a).

The uncanny internal resonance between Jung's psychological theory and Deleuze's philosophy receives further scrutiny from David Henderson (Chapter 3). Through a discussion of Deleuze's concepts of symptomatology, percept, and minor literature, from his *Essays Critical and Clinical* (1993), Henderson demonstrates the rich potential of Deleuzian thought for amplifying elements of Jung's psychology. According to Deleuze, 'Authors, if they are great, are more like doctors than patients. We mean that they are themselves astonishing diagnosticians or symptomatologists' (1969: 237). Jung can be read in this way as a symptomatologist, a 'clinician of civilization', who discovered the collective unconscious and prescribed a renewed relationship with wholeness as a remedy for the personal, cultural, and collective 'dis-eases' of modern life. The percept is a type of vision or

hearing, and Henderson uses this concept of Deleuze's to reflect on Jung's capacity to see the unconscious. Finally, Henderson shows how Deleuze's concepts of minor literature and minority politics throw light on the corpus of Jung's writing and on the role of analytical psychology within the wider field of psychoanalysis.

Inna Semetsky (Chapter 4) continues the discussion of how symptoms, symbols, and signs can paradoxically express the unconscious or irrepresentable dimension of reality and thereby promote wholeness. She draws parallels between the axiom of the third-century alchemist Maria Prophetissa ('One becomes two, two becomes three, and out of the third comes the one as the fourth'), which Jung refers to as a metaphor for the process of individuation, and Deleuze's paradoxical logic of multiplicities (problematic Ideas) – both of which are based on the notion of the *tertium quid*, the included third. Semetsky argues that the reading of signs is an experiment that involves experiential learning (self-education or apprenticeship) and, ultimately, self-knowledge in the form of deep gnosis. Only through such knowledge can we become in-dividual, 'whole' selves. Semetsky's chapter also addresses ethics as the integration of the Jungian shadow archetype that may manifest in events of which, according to Deleuze, we must become worthy. To conclude, Semetsky presents an example of a transformative, healing ('making whole') practice that demonstrates the actualisation of the virtual archetypes via their 'dramatisation' in the esoteric yet 'real characters' of a neutral language, such as envisaged by Wolfgang Pauli, Jung's collaborator on the concept of synchronicity. By means of such a practice, for Semetsky, Deleuze's call to retrieve and read the structures immanent in the depth of the psyche is answered: we self-transcend by becoming-other.

Complementing Semetsky's appeal to esoteric thought, George Hogenson (Chapter 5) also explores the relationship between certain mathematical patterns and symbols of wholeness, but within a more scientific framework. He compares formally constructed mandalas and other geometric forms associated by Jung with the notion of wholeness with the iterative elaboration of the equations associated with Mandelbrot's fractal geometry. Hogenson argues that these symbols of wholeness are manifestations of fundamental mathematical structures that manifest throughout the natural world and connect psyche to the rest of nature in a fundamental form. Additionally, his analysis illustrates how the breakdown of psychic wholeness can be modelled in the breakdown of unity into chaotic states, thereby providing an argument for Jung's model of the psyche moving from the individual complex to the *unus mundus* and the unity of the self.

In an argument also thoroughly grounded in science, in this case physics and consciousness research, Harald Atmanspacher (Chapter 6) explores relational and immanent experiences in relation to what he has called the Pauli-Jung conjecture, which is a coherent reconstruction of Pauli's and Jung's scattered ideas about the relationship between the mental and the physical and their common origin. It belongs to the decompositional variety of dual-aspect monisms, in which a basic, psychophysically neutral reality is conceived of as radically holistic, without distinctions, and hence discursively inexpressible. Epistemic domains such as the mental and the physical emerge from this base reality by differentiation. Within this conceptual framework, Atmanspacher identifies three different options to address so-called exceptional experiences, that is, deviations from typical reality models that individuals develop and utilise to cope with their environment. Such experiences can be understood (i) as either mental images or physical events, (ii) as relations between the mental and the physical, and (iii) as direct experiences of the psychophysically neutral reality. These three classes are referred to as reified, relational, and immanent experiences.

Paul Bishop (Chapter 7) is also concerned with ideas and experiences that express a holistic and enchanted view of reality. He argues that for Friedrich Nietzsche – a key influence on Jung and Deleuze alike – the world is both disenchanted and enchanted. From a transcendental perspective (associated with Judeo-Christianity), the world is disenchanted; it is 'the work of a suffering and tormented God'. Yet from an immanent perspective, the world is in fact enchanted – or potentially

so, and the means by which Nietzsche proposes to re-enchant (or rediscover the primordial enchantment of) the world is the doctrine of eternal recurrence. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, his animals proclaim Zarathustra to be 'the teacher of the eternal recurrence', and this passage has caught the attention of numerous commentators, including Heidegger and Deleuze. Another critic of Nietzsche's doctrine of eternal recurrence is Ludwig Klages, himself deeply invested in the challenges of disenchantment and re-enchantment. Central to Klages's philosophy are his doctrine of the 'reality of images' and his related notion of 'elementary similarity'. Elementary similarity informs the kind of perception he associates with *die Seele*, that is, with the soul or the psyche, and which he regards as essentially symbolic. Can the concepts of identity, similarity, dissimilarity, and difference, Bishop asks, help us to relate and coordinate the thought of Klages, Jung, and Deleuze – and not just in relation to Nietzsche?

The volume concludes with Joshua Ramey's highly original perspective on the relationship between divination and financial markets (Chapter 8). Ramey explores how extreme variants of neoliberal ideology about the power of markets, particularly as articulated in the late work of Friedrich Hayek, produce illusions about the kind of meanings that can be construed on the basis of chance or random processes. Randomness poses an interesting problem for holism in general, but here Ramey focuses on the specific power that uncertainty (linked to the basic fact of extreme contingency, or chance) is supposed to display, within 'correctly' functioning markets, to generate meaning. In Ramey's book, *Politics of Divination: Neoliberal Endgame and the Religion of Contingency* (2016), he has argued that the extreme version of neoliberal market apologetics holds that markets can function as divination processes – that is, as inquiries into more-than-human knowledge. The complex and unstable relation between chance and the Whole is figured here in an equivocation over whether chance means everything or nothing, and helps to explain the particular relation between neoliberal ideology and nihilism. <>

## **LAW AND LOVE IN OVID: COURTING JUSTICE IN THE AGE OF AUGUSTUS** by Ioannis Ziogas [Classics in Theory, Oxford University Press, 9780198845140]

In classical scholarship, the presence of legal language in love poetry is commonly interpreted as absurd and incongruous. Ovid's legalisms have been described as frivolous, humorous, and ornamental. **LAW AND LOVE IN OVID** challenges this wide-spread, but ill-informed view. Legal discourse in

Latin love poetry is not incidental, but fundamental. Inspired by recent work in the interdisciplinary field of law and literature, Ioannis Ziogas argues that the Roman elegiac poets point to love as the site of law's emergence.

The Latin elegiac poets may say 'make love, not law', but in order to make love, they have to make law. Drawing on Agamben, Foucault, and Butler, *Law and Love in Ovid* explores the juridico-discursive nature of Ovid's love poetry, constructions of sovereignty, imperialism, authority, biopolitics, and the ways in which poetic diction has the force of law. The book is methodologically ambitious, combining legal theory with historically informed closed readings of numerous primary sources.

Ziogas aims to restore Ovid to his rightful position in the history of legal humanism. The Roman poet draws on a long tradition that goes back to Hesiod and Solon, in which poetic justice is pitted against corrupt rulers. Ovid's amatory jurisprudence is examined vis-à-vis Paul's letter to the Romans. The juridical nature of Ovid's poetry lies at the heart of his reception in the Middle Ages, from Boccaccio's *Decameron* to Forcadel's *Cupido iurisperitus*. The current trend to simultaneously

study and marginalize legal discourse in Ovid is a modern construction that *Law and Love in Ovid* aims to demolish.

## Review

"Ziogas's argument is brave and original." -- Maksymilian Del Mar, *The Cambridge Law Journal*

"Ziogas' arguments ... present a strongly persuasive case" -- Jo-Marie Claassen, Professor Emeritus, Stellenbosch University, *The Classical Journal*

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## Eros and Nomos

We may start by saying that law is the negation of passion. As Aristotle put it, 'the law is a mind without desire' (Politics 3.11.4). The legal system relies on dispassionate objectivity in an attempt to put an end to the vicious circle of revenge. Personal desires and vendettas need to be controlled by the disinterested hand of the law. Subjective emotions undermine law's rationality. Vengeance does not end crime but perpetuates it in a way that renders the distinction between crime and punishment indistinguishable. Reason is the source of the law and passion a regression to the primitive rules of the *lex talionis* ('law of retaliation'). The representatives of the legal system need to be unrelated to their subjects. It is imperative for the effective administration of justice that the judge have no relationship with the defendant outside the strictly prescribed rituals of the courtroom.

Yet we can also argue that desire is the ultimate source of the law. The legal system does not replace passions with reason, but creates an elaborate apparatus that conceals the very source of justice, which is none other than the will of the legislator. Law needs a precedent in order to establish its objectivity. Every law acquires authority from past laws, a technical procedure designed to check the transgressive forces of personal urges. But once we strip law of all layers of referentiality, we are left with the arbitrary choices of the legislator or the will of a god. No rational



explanation can justify the primary source of law, unless it includes the subjectivity of the legislating authority. If we push this argument further, we can even say that law is the division of passions into legitimate and illegitimate.

Similarly, love poetry is often a normative discourse that legitimizes or outlaws desire. That the language of pleasure dominates love poetry may seem unremarkable. More surprising is that pleasure is explicitly related to the lawmaking procedures of the Romans. The legislative formula *senatus placuit* ('it pleased the senate') reveals an often wellhidden secret: that the ultimate source of law is the desire of the legislator. Under Augustus, this sovereign authority is transferred to the prince. Ulpian famously rules that 'whatever pleased the prince has the force of law' (Institutes I.4.6; Digest I.4.1 *quod principi placuit legis habet vigorem*). In the numerous constructions of *placet* ('it is pleasing') in Ovid, we should detect the poet's claim to the authority of the sovereign legislator. Ovid exemplifies the confluence of lawmaking and lovemaking, an essential aspect of his poetry that has been overlooked in scholarship.

Latin love elegy reaches its climax at the same time as Augustus introduces his moral legislation. This is not a coincidence. The production of laws that revolve around the regulation of sexuality and the publication of love poetry that has the force of law are the two sides of the same coin. Augustus' reforms were unprecedented in the history of Roman law. His legislation criminalized adultery, encouraged marriage, rewarded childbirth, and penalized celibacy. What was hitherto the business of the family and the *pater familias* now became the business of the state and the *pater patriae*. For the first time, a standing criminal court was created to punish adultery and criminal fornication by trial. The laws were primarily aimed at the upper classes, whose members, in the eyes of Augustus, had deviated from the good old ways of Republican morality. To this end, there were several legislative attempts: the *Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* (18 BCE), the *Lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* (16 BCE), and the *Lex Papia Poppaea* (9 CE). This time span is indicative of Augustus' persistence and struggle to enforce a particularly unpopular legislative agenda. Despite the immediate reaction from several groups (including the knights, Ovid's social class), the laws remained valid for centuries. Yet they did not seem to be successful, if we trust Tacitus (*Annales* 3.25) and Dio (56.1–10). A particularly thorny issue was that Augustus himself suffered under his laws. The prince punished his daughter and granddaughter for committing adultery. His family life was too problematic to function as an authoritative example for his marriage legislation. Augustus (then Octavian) divorced Scribonia soon after she gave birth to his daughter Julia to marry a hastily divorced and heavily pregnant Livia. Rumours about Augustus committing adultery with Livia before their marriage would inevitably proliferate.

Ovid (43 b c e–17 ce) writes his love poetry during this period. Even though we are not sure about the date of the second edition of his *Amores*, it is beyond reasonable doubt that the love poet is aware of the Augustan legislation. The moral reforms loom large throughout Ovid's oeuvre, not only in his love elegies (the *Amores*, the *Heroides*, the *Ars amatoria*, and the *Remedia amoris*), but also in the *Metamorphoses*, the *Fasti*, and the exile poetry (the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto*). The *Ars amatoria* is a turning point, since it is likely that it provided a reason for Ovid's exile in 8 CE. On account of 'a song and a mistake' (*Tristia* 2.207 *carmen et error*), the poet was relegated to Tomis by a decree of Augustus. The measure is extraordinary; the emperor was personally offended by Ovid. In his exile poetry (e.g. *Tr.* 5.12.67–8; *Ibis* 5–6), Ovid says that he was destroyed by his own art (meaning his poetic art but also his 'Art of Love')—his books are compared to children who turned against their father (see Chapter 7). There is an uncanny similarity here between Ovid, the author of love poetry, and Augustus, the author of moral legislation—the prince suffered under his own laws when his own child broke them.

The similarities between Ovid and Augustus are a key aspect of this book. In my view, Ovid is

native sea'). The goddess of love is thus the primary legislator. For Ovid, Venus is the origin of human civilization:

prima feros habitus homini detraxit: ab illa  
uenerunt cultus mundaque cura sui.  
primus amans carmen uigilatum nocte negata  
dicitur ad clausas concinuisse fores,  
eloquiumque fuit duram exorare puellam,  
proque sua causa quisque disertus erat.  
mille per hanc artes motae; studioque placendi,  
quae latuere prius, multa reperta ferunt.

Ovid, *Fasti* 4.107–14

That force first stripped man of his savage garb; from her he learned decent attire and personal cleanliness. A lover was the first, they say, to serenade by night the mistress who denied him entrance, while he sang at her barred door, and eloquence lay in winning over a harsh girl, and each man was a barrister pleading his cause. This goddess has been the mother of a thousand arts; the wish to please has given birth to many skills that were unknown before.

In the context of the laws of Venus, the passage quoted above evokes the setting of a trial: the primary meaning of *causa* is 'a legal case' (OLD s.v. A1) and *disertus* means 'barrister/forensic orator,' as in Ovid, *Ars amatoria* 1.85 (see Hollis 1977: 49–50 and cf. *Ars* 1.459–64). Readers familiar with Latin love elegy will recognize that Venus here features as the inventor of this genre. The lover's serenade (109–10), the so-called *paraclausithyron* ('lament by the door'), is a trademark of the elegiac lover. The role of Venus also clearly evokes the *praeceptor amoris* ('the teacher of love') of the *Ars amatoria*. Instructions about *cultus* ('fashion style') and *munditia* ('cleanliness') feature in the *Ars amatoria*. Winning over a girl is similar to wining over a judge (cf. *Ars* 1.459–64). The pursuit of pleasure, the aim of the *Ars amatoria*, is the origin of a thousand *artes*. These 'arts' are inspired by Venus and derive from the art of love. The art of rhetoric, *ars oratoria*, is cast as an imitation of the art of love, *ars amatoria*. This is important for understanding how Ovid conceives of the relationship between the lover's and the lawyer's discourse. Contrary to modern critics who see incongruity between the language of law and love, Ovid points to Venus as their common origin. For Ovid, forensic rhetoric derives from the poetics of Latin love elegy. In Ovid's history of human civilization, the art of courtship not only precedes courtroom rhetoric, but actually provides the model for winning a legal case. *Fasti* 4.111–12 is not a case of introducing the setting of a trial into the rituals of elegiac courtship, but exactly the opposite. The elegiac lover is the archetypal lawyer (*disertus*). From that perspective, the current practice of pointing out Ovid's borrowings from law is problematic. Ovid says that legal diction is a reflection of the lover's discourse, not the other way around.

Far from being an Ovidian peculiarity, the overlap between amatory and forensic discourse is as old as Homer and Hesiod. The end of Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, to refer to a clearly serious case, is a good example for the confluence of legal and amatory persuasion. Nicholas Rynearson (2013) argues convincingly that Athena draws on the discourse of amatory persuasion in order to win over the Erinyes to give up their wrath. Through the erotic element of her seductive speech, the virgin goddess woos the Erinyes, casting them as the beloved objects. Her rhetoric of seduction has a transformative power over the Erinyes, just as *amor* is the driving force of metamorphoses. Critics have been puzzled by the fact that no less than one-third of the play takes place after the decision has been rendered. But Aeschylus seems to understand that the legal system does not depend on

whether the winners accept the verdict, but on whether the losers do. To sustain the law, seductive persuasion is more fundamental than law enforcement.

My work contributes to a current interdisciplinary trend in law and the humanities that examines the interactions between law and love. Peter Goodrich (1996; 1997; 2002; 2006) has been a pioneer in this field and one of the main inspirations for my project. Justice, Goodrich (2006: 7) notes, has always been tied to the jurisdiction of love. The law of Venus was the originary and thus higher law, because it allowed for settlement, and it furthered the community in mending itself. To proceed by love was to remain friends and to forestall law in its coercive and punitive forms (see Goodrich 2006: 8). We shall see that Ovid draws a similar distinction between the justice of love and the corruption of litigation, between love that resolves conflict and legalism that breeds dissent (see Chapter 5).

While Goodrich mentions Ovid in passing, the Roman poet is at the centre of my research. The medieval tradition that Goodrich studies is not anomalous in time, unrelated to prior or succeeding legal discourses. In fact, a great part of it derives from the Ovidian jurisprudence of love.

My work both builds on Goodrich and interrogates his approach. The key is that Goodrich treats the medieval courts of love as isolated from the mainstream legal system and running by wholly independent norms. By contrast, my aim is to show that Ovid's courts of love were not simply 'other' than Roman law but fundamentally connected to them in discourse, in principles, and in concepts of jurisdiction. The engagement between love and law is intimate rather than isolate, and this makes a contrast with Goodrich's approach.

Interdisciplinary work on law and the humanities has reopened questions of jurisdiction and the plurality of laws—nterior and exterior, emotional and rational, imagined and real. All these issues lie at the heart of Ovid's poetry; yet Ovid is conspicuously absent from recent work on law and literature. By contrast, scholarship on Ovid rarely engages with current developments in legal theory. The common denial to take law in Ovid seriously is partly to blame for this. There are, however, some exceptions which hopefully suggest a paradigm shift. In his book on Latin love elegy, Paul Allen Miller (2004: 160–83) includes a chapter on 'Law and the Other in the Amores'. He argues that Ovid's Amores revolve around the double axis of law and transgression. His fascinating argument is relevant to my thesis that Ovidian elegy creates a zone of indistinction between following and breaking the law (see Chapter 3). Miller argues that Ovid violates the law in such a way as to require its preservation. For Miller, the poet ultimately reproduces the structures of the dominant regime. Without law there is no transgression, and vice versa. In my view, Ovid indeed avers that transgression is the fulfilment of the law. But the fulfilment of the law can be either its preservation or its end. While imperial legislation crumbles in Ovid's sovereign jurisdiction of love, the art of love cannot escape from the web of Augustan legislation.

Micaela Janan (2001: 146–63) has a short, but perceptive analysis of the interdependence of law and desire in Propertius 4.11. Janan applies Lacan's concept of the Law as ungrounded in any unshakable foundation to her compelling reading of Livy's Verginia and Propertius' Cornelia. She notes that ultimately juridical reasoning comes to rest in the logical opacity of desire: something is made into law, because 'it is the will of [the gods, Nature, emperor, people, senate]'. To the question 'what does justify this', no answer can be given (Janan 2001: 149). Janan's chapter is relevant to my approach: desire is the ultimate source of law and love. That is why the lover and the legislator are the two sides of the same coin.

Kathryn Balsley's article on Ovid's Tiresias (Balsley 2010), which partly derives from her unpublished dissertation (Balsley 2011), discusses Ovid's presentation of the seer as an expert in law. Ovid brings together prophetic, poetic, and juristic discourse in an era that signals the emergence of the science

of law (see Chapter 6). Balsley (2011: 44–100) studies the trial scene in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in a way that complements my work on the trial scene in the *Amores*, the *Heroides*, and the *Ars amatoria*. The trial setting also features prominently in Gebhardt (2009), the only recent booklength study of law in Augustan poetry. This monograph has been extremely useful, as it systematically identifies legal diction in Ovid and other Augustan poets. Yet, despite its usefulness, its scope is limited. Even though Gebhardt (2009: 3–4) mentions in his introduction the field of law and literature, his analysis is mostly restricted to identifying legal terms in Augustan poetry. It is striking that the laws of Augustus do not concern his study.

My book does not follow the common practice of identifying legal terminology in Augustan poetry and then moving on without interpreting its cultural significance. Dissecting legalisms in Ovid for the purpose of collecting and evaluating historical data about Roman law is similarly not the goal of my research. Ovid's poetry is not merely a reflection or distortion of Roman law but is involved in its production. If the majority of works on Roman law are to blame for studying law as a culturally isolated field, the literary critic who sees legal diction in poetry as appropriated in a closed literary universe falls into a similar trap. In my view, poetry does not borrow from law just to serve poetic ends. Law in literature is more than just another literary device. The language of law in Ovid declares the normative force of his art.

The classicist whose work is most relevant to my project is Michèle Lowrie. Her work not only engages with the interdisciplinary field of law and literature, but also combines close readings with historically sensitive analyses. Key aspects of her work (authority, performativity, and exemplarity) feature prominently in my monograph. As far as legal theory is concerned, the work of Giorgio Agamben (1998; 2005a) is key for my argument that both Ovid and Augustus, the love poet and the prince, define the boundaries of the law by excluding themselves from formal legal procedures. For Agamben, sovereignty consists in pronouncing what lies inside and what outside the juridical order. Agamben's work is not only relevant to Augustan Rome; it actually derives from his research on Roman law and the crucial shift from the Republic to the Principate. The titles of two of his most influential books (*Homo Sacer* and *State of Exception*) are concepts of Roman law. According to Pompeius Festus (*De uerborum significatione* 318), the *homo sacer* is a man whom anyone can kill without committing a crime. This is an important concept, because it describes a man who is not legally punished, but whom the law banned from the juridical order and thus reduced to what Agamben calls 'bare life', a life that does not concern the law. When Latin love poets exclude themselves from the juridical order or are banned from it by a *domina* (a mistress) or a *dominus* (Augustus), they bear more than fleeting similarities to the *homo sacer* (see Chapter 2).

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When scholars point out the primarily technical meaning of a word to stress its incongruity in Ovid's love poetry, they assume the primacy of the language of law over the language of love poetry. Thus, Ovid cheekily borrows or steals from law. But, in fact, Ovid points in the opposite direction, namely to forensic rhetoric as emerging in the aftermath of the lover's discourse. Of course, we do not have to take Ovid at face value. His version may be the ultimate attempt at appropriation. But if we want to interpret his poetry on his terms, we need to take into account that he casts Venus as the originary legislator. We need to do justice to Ovid's claim that his love poetry reproduces the primary act of legislation and is thus not just a mere reflection or distortion of the realities of Roman law, but their very source.

That love poetry may be the source of law is not yet mainstream jurisprudence, but should not be controversial either. As Desmond Manderson (2003: 9) notes, the school of legal pluralism has done a lot to emphasize that law is learnt and practised in specific cultural contexts, in diverse and disparate fashions, and on an everyday basis. The interpretive battles over the meaning and functions

of law take place not only in the courts of law's empire, but also as daily events in the streets, in the bedroom, and in love poetry. Law, like love, conquers everything. When Ovid assumes the roles of an expert jurist, an eloquent advocate, a judge, a censor, or a sovereign legislator, he points to his art as a discourse through which we develop, test, and implement assumptions about the meaning, function, and interpretation of law. Legal issues are hotly debated in Latin love poetry and its courts of love, just as the *Lex Julia* was fiercely debated in the treatises of jurists and in the courts of the Roman Empire. If we want to understand Roman law, we cannot afford to restrict our inquiries to the forum and dismiss Ovid's courts as insignificant.

The main body of the book is divided into three parts and concludes with an Epilogue. Part I ('The Trials of Love,' Chapters 2–4) explores legal expression, imagery, and authority in Ovid's earliest literary works (the *Amores* and *Heroides*), but also highlights the juridical nature of Ovidian elegy from the *Amores* to the exile poetry. Chapter 2 ('Love as a State of Exception') discusses passages in which Ovid rejects a career in law for the sake of love poetry. Scholars take these as proof of his indifference to legal procedures. Yet the poet's disavowal of law for the sake of love is couched in courtroom rhetoric and is thus both a denial and an appropriation of legal discourse. The elegiac *recusatio* is a version of the *recusatio imperii*, Augustus' strategy for establishing his sovereignty by setting himself outside or above formal procedures. Similarly, Ovid aims to control the juridical order by deciding what lies outside it. The chapter studies a number of key passages from Catullus, Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid to show that the love poets anticipate Augustus' claims to sacrosanctity and sovereignty. It further examines love elegy's affinities with the Saturnalian spirit of Roman comedy in order to argue that the elegiac suspension of legal action affords space for the emergence of an alternative jurisprudence of love.

Chapter 3 ('The Courtroom in the Bedroom') compares the distinction between what lies inside and outside the rule of law with the blurring of public and private space in the age of Augustus. Love elegy blends private with public life, but also bars Roman law from the privacy of the bedroom. The secrecy of lovemaking is emblematic of the autonomy of love poetry, an independent area governed by the sovereign laws of love. At the same time, love's jurisdiction spreads from the privacy of the bedroom to occupy the spaces of public life. The bedroom in Latin love elegy is part of the discursive independence of sexuality, an autonomy that is the basis of sovereignty. Focusing on representative case studies from the *Amores* (1.4, 2.5, 2.7–8, 2.19, 3.4, 3.14), the chapter examines the shift to the privacy of the elegiac bedroom against the background of Augustus' policy of making all aspects of his private life public.

Chapter 4 ('The Letter of the Law') moves away from the *Amores* to explore the last of the double *Heroides* (20–1), the correspondence between Acontius and Cydippe. While the extensive legal lexicon of these letters has been much discussed, its significance has been downplayed. By contrast, building on Goodrich (1997), I argue that Ovid highlights the fundamental confluence of the love letter with legal correspondence. The discussion ranges widely through comparative material from contemporary Latin elegy (Propertius in particular) to its intertextual matrix (Callimachus' *Aetia*) in order to spell out the dependence of both poetry and law on precedent. Core aspects of *Heroides* 20–1, such as the materiality of the text, iterability, performativity, and intertextuality are not only closely related to the predominance of legal diction in these letters, but also show that the invention of love is inextricably related to the invention of law. I further bring in the extrajudicial rituals and materials of magic, in the form of the curse tablet, to investigate the triangulated relations between magic spells (*carmina*), love poetry (*carmina*), and legal statements. The scripted authority of the law cannot always be segregated from the jurisdictions of magic and poetry. In its historical context, the crucial role of epistolography in the production and communication of laws in the Roman Empire is important for understanding the legal force of Ovid's love letters.



Part II ('Lex amatoria,' Chapters 5–6) revolves around the *Ars amatoria* in order to demonstrate the importance of both literary tradition and historical context for Ovid's selfpresentation as a paragon of justice. Chapter 5 ('Poets and Lawmakers') starts by reassessing the common view that Ovid's *Ars amatoria* is a frivolous parody of serious didactic poetry. I argue that Ovid's didactic elegy should be studied in the tradition of the genre's founding father, Hesiod. The close relationship between law and didacticism is encoded already in Hesiod's *Works and Days* and continues thereafter in Greek elegy (Theognis and Solon). Ovid is part of this tradition. The courtroom setting, to which Ovid has repeated recourse in the *Ars amatoria*, reproduces the trial setting of the *Works and Days*. Not unlike Hesiod, Ovid aims at an outofcourt settlement in contrast with the litigiousness of corrupt lords. Hesiod and Solon cast themselves as champions of justice in a world dominated by unjust rulers. Subtly but clearly, this is how Ovid envisages the relationship between his poetry and the laws of Augustus.

Chapter 6 ('Sexperts and Legal Experts') examines the expertise of the *praeceptor amoris* ('teacher of love') in the context of the rise of the Roman jurists in the early Principate. The autonomy of jurisprudence in the schools of law goes hand in hand with the independence of sexuality in Ovid's school of love. The bulk of the chapter explores the juridicodiscursive nature of Ovid's *Ars amatoria* and includes a discussion of Ovid's account of Tiresias (*Metamorphoses* 3) that highlights the confluence of amatory and juridical expertise. Arguing against the view that the science of law was culturally isolated, I trace the deep interconnections between the didactic discourses of jurists and love poets. Since both Ovid's innovative laws of love and Augustus' legal reforms make female sexuality the centre of attention, the chapter focuses on the ways in which both Ovid and Augustus aim to fashion women in the image of their desires.

Part III ('The Law of the Father,' Chapters 7–8) focuses on the connection between producing laws and fathering children. Chapter 7 ('Authors of Law and Life') examines the biopolitical force of Augustan legislation visàvis Ovid's love poetry. Ovid, the 'father of poems', pits himself against the prince, the 'father of the fatherland'. Poet and emperor are involved in the production of normative discourse (legal or literary) that aims at generating biological or conceptual offspring. Their roles are both parallel and antithetical. Augustus' laws aim to increase the population, while the elegiac legislator sees pregnancy as undermining attractiveness. Yet both poet and prince cast themselves as *auctores*, a word that can refer to a proposer of law, an author of poems, and a father. As *auctores*, Ovid and Augustus aspire to create a zone of indistinction between the biological and the political, between law and life. The capacity of Ovid's art to become life parallels and contrasts with the power of Augustus' laws to become flesh.

Chapter 8 ('Love and Incest') takes up these themes in an exploration of Orpheus' celebration of pederasty and denunciation of female passion, especially in the form of incest. The chapter starts by discussing Orpheus as a figure who combines the roles of the archetypal poet and lawgiver (Horace, *Ars Poetica* 391–401; Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 10–11). While in Horace the legendary bard institutes marriage laws, in Ovid he is the founding father of pederasty. Orpheus' version of the myth of Myrrha (a daughter who fell in love with her father) revalues the prohibition on incest as the origin of the law of the father. Myrrha's love is an attempt to appropriate *patria potestas* by challenging the father's power to say no to incest. What is more, the myths of Orpheus and Myrrha resonate with Augustan Rome: Orpheus bears more than fleeting similarities to the teacher of the *Ars amatoria*; Cinyras and Myrrha recall Augustus and Julia, a resemblance that opens the gap between the intention of the law of the *pater patriae* and its undesirable effects.

In the Epilogue, I outline my study's links to Ovid's reception in the Middle Ages in order to recapitulate the main theoretical approaches of my work. Ovid's jurisprudence of love had a major impact on Forcadell's *Cupido Jurisperitus* and Boccaccio's *Decameron*. The current trend to

simultaneously study and marginalize legal discourse in Ovid is a modern construction that this book aims to demolish. My comments on the juridicodiscursive reception of Ovid are brief, but will hopefully open new avenues not only in Ovidian studies and the reception of our poet's work, but also in the field of law and literature. <>

## **A HISTORY OF AMBIGUITY by Anthony Ossa-Richardson** [Princeton University Press Princeton University Press, 9780691228440]

Ever since it was first published in 1930, William Empson's **SEVEN TYPES OF AMBIGUITY** has been perceived as a milestone in literary criticism—far from being an impediment to communication, ambiguity now seemed an index of poetic richness and expressive power. Little, however, has been written on the broader trajectory of Western thought about ambiguity before Empson; as a result, the nature of his innovation has been poorly understood.

**A HISTORY OF AMBIGUITY** remedies this omission. Starting with classical grammar and rhetoric, and moving on to moral theology, law, biblical exegesis, German philosophy, and literary criticism, Anthony Ossa-Richardson explores the many ways in which readers and theorists posited, denied, conceptualised, and argued over the existence of multiple meanings in texts between antiquity and the twentieth century. This process took on a variety of interconnected forms, from the Renaissance delight in the 'elegance' of ambiguities in Horace, through the extraordinary Catholic claim that Scripture could contain multiple literal—and not just allegorical—senses, to the theory of dramatic irony developed in the nineteenth century, a theory intertwined with discoveries of the double meanings in Greek tragedy. Such narratives are not merely of antiquarian interest: rather, they provide an insight into the foundations of modern criticism, revealing deep resonances between acts of interpretation in disparate eras and contexts. *A History of Ambiguity* lays bare the long tradition of efforts to liberate language, and even a poet's intention, from the strictures of a single meaning.

### Review

"**A HISTORY OF AMBIGUITY** is unambiguously wonderful – the sort of book I thought no one could write any more . . . Ossa-Richardson's book is an epic love song to scholarship . . . it's well written and intelligently funny. Ossa-Richardson has the big picture in mind."---**Robert Eaglestone, *Times Higher Education***

"Ossa-Richardson demonstrates his mastery of the two classic attributes of the intellectual historian: first, a willingness to do justice to the variety of forms that ideas can take, and second, a close attention to detail in the establishment of intellectual genealogies. As a work of intellectual history, this book is a remarkable achievement."---**James Everest, *Essays in Criticism***

"Exhilarating. Ossa-Richardson's richly textured book makes a huge contribution to our understanding of the full spectrum of ways—and reasons why—words mean more than one thing."---**Reid Barbour, author of *Sir Thomas Browne: A Life***

"This unequivocally brilliant book traces the tortuous evolution of ambiguity from a vice in ancient rhetoric to creative poetic indeterminacy in the twentieth century. Beginning and ending with William Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity*, this rich and challenging study ranges widely across scriptural hermeneutics, theology, legal history, classical philology, and literary criticism. An almost impossible story told with verve, erudition, and wit."---**Stephen Clucas, Birkbeck, University of London**

"For anyone who imagines that the history of ambiguity begins with William Empson, this book will come as a revelation. Anthony Ossa-Richardson presents an alternative history of ambiguity in which Empson and the New Critics are the end point rather than the beginning. In a work of thrilling ambition—ranging across biblical criticism, classical translation, religious polemic, and legal hermeneutics—he recovers a lost tradition of medieval and early modern scholarship which, rather than trying to eliminate ambiguity, reveled in its power and possibility. **A HISTORY OF AMBIGUITY** takes its readers on a voyage of discovery into uncharted waters which will not only expand their horizons but redraw their map of intellectual history."—**Arnold Hunt, University of Cambridge**

"Few scholars can be trusted to lead you from Aristotle and Augustine, through the deepest forests of early modern intellectual history, to emerge ready for modern literary thickets. You can trust Ossa-Richardson. In showing how Empson's **SEVEN TYPES OF AMBIGUITY** transformed vice into virtue, he untangles the origins of modern criticism with a rare combination of scholarship and playfulness."—**Richard Oosterhoff, University of Edinburgh**

"This remarkable book is full of insights, wonderfully learned and often funny."—**Michael Wood, author of *On Empson***

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## A Company of Two Armies

Eine gute Vorrede m<sup>a</sup>b zugleich die Wurzel und das Quadrat ihres Buchs sein. — Friedrich Schlegel, *Lyceum Fragmente* 8, in *KSA II*, p. 148.

In the beginning was the Word. No, wait—in the beginning was ho logos, the `word', `account', `reason', `plan', `discourse', `message', `rational principle'—or something. And ho logos, whatever that was, was with God, or rather, with ho theos, the god. And ho logos was theos—not ho theos, the god, but only theos, god, or a god, a divinity perhaps, or a divine spirit. Was ho theos the same as theos? Does that ho, `the', matter? That is, is the god that the logos was the same as the god that the logos was with? If not, was it inferior? The text does not tell; it only speaks. Was St John writing for the unlearned, who might naturally assume the identity of theos and ho theos, or for the mice-eyed exegetes, who knew that any distinction counted, no matter how small? Was it St John writing at all, or the spirit of God, or a god, through him? And just when was this `beginning' anyway?

We can barely get started in the world without being ambiguous; the six-yarned samite of Creation is shot through with doubt, verbal, substantial. I put it this way so as to present together the two faces of the term ambiguity, which has always denoted the subjective state of doubt as well as its objective correlative in the world, or in a text, a painting, a sonata. Thus Faustus (1.1.80-2): 'Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please / Resolve me of all ambiguities, / Perform what desperate enterprise I will?' Those ambiguities threatened damnation, and not only on the stage. The royalist divine Richard Holdsworth, lecturing at Gresham College in the 1630s, warned that religious ambiguity, which took nothing in Scripture or Creation for certain, was the first step towards faithlessness, just as credulity was towards presumptuousness; true faith offered the golden mean between the two.

### Infidelitas-Ambiguitas-Fides-Credulitas-Praesumptio

More recent theologians, by contrast, have asked their readers to embrace the world's ambiguity, to come to terms with their own uncertainty. This seems appropriate to our modernity, which has revelled in hesitation as it has unfastened all certainties—in physics, in warfare, in art, in philosophy—at first conceiving new certainties from its own hesitation, and finally disowning even those. But in adopting ambiguity, our theologians have had to redefine it as plurality, that is, the surfeit of human perspectives, or the 'strange mixture of great good and frightening evil that our history reveals'. Over the past decade or two that plurality of perspectives has come to justify widespread political nihilism, total doubt: the truth of nothing and the permission of all, to paraphrase a line made famous by Nietzsche. Every action, every decision, every law, every televised utterance has seemed parsable in two ways or more, depending on one's ideological commitments. Uncertainty appears all-encompassing.

Doubt and plurality, or plenty, are the twin poles of ambiguity as it is studied in this book. Our subject is the ambiguity not of Creation but of language, of texts—the ways it has been posited, denied, conceptualised, and argued over since Aristotle. In language, doubt and plenty are intimately joined in the act of interpretation. The perception of plenty in a word, in a line, in a poem, makes us doubt which meaning is the right one; conversely, it is when we doubt the meaning of a text that we might assert the existence of plenty in it, and not simply in us.<sup>4</sup> Such a reciprocity is prominent in the book now most closely associated with the topic, William Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930), with its claim, supported by a litany of ingenious close readings, that ambiguity is intrinsic to poetry and not a fault but a virtue. The book is an extraordinary achievement, wise and learned, full of a wit recognised even by its detractors, and blessed with compelling powers of observation: under Empson's microscope, poems come to look just as rough and complex as the seeds and needles in the images of Robert Hooke. The critic's business is analytical: he is like the dog who relieves himself against the 'flower of beauty' and then scratches it up afterwards (STA, p. 9). But his manner is unlike the quasi-scientific mode promoted by his mentor I. A. Richards, and he insists that poetry be treated with sympathy, not merely as an 'external object for examination' (248). The book's method, despite its title, turns out to be tactical rather than strategic, arriving at insight not by systematic theorization but haphazard, as if on the way to something else, in the course of a chat over sherry in the combination room.

The seven types are 'intended as advancing stages of logical disorder' (48), but they keep bleeding into one another. In the first, most general type, 'a word or a grammatical structure is effective in several ways at once' (2)—Empson's first example, 'Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang', soon attracted astonishment for the number of associations he was able to draw out between trees and ruined monastery choirs. In the 'most ambiguous' seventh type the duality of meaning in a text shows 'a fundamental division in the writer's mind' (192), and the book culminates in a reading of George Herbert's poem 'The Sacrifice' as the charged expression of a Christian ambivalence. But

between these two extremes lies a wealth of glittering detail. For a flavour of Empson's typical approach, consider a stanza from the Andrew Marvell lyric 'Eyes and Tears':

What in the World most fair appears,  
Yea, even Laughter, turns to tears;  
And all the jewels which we prize  
Melt in these pendants of the Eyes.

Empson comments:

Melt in may mean 'become of no account beside tears', or 'are made of no account by tears,' or 'dissolve so that they themselves become teares,' or 'are dissolved by tears so that the value which was before genuinely their own has now been assumed by and resides in tears.' Tears from this become valuable in two ways, as containing the value of the jewels (as belonging to the world of Cleopatra and hectic luxury) and as being one of those regal solvents that are competent to melt jewels (as belonging to the world of alchemists and magical power). (172)

Here doubt ('may mean... or...') insensibly becomes plenty ('valuable in two ways, as ... and as ...'), in such a way that it is hard to know where one stops and the other begins. But the reader, whether or not she accepts the argument, is likely to come away from it thinking only of Marvell's fullness, having forgotten Empson's uncertainty. Empson helps her along in this regard, having already asserted that 'I have myself usually said "either ... or" when meaning "both... and" ' (81). He confesses that the ambiguities he finds in Shakespeare are mostly copied out of Arden editions, where, in the manner of traditional philology, possible readings and interpretations are considered and dismissed, or else listed as alternatives. But, suggests Empson mischievously, 'the nineteenth-century editor secretly believed in a great many of his alternatives at once' (82). How could one see all those wonderful meanings and not think they had occurred to Shakespeare? Better to see the Bard's 'original meaning' as 'of a complexity to which we must work our way back'. A writer's intention was of great interest to Empson, unlike many of his successors; in the preface to the second edition he warns that '[i]f critics are not to put up some pretence of understanding the feelings of the author in hand they must condemn themselves to contempt' (xiii—xiv). And so with 'Eyes and Tears' above, his discussion concludes with the insistence, forestalling objections, that he has not been making up his own poem but only 'quoting' Marvell, on the basis that the poet assumed in his readers a wide acquaintance with 'conceits about tears'.

What Empson meant by ambiguity should not be taken for granted. His infamous definition is 'any verbal nuance, however slight, which gives room for alternative reactions to the same piece of language' (1). But this is not really a definition, as he clarifies in a footnote: it is 'not meant to be decisive', and 'the question of what would be the best definition of "ambiguity"... crops up all through the book'. A few pages later he specifies both the subjective and the objective, doubt and plenty:

'Ambiguity' itself can mean an indecision as to what you mean, an intention to mean several things, a probability that one or other or both of two things has been meant, and the fact that a statement has several meanings. (5-6)

Later critics have deplored the imprecision of Empson's terminology, and particularly his failure to distinguish ambiguity from mere multiple meaning—one recent primer dismisses *Seven Types* as 'a very confused book'—but the foundation of his argument is his own experience of poetic language rather than any desire to clarify and classify concepts; ambiguity denotes, as we have seen above, textual items that have made Empson hesitate. Expressions of doubt appear throughout: 'Not a clear

example, and I am not sure that what I said is true', 'I am not sure how far people would be willing to accept this double meaning' (229). This is something like a negative capability, a 'being in uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts', although paradoxically it is also an 'irritable reaching after fact and reason'. 'Ambiguity', then, is precisely the correct word. Our estimation of the book's value must turn not on its theoretical rigour but on Empson's capacities as a reader, and here we are repaid by his seismographical sensitivity to words, to culture, to society. If it is a confused book, he might rejoin that it reflects a confused subject, and that, like Socrates, he has preferred aporia to false certainties.

Seven Types has long been canonised as a watershed in the history of thinking about ambiguity, starting with Richards's remark in 1936: 'Where the old Rhetoric treated ambiguity as a fault in language, and hoped to confine or eliminate it, the new Rhetoric sees it as an inevitable consequence of the powers of language and as the indispensable means of most of our most important utterances—especially in Poetry and Religion.' Empson's criticism more generally has enjoyed a revival of interest in recent decades. But beyond pointing to two of the book's sources—Richards and Robert Graves—few have seriously considered what preceded it, and so the nature of its achievement remains unclear. One major aim of this History is to remedy that omission, although I ought to state explicitly that the narratives traced below are not mere back-story, and only in the final chapter do I specifically address Empson's immediate intellectual genealogies. It is true, as Richards said, that the 'old Rhetoric', from Aristotle onwards, treated ambiguity as a fault, but even so, readers had praised the ambiguities of poetry for centuries before Seven Types, and this is to say nothing of the tangled histories of ambiguity in law, biblical exegesis, and philosophical hermeneutics. Each narrative will help qualify our assumptions about the profile of modernity with regards to ambiguity: again and again we find familiar questions raised in past and alien settings. Perhaps most of all, the interpretation of Scripture will acquire a special resonance with Empson's project. It was not for nothing that Richards paired 'Poetry and Religion' in his line on the new rhetoric, and as Empson himself would insist in a later preface, 'Critics have long been allowed to say that a poem may be something inspired which meant more than the poet knew' (STA xiv, my emphasis). As we shall see, the idea of divine inspiration, which undergirded so much analysis of multiple meanings in the Bible, was a key precursor to Empson's argument.

A more detailed synopsis of the book's chapters will be found at the end of this Introduction. Before that I want briefly to sketch the fortunes of Empson's ambiguity as a critical concept, so as to define and illustrate the broader questions and problems explored over the rest of the monograph.

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A central contention of this book is that Richards's temporal distinction between Old and New Rhetoric should be replaced by a generic one. On one side, theorists of language in all periods, after Empson as before—writers on grammar, rhetoric, semantics, poetics, general hermeneutics—have understood ambiguity as a pernicious fault. On the other, isolated traditions have acknowledged the deliberate and beautiful ambiguity of certain privileged, exceptional texts, which before Empson fell largely into one of two groups: (a) classical poetry, above all Roman satire and Greek tragedy, and (b) the Hebrew Bible. The strategies of explaining multiple meanings in these two categories differed. Those in classical poetry were evaluated with a concept I label artificial ambiguity, emphasizing a speaker's mastery of words as a means to manage and control other persons, whether benignly as social wit or malignly in acts of deceit. Those in Scripture, by contrast, were justified by later Christian scholars as what I call inspired ambiguity, relying on the figure of the prophet exalted by God to express divine and mystical truths. Where the first reinforces the classical model of the unified subject who deploys language to express his will and exercise agency in the world, the second serves to undermine that model by positing a divided subject whose language is his own and



not his own, simultaneously the product of two distinct impulses. These two terms are not actors' categories, and cannot be found in historical sources; rather, they represent an effort to get a handle on two ways of thinking about multiplicity that can, I think, be abducted from those sources. I have used the word ambiguity here, when some the figures I am discussing, such as St Augustine, would have thought rather in terms of multiple meanings. But the two ideas are only phases of the same moon, and where one reader asserted plurality in a text, another could always denounce it as ambiguity. Empson's term captures the threat of doubt inherent in all plenty.

It should go without saying that the history of ambiguity is not only complex but extremely non-linear, and therefore that there is no straightforward way to tell it within the confines of a linear prose narrative. Some may be surprised by the method with which I approach their disciplines, such as the history of law, or of literary criticism, which have their own etiquettes, rhythms, styles of citation, and so on. But it has been my assumption that a worm's-eye intellectual history of the obscure as well as the famous, the scholarly communities as well as the lone geniuses, will find the common ground and narrative interconnections between apparently disparate fields and eras. I have thus tried to strike a middle path between the remorseless thick description characteristic of much history of scholarship, and what Germans call the *Gipfelwanderung*, 'wandering from peak to peak' (for instance, from Descartes to Locke to Hume to Kant) of most long-range surveys. Instead, I have pursued rivers as they roll down from peaks—from Aristotle, from Justinian, from Augustine, from Eustathius, from Bacon, from Schlegel, from Freud—into trackless valleys, into other rivers, underground. Chronological coherence has been preserved within each narrative, at the expense of a tidy sweep forward overall.

The first half of the book offers a series of disciplinary parameters for thinking about ambiguity, from rhetoric and legal hermeneutics to biblical exegesis and early modern literary criticism. Chapter One is devoted to what Richards called the Old Rhetoric, sketching the long persistence in the West, from Aristotle to the early twentieth century, of a 'single meaning model' of language, one that takes ambiguity for granted as an obstacle to persuasive speech and clear philosophical analysis. Within this chapter I also touch on a recurrent fantasy that words 'really' (etymologically, or in a speaker's mind) have only one meaning, which can be recovered by philosophical procedure. This chapter stands apart from the rest of the book, in that it is, to use Saussure's terms, about ambiguity in *langue*—that is, in the structure of language, in its lexicon and syntax, not yet realised in use. The later chapters, by contrast, are about ambiguity in *parole*: in specific utterances, and especially in texts. *Langue* offers the rules within which *parole* operates; its 'ambiguity' represents the plenty from which doubt may arise on particular occasions.

Chapter Two examines the role of ambiguity in a hermeneutic setting that sees it only as doubt and never as plenty, namely, the English common law, where discussions about the nature of ambiguity serve as a proxy for a deeper controversy about what it means to interpret a text—a will, a contract, or a statute. Chapter Three introduces the notion of artificial ambiguity, understood at the level of speech-acts, which classical and early modern scholars usually conceived of either as puns, that is, ambiguities that are not really ambiguous, or as equivocations, ambiguities engineered to deceive; the latter category was the basis of the infamous sixteenth-century debate about Jesuitical equivocation. Chapter Four turns to Scripture, whose ambiguity is seen, following Augustine, both as a difficulty to shake us out of exegetical complacency, and as an inspired involution of multiple meanings on the page; these meanings are not only allegorical, mystical, or typological, but also literal, according to a widespread Catholic idea neglected by previous historians of biblical scholarship. In Chapter Five I return to artificial ambiguity, teasing out its implications for the early modern study of classical poetry. This encompasses commentaries on 'elegant' ambiguities in particular lines as well as theoretical treatises and dialogues struggling to make sense of ambiguity as a poetic and political virtue.

The second half of the book, which is more neatly chronological, contains a series of interlinked variations on the themes and ideas of the first. These might be thought of as attempts to reconcile the artificial and the inspired types of ambiguity, or as varying critical responses to the usual hermeneutic focus on the author's intention. Against those who insist that

the intention is single and so must disambiguate the text, it may be argued either that the intention is irrelevant and should be discarded, or, with greater subtlety, that intention is more complex than it looks, and can itself generate ambiguity. The major breakthrough in this respect, as also in reconciling artificial and inspired ambiguity, was the nineteenth century theory of dramatic irony, which is central to the narrative of the book.

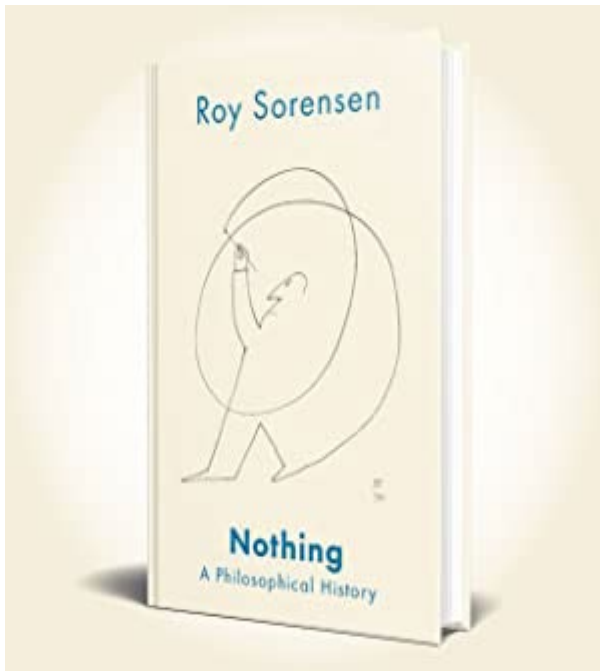
Chapter Six starts in the early eighteenth century with readers arguing over multiple meanings in Homer, and then turns to readers of Alexander Pope, via Pope's own translation of the Iliad. This marks a surprising episode in the prehistory of 'close reading', where the poet's imputed ambiguities become a counter of hermeneutic authority for which he vied with his hostile contemporaries. Chapter Seven, which centres on the mid-eighteenth-century figures William Warburton and George Benson, considers the way in which the reading of secular poets like Homer and Vergil came to chime with an ongoing debate about the possibility of double senses (and therefore ambiguity) in Old Testament prophecy. It ends in the 1760s, when German scholars, keen readers of Benson and other English theologians, began to reach a rationalist consensus on the unitary sense of prophecy. Chapter Eight examines the reaction against this consensus and the unexpected recrudescence of an older, mystical attitude to interpretation in the work of Johann Georg Hamann, whose writings, whatever their philosophical value, had a seismic impact on the Romantic thinkers of the next generation. A key product of that impact was Friedrich Schlegel's new notion of irony, and Chapter Nine traces the flattening of this notion into a useful philological tool—dramatic irony—by German and English scholars in the nineteenth century, a process made possible by a new attention to double meanings in Greek tragedy. The result is a kind of ambiguity that is both artificial for the playwright and inspired for the characters onstage.

My final chapter returns to Empson's Seven Types, a book about ambiguity in lyric poetry, but one that rejects the dominant concept in previous analyses of that subject, namely, artificial ambiguity. Its innovation was to adopt instead a form of inspired ambiguity, one made possible by the earlier invention of dramatic irony, and also, on another front, by the Freudian unconscious. To this end, Chapter Ten offers a conceptual archaeology of three keywords in Seven Types—ambivalence, primitive, and hypocrisy—an investigation that will lead us outwards, via Empson's own ambages, to the realm of moral doubt and human understanding, in which lay his book's greatest originality. <>

## **NOTHING: A PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORY by Roy Sorensen [Oxford University Press, 9780199742837]**

An entertaining history of the idea of nothing - including absences, omissions, and shadows - from the Ancient Greeks through the 20th century

How can nothing cause something? The absence of something might seem to indicate a null or a void, an emptiness as ineffectual as a shadow. In fact, 'nothing' is one of the most powerful ideas the human mind has ever conceived. This short and entertaining book by Roy Sorensen is a lively tour of



the history and philosophy of nothing, explaining how various thinkers throughout history have conceived and grappled with the mysterious power of absence -- and how these ideas about shadows, gaps, and holes have in turned played a very positive role in the development of some of humankind's most

important ideas. Filled with Sorensen's characteristically entertaining mix of anecdotes, puzzles, curiosities, and philosophical speculation, the book is ordered chronologically, starting with the Taoists, the Buddhists, and the ancient Greeks, moving forward to the middle ages and the early

modern period, then up to the existentialists and present day philosophy. The result is a diverting tour through the history of human thought as seen from a novel and unusual

perspective.

### Fake Blurbs Indicating the Lighthearted Mood of **NOTHING**

^ join the present king of France in royal praise for Roy Sorensen's ten-thousand-year chronicle of shadows, darkness, and the void. Not five thousand BC have I read a book of comparable substance."—King Fuxi

"For any book, there is a better book. Nothing is therefore the best book. Add it to your library!"—Simon of Dacia

"I had been told this was a holy book. Only after reading much on holes did I realize that the book was about the various faces of nothing, their history, and their significance for theology. The chronicle fills a much-needed gap in history of Christian contributions to atoms and the void." — Saint Katherine of Alexandria

"Roy Sorensen's affirmative action policy for negative entities addresses an historical injustice. The policy is not quite complete. What about me? If I do not manage to be in the author's book at least this blurb puts me on it!"—McX

"Who is Roy Sorensen?"—John Galt

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In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. —Genesis 1:1-2

Creation stories try to explain how everything originates from nothing. They leave something out. Nothing also has a history. This book aims to tell it.

Books about nothing may go back for billions of years. So say astronomers who conjecture that civilizations formed soon after the universe cooled to form stars and planets. What did the antennas of these historians miss that might be captured in this book?

The hominid side of nothing. I start with a cousin of Homo sapiens who picked up a pebble with holes that seemed to make faces. Many faces later (each chapter pairs a philosopher with an absence), I conclude with Bertrand Russell's precise analysis of how 'Caspar does not exist' could be true (chapter 22).

About the fifth century BC, three civilizations independently and simultaneously began to philosophize about nothing: China (chapter 3), India (chapters 4 and 5), and Greece (chapters 6-10). Their luminaries had previously focused on what is the case. Search beams of consciousness swept majestically across the field of being. But then there was a black-out. Voices from the dark spoke now about what is not the case.

Behold! The holes in a sponge are absences of sponge! Holes are what make the sponge useful for absorbing liquid. The sponge can exist without the holes. But the holes cannot "exist" without the sponge. Holes are parasites that depend on their host. Yet the two get along well. Without holes, there would not be so many sponges in your home!.

Your house is made more cozy with doors and windows. Yet these amenities are metaphysical amphibians. When you stand under a door frame are you inside or outside? Is the door an opening?

Or is the door a rectangular plug mounted on a hinge? We experience the same indecision when trying to decide whether windows and skylights are absences or presences.

You see the tiny boundary of the dot that ends this sentence. Is that boundary black or white? Not black, because anything that is black is part of the dot. Not white, because anything white is part of the dot's environment.

Boundaries are parasites of material hosts. But they are also parasites of immaterial hosts such as your shadow. Your shadow is a hole you bore into the light. Your shadow depends on both you and the light. You and light are each mysterious. Your shadow partakes of both mysteries.

Being is riddled with nonbeings. Why were the riddles first posed 2,600 years ago? Why all at once? This negative turn in world philosophy is the coincidence that inspired me to write *Nothing: A Philosophical History*.

My goal was to find a common factor that could explain the simultaneous and independent shift in perspective. My best candidate is a copying trick. Any experience of an event can also be explained by the parasitical hypothesis that the event was merely dreamt. The parasite copies the consequences of 'The event was perceived: Consider a little girl who is awakened by sounds of her parents. Embarrassed, they assure their daughter that the scene is a dream. In the morning, her parents keep up the lie. Their teamwork overrides the child's perception. The parasite hypothesis converts the daughter. After she wises up, the daughter concludes that any waking experience can be re-explained as a dream experience. She generalizes: all waking experiences can be explained as a dream. Dream skepticism is kept a live option because she dreams every night.

Host hypotheses have defenses against the insinuation that they are falsehoods that merely have true consequences. Gilbert Harman (1988, 40) notes that the host has the advantage of simplicity. The parasitical alternative requires editing the original tale told by the host. A further advantage for the host is our preference for hypotheses that predict truths rather than merely accommodate host's discoveries. Any parasite can wait for a host theory to make the discovery and then fudge its calculation to match the host's prediction. To stand out from the competition with other parasites, the parasite needs to generate its own predictions. In the 1960s, linguists knew that some phase structure grammars could co-opt the predictions of transformational grammars. But the linguists only seriously subscribed to phase structure grammars after phase structure grammars made their own predictions (Harman 1963).

The parasite has its own simplicity. Parasites are not lumbered by the commitments of their host. Old men in ancient Rome reported dark specks floating in their eyeballs. Skeptics said the old men were hallucinating the specks. The hallucination hypothesis avoids commitment to specks. It also predicts that no specks will ever be discovered by future observers of old eyeballs. The parasite lost that bet! But at least the parasite was making some novel predictions.

All parasitical theories postulate psychological mechanisms that explain how perceptions could occur in the absence of the represented events. During the late Warring States period (476-221 BC) Master Zhuang dreams he is a butterfly. But then the sage wonders whether he is a butterfly dreaming he is a man. That is lovely as poetry. But butterflies lack the neural and social infrastructure to dream they are men. If you dream you are a man, you might be woman. You might be a child older than two—the age at which dreams acquire plot lines. But you are no butterfly.

Typically, a parasitical theory depends on their host's survival. This means the host could later throw off the parasite. For instance, atomism was long parasitized by the hypothesis that the doctrine is useful make-believe. Some of the subtlest improvements of atomism were undertaken by physicists who simply wanted make the most from the host. In the beginning of the twentieth century, Albert

Einstein interpreted the random motion of pollen grains in water as collisions with atoms. This explanation required physical atoms rather than make-believe atoms. The parasite was expelled. The host retained the improvements engineered by the parasite.

Parasitical improvements of hosts are now deliberately cultivated. In null-hypothesis methodology, scientists are required to entertain a rival hypothesis that an apparent cause is a mirage of correlation.

A parasite can artificially prolong the life of its host. When parasites castrate crabs, the crabs get into fewer fights. Geocentric astronomy would have been killed off by heliocentric astronomy. Surveyors intervened. They have guaranteed geocentric astronomy a long future as a falsehood that simplifies measurement. Newton's physics survives as a limiting case of Einstein's physics. A magnanimous victor will live in harmony with neutered adversaries. This prospect leads the old guard to nervously cross their legs when the young begin praising their elder's theories as limiting cases of a fresh theory.

Contemporary parasites owe their sophistication to the private reality opened by Christian introspection (chapter 13). Previous thinkers had treated the utterer of 'It seems to me that Jesus wept' as refraining from reporting anything. Saint Augustine treats the sentence as a report of a mental fact. This inner fact can only be directly observed by the speaker. He has privileged access to matters that others can only infer from his behavior.

These subjective threads were woven into a universal coordinate system by Rene Descartes. As the thread count increased, the Cartesian

veil of ideas eventually enveloped the material world. And then, in a great vanishing act, George Berkeley pulled away the matter beneath the veil. The veil remained afloat. Where did the external world go?

The magician answered, "To be is to be perceived. There was never any external world to begin with."

Berkeley's immaterialism could only thrive on a rich diet of materialist hosts. Thanks to political scale, China and India achieved a critical mass of hosts about 500 BC. Lightly populated Greece achieved critical mass by commerce rather than by indigenous fecundity. The intricate coastline and islands placed these scattered people at a crossroads between civilizations. Their large neighbor civilizations had come close to achieving the critical mass needed for parasites to bore their holes. The Greeks accumulated these near misses into a hit. After Aristotle's student Alexander invaded India, the Greeks were able to import some of the parasitical breakthroughs pioneered by the Hindus and Buddhists. By copying the Indian copycats, the Greeks conquered the whole world at an intellectual level.

In Europe, this conquest was initially hampered by Christianity—but eventually helped. I focus on the Christians because of their love-hate relationship with atomism. Abhorrence of the vacuum had been the default attitude in the West since Parmenides. But in deference to the Genesis 1:1-2 scripture quoted in the epigraph, medieval philosophers such as Thomas Bradwardine were able to make a safe space for the void (chapter 16). This was the space later exploited by Isaac Newton's physics (chapter 17).

When I gaze outside my eastern window, I see Elon Musk's SpaceX rockets launching toward the sun. The drama of rocket after rocket is otherworldly. I had never seen a rocket before moving to Austin, Texas. Now I view launches as a weekly spectacle. Musk himself is a spectacle. He espouses the simulation hypothesis: almost all consciousness is the effect of computer programs. Instead of



being at the Boca Chica, Texas, launch site in the year 2021, Elon Musk exists far in the future. He has no hands, no heart, no head. Mr. Musk is an invention of future historians studying their ancestors who lived way back in 2021. The historians compare what actually happened in 2021 to what would have happened if there are had been an entrepreneur pioneering Internet banking, electric cars, and a mission to Mars.

If I had lived a life as improbable as Elon Musk's, then I might be tempted to think it all a dream. But Nick Bostrom's (2003) original support for his simulation hypothesis is a statistical argument that does not depend on extraordinary events. According to Bostrom, ordinary people ought to assign a surprisingly high probability to the simulation hypothesis. Bostrom has persuaded the eminent philosopher David

Chalmers (2022, 100) to assign a probability of at least .25 to the simulation hypothesis. The astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson assigns a probability greater than .5. The biologist Richard Dawkins, equally proud of his immunity to philosophy, takes the simulation hypothesis seriously.

Sound familiar? The simulation hypothesis is the latest parasitical theory. This twenty-first-century specimen incorporates the era's technical and social novelties. A live option! Whereas skeptical uses of parasites completely empty out the past and the material world, the simulation hypothesis innovates by preserving the past. That is why Dawkins, an outspoken evolutionist, can allow that the simulation hypothesis is true. The simulation hypothesis entails that Dawkins' heavily historical scientific theory is true. What gets deactualized is the present!

I would be disappointed to learn my recent experiences do not correspond to reality. Alas, I never saw a rocket! 'Twas but a bit of coding. Others find their disembodied alternative as enchanting as the ancient Hindus who conceived of themselves as dreamed by the gods. <>

## **CELESTIAL ASPIRATIONS: CLASSICAL IMPULSES IN BRITISH POETRY AND ART** by Philip Hardie [E. H. Gombrich Lecture Series, Princeton University Press, 9780691197869]

A unique look at how classical notions of ascent and flight preoccupied early modern British writers and artists

Between the late sixteenth century and early nineteenth century, the British imagination—poetic, political, intellectual, spiritual and religious—displayed a pronounced fascination with images of ascent and flight to the heavens. **CELESTIAL ASPIRATIONS** explores how British literature and art during that period exploited classical representations of these soaring themes—through philosophical, scientific and poetic flights of the mind; the ascension of the disembodied soul; and the celestial glorification of the ruler.

From textual reachings for the heavens in Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Donne and Cowley, to the ceiling paintings of Rubens, Verrio and Thornhill, Philip Hardie focuses on the ways that the history, ideologies and aesthetics of the postclassical world received and transformed the ideas of antiquity. In England, narratives of ascent appear on the grandest scale in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, an epic built around a Christian plot of falling and rising, and one of the most intensely classicizing works of English poetry. Examining the reception of flight up to the Romanticism of Wordsworth and Tennyson, Hardie considers the Whig sublime, as well as the works of Alexander Pope and Edward Young. Throughout, he looks at motivations both public and private for aspiring to the

heavens—as a reward for political and military achievement on the one hand, and as a goal of individual intellectual and spiritual exertion on the other.

**CELESTIAL ASPIRATIONS** offers an intriguing look at how creative minds reworked ancient visions of time and space in the early modern era.

### Review

“This almost impossibly learned book traces the literary and pictorial motif of human flight and ascension, through the heavens and expanses of space, in British literature from the late sixteenth through the early nineteenth century and in the classical tradition. It defines a topos of sublimity—of imagination, science and religious feeling—whose significance becomes clear as the examples multiply and Hardie's penetrating readings move from one important artist to the next.”—**David Quint, Yale University**

“**CELESTIAL ASPIRATIONS** is a splendidly enterprising exploration of the major artistic, religious and political themes of ascent and flight to the heavens, traced from their classical roots through to the English poetry and art of the early modern period. This brilliant book combines comparative literary analysis with art history, moving with ease from Plato and Virgil to Milton and the great painted ceilings of Stuart and early Georgian England, and presents an impressive model of interdisciplinary classical reception.”—**Stephen Harrison, University of Oxford**

“Clear and authoritative, *Celestial Aspirations* contains many acute readings and comparisons across a very wide range of classical and early modern poetry. Hardie has an excellent reputation for this kind of literary appreciation rooted in close reading, and his skills are evident.”—**Victoria Moul, University College London**

“**CELESTIAL ASPIRATIONS** is an extraordinarily erudite, interdisciplinary investigation of the enduring fantasy of achieving liftoff. Focusing on the reception of classical texts in Britain from the late sixteenth to the eighteenth century, Hardie's book offers new perspectives on the classical tradition and on the history of ideas.”—**William Fitzgerald, King's College London**

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Until the invention of the hot-air balloon, human beings were physically restricted in space almost entirely to the ground on which they stood. They could ascend in the direction of the heavens only by climbing mountains or other tall objects (as they could in more limited ways descend beneath the earth in chasms and caves or artificially excavated holes). But these earthly limitations could be transcended in religious belief or poetic fancy, and dreams, sleeping or waking, of flight, whether in the body or out of it, are no doubt as old as humanity, and to be found in every part of the world and in every century.

This book is focused on classical antiquity and the period in Britain reaching from the late sixteenth to the earlier part of the nineteenth century. It is a study in classical reception, centred mostly on literary history, accompanied by a substantial consideration of related phenomena in the history of art. My starting point is the observation that between the later part of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century the British imagination—poetical, political, intellectual, spiritual and religious—displays a pronounced fascination with images of ascent and flight to the heavens. The roots of this, and its manifestations, are various. The subject is given unity, in the first instance, by the fact that, on any reckoning, the roots of the post-classical materials lie substantially in the texts of Greek and Roman antiquity. Under this heading I include late antique Christian texts, which process specifically biblical and Christian narratives of ascent and aspiration largely through the vocabulary and imagery of non-Christian texts. My own perspective, that of a classicist with long-standing interests in early modern reception, looking forwards from antiquity, is guided, in the first instance, by the concern to trace the paths of the ancient representations of celestial aspirations through a wide body of British texts, primarily in verse, and painting, above all paintings on ceilings, the surfaces most appropriate for images of the heavens and of ascent to the heavens.

Looking back to the classical material from the perspective of the later period, the book aims to lend cohesion to its subject by attending to the ways in which antiquity is received and transformed through the history, ideologies and aesthetics of the post-classical world. The following pages outline some of the main contexts, themes and motivations under which to consider the shaping of the particular trajectories taken by narratives and images of celestial aspiration in British history from the late sixteenth to the first part of the nineteenth century.

### **CELESTIAL ASPIRATIONS and Larger Structures**

The central motif of this book is a simple one: ascent from earth to the heavens. But ascent along the vertical axis frequently enters into larger patterns and systems, both in antiquity and after. A common contrast is that between a legitimate and successful ascent, and an illegitimate and unsuccessful attempt that ends disastrously in travel in the opposite direction. Major classical examples of the latter, all the subject of frequent allusion in post-classical literature and art, are the myths of the tragic failure to sustain flight of two headstrong young men—Phaethon in the chariot of his father the Sun, and Icarus on the wings crafted for him by his father Daedalus—and the myths of the monstrously impious Titans and Giants who attempt to climb up to heaven to overthrow the Olympian gods. The latter are blasted down by Zeus's thunderbolts to a place lower than the surface of the earth, to underground prisons. Ascent and descent are deployed along the full vertical axis that reaches from the skies to the underworld, from heaven to hell. Descent, however, is not always negatively evaluated. The quest for knowledge or enlightenment may plumb the depths as well as search the heavens. Profundity, as well as altitude, is something to strive for. Sinking is the passive failure to soar, but diving is the active correlative to soaring.

The charting of the extremes of success and failure, of virtue and vice, of theological good and evil along the vertical axis often forms part of a larger moral, theological or political construction of the universe, in which order struggles against disorder. The scene is thus set for encyclopedic texts or iconographies with ideological or theological plots. In antiquity, the classic example is Virgil's *Aeneid*, which charts the history of Rome and Roman ancestors against a cosmic backdrop, and in which the success and rewards of Roman empire are figured in terms of both horizontal and vertical expansion. The vertical thrust of the *Aeneid* is something new in Greco-Roman epic, and is determinative for much of the later tradition. Ovid responds to it, in his own idiosyncratic way, in the *Metamorphoses*, as does Dante in the *Commedia*, the great medieval 'epic' of descent and ascent, although the upwards passage through the successive spheres of the heavens in *Paradiso* often occludes the motions of flight. Soaring and sinking are, however, vividly experienced in Milton's

Paradise Lost, an encyclopedic epic in which moral fall and recovery from fall are recurrently mirrored in episodes of physical descent and ascent.

### Periodizations and Intertextualities

These structural patterns, as well as the headings surveyed previously, could all be traced through longer histories stretching back into the Middle Ages and forward into modernity. The decision to focus on two discrete periods—classical antiquity (roughly up to the early fifth century AD, but coming as far forward as the early sixth century in the case of Boethius), and Britain roughly from the late sixteenth to the eighteenth century, but looking forward to the romanticism of the nineteenth century—inevitably has something of the arbitrary about it, and I occasionally stray into the long stretch of time that lies between. Nevertheless, my British texts and images respond for the most part to the classical models, and only intermittently to those models, both non-Christian and Christian, as mediated through medieval texts. Milton draws on Dante, as well as the rest of the epic tradition from Homer down to the seventeenth century, but the *Commedia* is not an important influence on most of the authors discussed in this book. Of earlier English authors, Chaucer certainly is an important presence in my period, and his parodic version of a celestial ascent in *The House of Fame* is discussed briefly at ch. 2.

This is also a period in English literary history given unity through its intensive and creative engagement with classical texts, of a kind that at its earlier limit was informed and concentrated by the humanism of the Renaissance, but at its latter end underwent relaxation and marginalization. While this book looks to wider frameworks of reception, it is, in the first place, a study in allusion and intertextuality. I proceed on the assumption that many of the early modern poets engage in conscious and intentional allusion to the ancient texts, as well as to earlier British (and in some cases non-British) poets, in a manner quite comparable to the proliferating chains, or 'imitative series', of intertextuality that link the ancient authors. This is beyond question when it comes to classically learned, and in some cases self-annotating, authors like Milton, Cowley, Pope, Thomson, Gray and Young (university poets all, apart from Pope, who was debarred by religion). In other cases, we have to do with what had become a shared vocabulary and imagery of celestial aspiration and its associated emotions—a koine of rapture, ravishment and transport.

The unity of this book also depends on the claim that there is something cohesively British to the package of texts and images discussed. There are clear lines of intertextuality within both the textual and the visual productions of the period. Texts and images both participate in specifically British histories—literary, artistic, political, ideological. At the same time, it is important to recognize that this period in Britain, and in particular the first part of that period, was as open to continental influence as this country has ever been. This is very clearly the case with the ceiling paintings, which largely derive from, and are in dialogue with, Italian and French models, setting up tensions between continental Catholicism and British Protestantism, and activating rivalries firstly between British and French versions of absolutist monarchy, and subsequently between French absolutism and British constitutional monarchy. Many of the artists who painted on walls and ceilings were themselves of Italian or French origin, and brought their continental training with them to Britain. British poets were also impelled in a skywards direction by European models: for example, Spenser's Neoplatonizing ascents, James VI of Scotland's and Josuah Sylvester's translations of Guillaume de Salluste Du Bartas's sacred poems, and not least Milton, deeply read in a wide range of early modern continental authors both in the vernaculars and in Latin. Neo-Latin poetry, written for a readership not restricted by national boundaries, plays a significant part in this book: for example, the poetry of the Polish poet Casimire Sarbiewski, popular in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Britain. Some of the most extravagant expressions of Milton's celestial aspirations are in his own early output of Latin poetry.

## Overview

Chapter 2 offers an extensive, but selective, survey, with commentary, of Greek and Latin texts, in both prose and verse, on the subject of celestial aspiration. Most of these texts were well known in the elite classical culture of Britain in the period under review. Readers who want to skip to the post-classical material may start with chapter 3, and refer back to the discussion in chapter 2 of particular ancient authors and texts, as required. The three chapters (3-5) on British poetry are organized, in general, chronologically. Chapter 3, however, takes the story to a point some decades after the death of John Milton, before chapter 4 returns to a synoptic account of celestial aspirations across the whole of Milton's poetic output. Chapters then proceeds further into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Throughout the book, I touch occasionally on the visual arts; chapter 6 is a sustained account of the iconography and contexts of visions of ascent to (and, in some cases, descent from) the heavens on painted ceilings.

Milton has a central role, both for his response to the earlier traditions of celestial aspiration—Christian and non-Christian; classical, medieval, early modern; British and non-British—and for his inescapable presence in the post-Miltonic material. A large number of other poets still central to the canon of English literature put in appearances, but so do a number of other poets famous in their time, but now very little read outside specialist circles. Josuah Sylvester's translation of Du Bartas's *Divine Weeks and Works* was one of the most popular poetic works in the seventeenth century, but then plummeted into near-oblivion. Abraham Cowley, James Thomson and Edward Young all flew high in fame in their lifetimes and after, but how many read them now? A similar fate has befallen the mural and ceiling paintings of seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century palaces and stately homes, in their time the height of fashion, but now usually relegated to the sidelines in histories of British art. This book has no ambition to bring about a revolution in taste, but a more modest aim is to suggest that these faded celebrities deserve continuing attention for both their literary-historical and their art-historical interest, and indeed for their aesthetic appeal. Partly for that reason, I have been generous with the quotation of texts. As a consequence, the book offers something of an anthology of passages from authors many of whom may be unfamiliar to many readers. <>

## **ON MODERN POETRY by Guido Mazzoni [Belknap Press: An Imprint of Harvard University Press, 9780674249035]**

**An incisive, unified account of modern poetry in the Western tradition, arguing that the emergence of the lyric as a dominant verse style is emblematic of the age of the individual.**

Between the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, poetry in the West was transformed. The now-common idea that poetry mostly corresponds with the lyric in the modern sense—a genre in which a first-person speaker talks self-referentially—was foreign to ancient, medieval, and Renaissance poetics. Yet in a relatively short time, age-old habits gave way. Poets acquired unprecedented freedom to write obscurely about private experiences, break rules of meter and syntax, use new vocabulary, and entangle first-person speakers with their own real-life identities. Poetry thus became the most subjective genre of modern literature.

**ON MODERN POETRY** reconstructs this metamorphosis, combining theoretical reflections with literary history and close readings of poets from Giacomo Leopardi to Louise Glück. Guido Mazzoni shows that the evolution of modern poetry involved significant changes in the way poetry was perceived, encouraged the construction of first-person poetic personas, and dramatically altered

verse style. He interprets these developments as symptoms of profound historical and cultural shifts in the modern period: the crisis of tradition, the rise of individualism, the privileging of self-expression and its paradoxes. Mazzoni also reflects on the place of poetry in mass culture today, when its role has been largely assumed by popular music.

The result is a rich history of literary modernity and a bold new account of poetry's transformations across centuries and national traditions.

## Review

"In this sweeping comparative study, Guido Mazzoni shows how poetry's fate in the post-Romantic world reflects the individualism of modern Western society: atomized by small differences, narcissistic, 'free.' His sociological reading of modern poetry goes well beyond the conventional approach of matching poems and poets with local context. It discusses an entire corpus against the largest historical backdrop. Revelatory and often troubling, *On Modern Poetry* is criticism of the highest order."—**David Quint, author of *Epic and Empire***

"Ranging widely across European and American verse traditions, Guido Mazzoni maps the space of a modern poetry fundamentally determined by the Romantic revolution of self-expression. He shrewdly illuminates the ways in which modern poetry departs from earlier poetic conventions, shaped indelibly by the paradoxes of modern life."—**Jonathan Culler, author of *Theory of the Lyric***

"This is a book that many people will want to read, and a book that contemporary scholars *should* read. Tackling the uneven historical development of 'Western' ideas of lyric, *On Modern Poetry* is engaged in exactly the conversation those of us interested in the field of poetics need to have right now. I, for one, am grateful for Mazzoni's many contributions."—**Virginia Jackson, author of *Dickinson's Misery: A Theory of Lyric Reading***

"This richly erudite book isn't shy about its provocative thesis. Modern poetry, Mazzoni argues, diverges from both earlier poetic forms and the novel by virtue of its relentless drive toward subjectivism, autobiographism, and egocentrism. Charting the gaudy triumph of lyric individuation, he ranges impressively across two hundred years of canonical poetry in English, Italian, French, German, and Spanish."—**Jahan Ramazani, author of *Poetry in a Global Age***

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## A Theory of Genres

As stylistic criticism and the "thick description" of the anthropologists teaches us, even a minimal sign can reveal a culture in its entirety; but if we look at the rule rather than the exception, it appears clear that the most complex and long-lasting structures are also the most significant. When Benjamin compared the morphology of narrative forms to the morphology of the earth's surface, he was thinking about groupings of works as complex as they are undefinable: literary genres. Taking his geological simile further, we would have to say that if the literary space of an epoch corresponds to the earth's surface, genres are the plates whose movements give form to the planet's crust.

But if literary histories of the *longue durée* often end up being genre histories, it is not at all clear what literary genres are. In the continuous semantic flux that characterizes discussions on this subject, it is easy to recognize a constant in any cultural debate. Owing to a primary process of semantic dissemination that is almost physical in origin, whenever a debate involves mass participation, the topics under discussion end up with increasingly frayed senses and lose their specific meanings. There is nothing unusual about the fact that the topic we are talking about has succumbed to the same fate. What is meant by modern poetry? And, before that, what does it mean to talk about modern poetry as a literary genre? What are literary genres?

These questions, it seems to me, bring together three different uncertainties that demand separate responses: the first regards the criteria that allow the boundaries of genres to be marked out; the second concerns the nature of similarities between the texts gathered under the same name; the third is about the meaning of such families. The uncertainty regarding the boundaries of genre was formulated incisively by Goethe in one of the notes accompanying *West-East Divan* (1819). In his opinion, anyone who reflects on genres realizes immediately that the categories used to define these entities reflect diverse criteria:

Allegory, ballad, cantata, didactic poem, drama, elegy, epigram, epistle, epic, fable, heroic poem, idyll, narrative, novel, ode, parody, romance, satire. If you wanted to classify methodically these poetical genres, which I have arranged in [German] alphabetical order, and more of the kind, you would encounter great difficulties, not easily put aside. If you look at the rubrics above more closely, you will find that they are labeled in some cases according to external criteria, in others according to the content, but only rarely according to an essential form. You will quickly notice that some of them can be coordinated, others subordinated one to another.

In ordinary usage, the concept of genre indicates completely heterogeneous families of texts: allegory, ballad, cantata, didactic poem, drama, elegy, epigram, epistle, epic, fable, heroic poem, idyll, narrative, novel, ode, parody, romance, satire are in reality groups that cannot be compared with each other, that have arisen at various times out of similarities in content or form, or from a fluctuating combination of content and form. In common critical practice, these heteroclite categories lead us to use the same abstract noun "literary genre" to name completely different entities: the sonnet, medieval love poetry, or lyric poetry in general; the science-fiction novel, the romance, or the novel; Greek tragedy, tragedy without adjectives, or the corpus of texts written for the theater—and so forth. To avoid this kind of confusion, Goethe proposes to establish a hierarchy that would follow a more rational order. He suggests that a few ideal categories should be inferred from the logic of literature in order to regroup the congeries of historical categories, distinguishing the mass of poetic genres (*Dichtarten*) from the three great natural forms (*Naturformen*) of poetry—epic, lyric, and drama. These natural forms stand in the same relation to poetic genres as the particular does to the universal. The attempt met with success: a century and a half later, repeating Goethe's thought process, Szondi would oppose the empirical poetics of genres to speculative poetics. Similarly, Tzvetan Todorov would separate "historical genres," founded on observation of the literary reality, from "theoretical genres," born of inference; and Gerard Genette would divide historical "small forms" from archetypal large forms, which he would baptize archigenres. This is a modern version of a dialectic already familiar to Plato, who in a passage of *Laws* names the categories that authors and the public used to classify relic poetry (hymns, threnodies, paeans, dithyrambs, and citharode chants); and in book three of *Republic* he deduces an ideal tripartition of all texts, placing "everything that's said by poets or storytellers" under the large forms that are either simple narrative (a *ple diegesis*), imitation (*mimesis*), or a mix of the two, according to a purely philosophical taxonomy that unifies the small empirical genres into abstract categories. Today we still use the same word to name both Goethe's natural forms, which are complex but substantially ahistoric, and the congeries of historical forms, which are concrete but limited. The first category includes, for example, the notions of narrative, drama, and lyric that organize the architecture of our literary histories; the second, the potentially infinite list of categories that various cultures have used to group their works: the hymns, threnodies, paeans, dithyrambs, and dtharode chants of ancient Greek lyric; the chivalric, historical, realistic, fantastic, Bildungsroman, or family novels of modern narrative; the neoclassical, reformed, or larmoyante comedy of eighteenthcentury theater—and so on. Once these boundaries are set, it is possible to arrange the various families according to a rational order, with a few large theoretical genres at the top that move downward by decreasing degrees of generality to empirical genres at the bottom. This is similar to the hierarchical chain that ties narrative in general to science-fiction novels in

particular, passing by way of the intermediate forms of the novel and the romance. The confused congeries of names would thus find its own logic.

But even though some of these categories, those most closely tied to the empirical domain, seem to possess an irrefutable degree of reality, a skeptical nominalist might challenge the existence of the more abstract sets and the possibility of uniting the genres following coherent logical steps. Indeed, the *Naturformen*, the theoretical genres, the archigenres, only possess the value they claim to have if they truly descend by inference from the logic of literature itself. However, Genette has demonstrated with unassailable arguments that the only true archigenres are the notions of diegesis, mimesis, and mixed narrative already familiar to Plato and Aristotle, and that these three categories are in any case inadequate for establishing a well-structured system. To this is added the fact that the categories of narrative, drama, and lyric on which almost all modern systems are built have almost no absolute logical foundation but simply a relative, historical origin. And yet the hierarchical distinction between the various forms seems to preserve a glaring obviousness, because it is undeniable that the families of texts we call genres lie on uneven planes of reality: some of them can be placed in an equal relationship with each other, as Goethe points out; others are in a relationship of subordination. For example, between the science-fiction novel, the romance, the novel, and narrative, there seems to be a relation of increasing generality, since the first is a subset of the second, the second is a subset of the third, and the third a subset of the fourth. Therefore, if we cannot defend *Naturformen* and the idea of a hierarchy inferred from the logic of literature, it seems reasonable to keep the sense of a progression from the particular to the universal, from the smallest and most contingent forms to the largest and most abstract: the epic, the romance, the novel, comedy, tragedy, and so forth. Modern poetry would be one of these large, expanded genres.

How can we give a solid foundation to a deductive chain of this sort? A rigorous examination of the genre categories reveals that it is very difficult to justify a move like the one Goethe attempts to legitimize, given that the difference between historical and theoretical genres, between small forms and large forms, has no solid foothold in thought. In fact, if we adhere strictly to the data of literary history, not only would we repudiate all foundations for theoretical genres such as narrative, lyric, and drama, but we would even have to challenge the existence of expanded genres such as the epic, the romance, the novel, the modern novel, modern drama, and modern poetry. More than anything, the status of these expanded sets changed after the crisis in European neoclassicism and the end of normative aesthetics: the ancient poetics recognized the existence of a few large synthetic forms (serious epic, comic epic, tragedy, and comedy), whereas modern literary aesthetics struggles to defend the value of such groupings from the attacks of a positivism that recognizes particulars but distrusts universals. Do we not perhaps do violence every time we talk about "modern poetry" in general, forgetting how many profound differences separate the lyric poems of English Romanticism from the texts of French Symbolism, Spanish or Spanish American Modernism, German Expressionism, or the Italian Neo-avant-garde? Furthermore, if we wanted to reflect on the underlying question, we would have to ask ourselves how much reality the data of literary history truly possess, and what marks the transition from a historical genre to a theoretical genre. The only certain distinction for establishing data and legitimizing difference would appear to be one that separates the endogenous categories, used by writers and the public, from the exogenous categories, used by literary theorists. But when you try to bring this opposition into practice, you realize that the two groups get mixed up time and again. For writers and readers, the theoretical genres coexist with the historical genres in total confusion, something that becomes obvious when you look at bookstore shelves, where large abstract sets of "fiction," "theater," and "poetry" live alongside small concrete sets of "detective novels," "fantasy novels," or "romance novels," without any hierarchy books are stacked, we expect to find books containing versified, generally short pieces that describe experiences or reflections, voiced subjectively, in a

style far from the degree zero of everyday communication. On closer in-

spection, the project of writing a poem on the woods astonishes us precisely because it contravenes these expectations. It seems premodern to us that

Leopardi wants to use verse to speak about a conventional theme that is remote from his lived experience, or that he wants to dress up a prosaic matter with the ornaments of metrics and rhetoric. For at least two centuries, didactic poetry has ceased to exist, except in experimental or parodic forms, such as in the work of Wystan Hugh Auden or Raymond Queneau; for some time now the idea of style that poets and readers of poetry go back to is no longer ornamental.

The crisis in verse narrative was less sudden but equally clear. Until the midnineteenth century it was thought quite obvious to use verses to embellish a story or an argument. Epic and didactic poetry were part of the system of genres commonly used in classicist literature of the eighteenth century. The pre-Romantic and Romantic culture reinvigorated the tradition of the narrative poem, reinventing the narrative ballad and transforming The Works of Ossian and Byron's poetry into cult works. Between 1800 and 1860 French epic poetry had an extraordinary explosion in terms of quantity. In the last half of the nineteenth century some of the major English poets and novelists, such as Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, William Morris, George Meredith, and George Eliot, dedicated themselves to composing long narrative works in verse. Between 1785 and 1858 many epic poems celebrated the birth and development of a new world power, the United States, and epic was widely practiced from 1790 to 1910 in Britain by Romantic and Victorian poets. One of William Butler Yeats's first works was a legend in verse, *The Wanderings of Oisín* (1889). Nevertheless, despite these signs of resistance, the overall prestige of long narrative compositions would decline inexorably over the course of the nineteenth century, during the same period when lyric achieved its hegemony over verse writing.

Today the predominance of short, subjective pieces is so dear that it has become established in the language. Not by chance, the set of texts we call "poetry" is held together by two dissimilar taxonomic criteria: "poetry" is any text written in verse, regardless of its content; but "poetry" is also any brief prose piece with a lyrical orientation, according to a linguistic usage that takes for granted an idea that is anything but self-evident, namely, that the distance between a novel in verse and a novel in prose is greater than the distance between an epic in verse and a collection of prose poems. This idea was before the crisis of the classicist literary system destroyed didactic poetry, before the development of the modern novel made prose the natural medium for narrative, and before lyric achieved its hegemony over writings in verse. In certain critical traditions, then, the centrality of subjective poetry is considered so tautological that it creates antinomias. This is demonstrated by the habit of using words like "prose" and "poetry" as synonyms of "narrative" and "lyric," or the habit of superimposing the concepts of "modern poetry" and "modern lyric," according to a usage that Hugo Friedrich has tried to legitimize in a book as well known as it is questionable. This predominance is further confirmed, unintentionally, by the arguments of those who defend an alternative idea of modern poetry but end up giving their essays a characteristically polemical tone, as if they were writing against a hegemonic opinion whose supremacy they acknowledge by the very act of contesting it. When Charles Bernstein attacked poetry founded on the centrality of "Sovereign Human Self (SHS) as the sole origin of authentic expression and meaning" or when Bob Perelman attacked texts made of "first-person meditations ^ where the meaning of life becomes visible after 30 lines," or when Jean-Marie Gleize derides "re^^^sie," the "re-poetry" of contemporary lyrics, their alternative poetics takes the form of a challenge to a mainstream idea. For the same reason, it often happens that someone commenting on a text that falls outside the lyric form feels obliged to explain to readers what the genre is—for instance, when we read that Ezra Pound sought to re-create the modern epic poem, or that Auden rediscovered premodern didactic poetry—whereas it seems quite

unnecessary for someone to be concerned about describing the nature of texts written by Eugenio Montale, Jorge Guillen, Rene Char, Elizabeth Bishop, or Ingeborg Bachmann.

But subjective poetry does not exhaust the entire spectrum of modern poetry: in fact, on the periphery of the genre we find two extended families of texts that cannot be called lyrical. On the one hand, there are texts referred to as "long poems" in English-language criticism, which sometimes go beyond the limits of subjective poetry by taking on narrative or essay-type topics and eschew the generally short, opaque, and egocentric form of the modern lyric to pursue a clearer, more transparent public diction. On the other hand, there are texts that have the pretension of eliminating all subjective or prosaic content to shift attention onto pure form, according to a project first formulated by Stephane Mallarme. Naturally, just as in cities, the boundary between center and periphery is hazy: a book like Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Le ceneri di Gramsci* (1957, *The Ashes of Gramsci*), for example, can be read either as an attempt to revive narrative in verse on social subjects or as a series of long egocentric, confessional monologs, since, as it turns out, it is both; Anne Carson's *"The Glass Essay"* (1995) is at the same time a reflection on love written in verse, an essay on Emily Brontë, and an autobiographical text; *Citizen: An American Lyric* (2014) by Claudia Rankine alternates personal experiences with essaylike reflections. But although the genre of poetry does not coincide with the lyric, and some of its most canonical works (Mallarme's *Un coup de des*, or T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, or Pound's *The Cantos*, and so forth) lie outside the sphere of subjective poetry, the centrality of the lyric nevertheless remains unscathed.

Moreover, the texts of recent centuries seem to have exasperated the egocentrism immanent in subjective poetry, exhibiting to the public eye personal experiences that in other eras would have been judged uninteresting or unsuitable for a serious work. They are also put in a form that seems governed, at least on the surface, by something T. S. Eliot would have called "the individual talent": a subjective difference from the collective norm of tradition. In principle, a modern poet can express any thought and any private passion in such an individualistic form that he or she need never paraphrase, almost as if over the last two centuries the Romantic idea of the lyric as a genre in which the self, by expressing itself, aspires to tell the truth to everyone and to "attain universality through unrestrained individuation" had truly been achieved:

The lyric work hopes to attain universality through unrestrained individuation.... To say that the concept of lyric poetry that is in some sense second nature to us is a completely modern one is only to express this insight into the social nature of the lyric in different form.... I know that I exaggerate in saying this, that you could adduce many counterexamples.... But the manifestations in earlier periods of the specifically lyric spirit familiar to us are only isolated flashes, just as the backgrounds in older painting occasionally anticipate the idea of landscape painting. They do not establish it as a form. The great poets of the distant past—Pindar and Alcaeus, for instance, but the greater part of Walther von der Vogelweide's work as well—whom literary history classifies as lyric poets are uncommonly far from our primary conception of the lyric.

This book proposes a unified reading of modern poetry in the Western tradition. It takes a comparative point of view but, inevitably, more space will be given to the national literatures I know best. This asymmetry has no explanation other than my limits. Comparative literature is faced today with an insurmountable task: the opening of horizons, the multiplication of data and research, the skepticism that our epoch nourishes toward master narratives, and the power relations between national literatures and languages have made it impossible to take everything into account or to simplify unproblematically, as early twentieth-century literary theory did. In my opinion, this objective difficulty cannot be side-stepped by writing a grand encyclopedic treatise arranged to give every single thing some minimal diplomatic representation. Such a treatise would probably be an artificial work of that falls outside the lyric form feels obliged to explain to readers what the genre

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I start by reconstructing the genesis of the modern conception of poetry: the idea that writing in verse during recent centuries is different from verse in the premodern period, that it has the genre of the lyric at its center, and that the lyric is what we understand today by this word. I start from concepts and not works, because in this case words change before things do. Although Western poetry experienced its most conspicuous metamorphosis between 1850 and the age of the historical avant-gardes, the modern conception of poetry began to emerge in the late sixteenth century and became prevalent between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In the second chapter, I illustrate the novelties of modern poetry using as an example a text that many consider to be the first modern poem in Italian literature: Leopardi's "The Infinite." The third chapter is dedicated to the history of forms. In the fourth chapter, I construct a sort of map of the currents and tendencies that intersect and collide to make up the modern poetic space. In the final chapter, I reflect on the sedimented content of modern poetry as a symbolic form: what it means, what image of the world it transmits to us, what it allows us to understand, and what value it has for us today. <>

## **SLOTERDIJK'S ANTHROPOTECHNICS** edited by Patrick Roney and Andrea Rossi [Angelaki: New Work in the Theoretical Humanities, Routledge, 9781032193700]

Peter Sloterdijk is an internationally renowned philosopher and thinker whose work is now seen as increasingly relevant to our contemporary world situation and the multiple crises that punctuate it, including those within ethical, political, economic, technological, and ecological realms.

This volume focuses upon one of his central ideas, anthropotechnics. Broadly speaking, anthropotechnics refers to the technological constitution of the human as its fundamental mode of existence, which is characterized by the ability to create dwelling places that 'immunize' human beings from exterior threats while at the same time instituting practices and exercises that call on humanity to transcend itself 'ascetically'. The essays included in this volume enter a critical dialogue with Sloterdijk and his many philosophical interlocutors in order to interrogate the many implications of anthropotechnics in relation to some of the most pressing issues of our time, including and especially the question of the future of humanity in relation to globalism and modernization, climate change, the post-secular, neoliberalism, and artificial intelligence.

The chapters in this book were originally published as a special issue of *Angelaki*.

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The works of Peter Sloterdijk (b. 1947) have become more readily available in recent years to the English-speaking world,<sup>1</sup> and so too has the recognition that his thought represents a major contribution to the ongoing discussions about globalization and its discontents, some of which are becoming increasingly catastrophic, particularly at this moment in time. Although often identified as philosophical or theoretical in nature, a survey of Sloterdijk's corpus reveals a voluminous writing with a far wider scope, one that includes among its foci art and aesthetics, ecological concerns, most notably climate change, religion and its history, the crisis of liberal democracies and the political overall, an extensive attempt at Nietzschean-inspired diagnoses of the ills of modernity and modernization, and the development of a new topological history of human in-dwelling or "en-housing" [*Ge-häuse*] that goes by the name of *Spherology* (*Bubbles, Globes, Foams*; see Rashof). This list of subjects here does not even touch on Sloterdijk's multifarious styles of writing. Oftentimes philosophical and interrogative but also very often oriented around the construction of a narrative, some which are quite grand, Sloterdijk's styles are interspersed with polemical, playful, and provocative elements.

Nonetheless, there are clear elements of continuity and lines of thought within this oeuvre, one of which is without a doubt the notion of anthropotechnics (see especially Sloterdijk, *You Must Change; Art of Philosophy; Nach Gott* 210–28; "Anthropo-technology"). It is our contention that far from being one of several occasional topics found in Sloterdijk's work, anthropotechnics is central to his ever-expanding diagnoses of modernity and its history – a history that now finds itself in a profound crisis. Our aim in this issue is to foreground and to initiate what we hope will be a deeper engagement with the many aspects and implications of this *problématique*.

Like most of Sloterdijk's key terms, anthropotechnics defies easy conceptualization. As a first approximation, it refers to that cluster of phenomena pertaining to the technological modification of the human at both the physical and psychological levels. Its scope, however, encompasses a much broader set of issues and perspectives that are at once sociological, anthropological, ethical, philosophical, and political, and which in fact aim to cast light – a different, a diagonal light – on the history of human culture as a whole. The contours of anthropotechnics emerge in Sloterdijk's work through a patient, if seemingly unsystematic accumulation of historical analyses and a multiplication of theoretical viewpoints elaborated over more than two decades, most of which would be impossible to reconstruct here. Instead, our aim will be to outline a general horizon of concerns that

will begin, following Sloterdijk's own suggestion, with the characterization of anthropotechnics as a "manoeuvre" (*You Must Change* 4), one whose purpose is to actively intervene into the current Western and indeed world situation where, under the pressure of modernization, peoples are increasingly and "dangerously" exposed to the deterritorializing forces of globalization, of ecological crisis, and of technologies such as genetic engineering and artificial intelligence. Anthropotechnics is as much a practice and a provocation as it is a theory, something that we would like to explore, in particular, in relation to three of its central theoretical moments, which are also the ones around which most of the essays in this issue revolve. These are respectively, the *technological*, the *ascetic*, and the *immunological* constitution of humanity.

Sloterdijk's first mention of the term "anthropotechnics" occurred in the late 1990s, in a piece that created an immediate controversy, "Rules for the Human Park" (*Not Saved* 193–216; *Couture* 77–84). The text was meant in part as an intervention into ongoing debates over the new technologies of genetic engineering and the "indistinct" and "frightening" questions that they raise concerning humanity's future. Here, it had already become apparent how much Sloterdijk's approach to the ethico-political implications of these and other anthropo-technologies would differ from those of some other prominent authors who have taken part in that debate. Rather than point to the threats posed by biogenetics to individual autonomy, human nature, or the *humanitas* of man, as one finds in different ways in the work of Habermas, Fukuyama, or Sandel, Sloterdijk focused, in a deliberately polemical way, on the notion and practice of breeding (*Züchten*) – a most eerie word to a German ear – in the specific sense of the ways in which technology embodies and enhances human plasticity, i.e., the human capacity for self-formation. To quote one of his later texts, "humans encounter nothing strange when they expose themselves to further creation and manipulation, and they do nothing perverse when they change themselves autotechnologically" (Sloterdijk, "Anthropo-technology" 16). Anthropotechnics can thus be characterized in a preliminary way as an ontological determination of the co-constitution of *anthropos* and *techne* and their historical permutations rather than as a traditional theory of human nature as *animal rationale* (cf. Duclos, "Anthropotechnics").

Even though Sloterdijk is not alone in his attempt to link the human and the technological from the ground up (see, e.g., Simondon; Stiegler; Haraway), still the scope that he gives to their relation proves to be much wider than is the case in many recent philosophies of technology. Technology, for Sloterdijk, includes not only material artifacts, machines, media, or other types of technical "exo-somatization," but also, more broadly, any cultural practice aimed at consciously transcending and remodeling the human being, his self-understanding and stance in the world. Anthropotechnics belongs, in other words, to a wider constellation centered around the notion of *askesis* as a *technology of the self*, that is, as a set of *praxes* or, if one prefers, of arts of life, as articulated most notably in the works of Michel Foucault and Pierre Hadot. Here lies a second fundamental dimension of anthropotechnics: it functions as a *general ascetology*, a new science in which the history of ascetic practices in all of their disparate manifestations becomes visible not in terms of a more conventional perspective that focuses on abnegation and self-renunciation, but "positively," as a system of anthropotechnical *praxes* that embody the fundamental ethical imperative to go beyond one's existing conditions towards a new state of being that appears as either impossible or "monstrous" in relation to the habits, the norms and the enclosed protective systems of everyday social life.

Anthropotechnics as a general ascetology thus paves the way for a historical analysis where "charioteers and scholars, wrestlers and church fathers, archers and rhapsodists come together, united by shared experiences on the way to the impossible" (Sloterdijk, *You Must Change* 64). It forms a narrative of the multifarious ways in which human beings, both individually and collectively, have shaped, "bred," and cultivated themselves, from the beginnings of advanced civilizations – when the first "acrobats," "the wise men, the illuminated, the athletes, the gymnosophists, the sacred and profane teachers" made their appearance (194) – to the contemporary industry of self-enhancement

and genetic engineering. Even the latter can and must be grasped as part of “a broad tableau of human ‘work on oneself’” (10) rather than as unnatural threats to our humanitas created by a new breed of institutionalized Dr Frankensteins. Genetic engineering is but the latest ring in a long chain of cultural experimentations, broadly understood, by means of which human beings step into the open of the world and immunize themselves against possible harm coming from the outside.

This last mention of anthropotechnics and ascetology as a general practice of stepping into the opening of the environing world or alternatively, as a practice of world-formation, introduces the third and final moment that we wish to highlight here: anthropotechnics as part of a general immunology. This theme, which occupies a large portion of Sloterdijk’s writings since the 1990s and culminates in the great spatial-ontological investigations of the Spheres trilogy,<sup>5</sup> bears a strong affinity with Heidegger’s existential analysis of Dasein as *unheimlich*, as not-being-at-home in the world, although it is by no means the same. One can get a better sense of Sloterdijk’s approach from his remark that “human beings are living beings that do not come to the world, but rather come into the greenhouse” (Not Saved 120). The world, in the sense of the sheer outside, is not an especially hospitable place, and pace the survivalist mindset, human beings that are exposed to it for too long do not last. Greenhouses – literally, those climatically controlled, enclosed, protective spaces that foster life and growth – are our natural dwellings. Humans need incubators, shelters, and artificial containers – in short, material and symbolic immunity scaffoldings – to protect themselves from a world that they are not well equipped at birth to inhabit. They are somehow compelled to form their world rather than simply expose themselves to its sheer facticity – the world is never given in such a brute manner. Hence, anthropotechnics appears a branch of a general immunology, as a comprehensive system of layered immunity structures that includes the biological, the social, and the symbolic. The latter is the specific focus of anthropotechnics, which may accordingly be defined as the study of the symbolic or psycho-immunological practices on which humans have always relied to cope – with varying success – with their vulnerability through fate, including mortality, in the form of imaginary anticipations and mental armour [and] the methods of mental and physical practising by which [they] have attempted to optimize their cosmic and immunological status in the face of vague risks of living and acute certainties of death.

As should hopefully be clear by now, immunology, particularly at the symbolic level, entails more than just a prophylactic insulation from external dangers. The life of practice is never just a matter of survival or adaptation, as a crude form of pragmatism or biologism would have it; practice requires a controlled yet creative exposition to the outside (Duclos, “Falling”). In the interplay between the defensive retreat to an inside and the ecstatic opening to the world, the human looks out towards new horizons in the form of “vertical attractors,” to use the language of *You Must Change Your Life*, through which s/he may discover a different life. For Sloterdijk, immunology underlies, in this sense, the most basic dynamics of human culture:

In order to cope with the self-endangerments that increase for sapiens-beings from their unique biological position, they have produced an inventory of procedures for the formation of the self, which we discuss today under the general term “culture,” [which encompasses] all those ways of ordering, techniques, rituals, and customs with which human groups have taken their symbolic and disciplinary formation “into their own hands.” (Not Saved 126–27)

Not only technology, but also politics, ethics, religion, art, and athleticism, to name but a few, might be reinterpreted accordingly, since life as a whole is only “the success phase of an immune system” (449).

The main coordinates of Sloterdijk’s anthropotechnical maneuver are thus delineated: the human, whose essence is technological, and whose technological essence impels it to transcend itself ascetically, is at the same time the subject who, through practice, must form the world it inhabits to shelter itself from the abyss of sheer exteriority.

Through this conceptual framework, we are now in a position to gesture, however tentatively, to the dangers as well as the opportunities associated with Sloterdijk's diagnosis of modern anthropotechnics, and of the "Great Catastrophe" that he evokes at the end of *You Must Change Your Life*, which looms on our horizons today as never before. The crises that we are experiencing may be regarded as technological, ascetic, and immunological, which are now unfolding at virtually every level, including the viral, social, environmental, economic, and political. In a purely schematic way, modernity for Sloterdijk appears torn between its attempt to expand and democratize the life of practice, and the dilution, if not the sheer erasure, of its vertical dimension – i.e., the prospect of a radical transformation, a metanoia, a leap to the most improbable as the condition of possibility of any asceticism (*You Must Change* 315–435; Nach Gott 211–16). Never has humanity been as enthused by the prospect of a total and permanent transformation as in our age, but Sloterdijk is also aware that up until now this has failed to produce anything other than "a cybernetic optimization system," where we "are guaranteed all human rights – except for the right to exit from facticity" (*You Must Change* 437). Despite his recognition of the essentially technological essence of man, Sloterdijk does not ignore how recent technologies – which, needless to say, extend well beyond biogenetics – tend to be mobilized primarily as "life-augmenting and life-increasing accessories" that direct life and the imperative to change one's life only to the flat, horizontal perspective of enhancing or making more comfortable our existing life rather than transforming it. Divested of its vertical dimension and therefore of its ecstatic opening to the outside, immunity turns, to draw on the insights of another author who has long been preoccupied with similar questions, into auto-immunity (Esposito).

However vaguely, Sloterdijk seems nonetheless to detect a new paradigm looming on the horizon – or the need or the hope for one – which he refers to as "co-immunity." In the face of the utter impossibility that things could still go on just as they have been for the last half century or more, humanity is, and will increasingly be called upon to realize "that shared life interests of the highest order can only be realized within a horizon of universal co-operative asceticisms," ones that transcend "all previous distinctions between own and foreign," and "the classical distinctions of friend and foe" (Sloterdijk, *You Must Change* 451–52). What this might entail, apart from an ill-defined, environmentally tinted cosmopolitanism remains an open question. Sloterdijk's contention here seems to be simply that the crisis itself, whose religious overtones he stresses throughout *You Must Change Your Life*, may give rise to a new verticality, a new "unconditional overtaking" in the form of an "absolute imperative" (442) – a dimension which modern, and above all contemporary anthropotechnics, would seem to have forsaken long ago. What is certain, though, is that like any ascetic exercise, this new imperative would not evince a clear and certain aim, but would, at the very most, be heard as a call to "rehearse the most improbable as the most certain" – "certum est quia impossibile," as Tertullian wrote (*You Must Change* 334). At its most incisive, Sloterdijk's anthropotechnics represents an attempt to reawaken this call – a call to which this issue and the essays contained in it have tried critically to pay heed, as a tribute, so to speak, to its necessary improbability. <>

## **THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF CRITICAL IMPROVISATION STUDIES, VOLUME I** edited by George E. Lewis and Benjamin Piekut [Oxford Handbooks, Oxford University Press, 9780195370935]

Improvisation informs a vast array of human activity, from creative practices in art, dance, music, and literature to everyday conversation and the relationships to natural and built environments that surround and sustain us. The two volumes of the Oxford Handbook of Critical Improvisation Studies

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gather scholarship on improvisation from an immense range of perspectives, with contributions from more than sixty scholars working in architecture, anthropology, art history, computer science, cognitive science, cultural studies, dance, economics, education, ethnomusicology, film, gender studies, history, linguistics, literary theory, musicology, neuroscience, new media, organizational science, performance studies, philosophy, popular music studies, psychology, science and technology studies, sociology, and sound art, among others.

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## **THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF CRITICAL IMPROVISATION STUDIES, VOLUME 2** edited By George E. Lewis and Benjamin Piekut [Oxford Handbooks, Oxford University Press, 9780199892921]

Improvisation informs a vast array of human activity, from creative practices in art, dance, music, and literature to everyday conversation and the relationships to natural and built environments that surround and sustain us. The two volumes of the Oxford Handbook of Critical Improvisation Studies gather scholarship on improvisation from an immense range of perspectives, with contributions from more than sixty scholars working in architecture, anthropology, art history, computer science, cognitive science, cultural studies, dance, economics, education, ethnomusicology, film, gender studies, history, linguistics, literary theory, musicology, neuroscience, new media, organizational science, performance studies, philosophy, popular music studies, psychology, science and technology studies, sociology, and sound art, among others.

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## On Critical Improvisation Studies

Cultural historian Andreas Huyssen has perceptively observed that Fluxus, an art movement that featured improvisation as a key element, was “an avant- garde born out of the spirit of music. ... [F]or the first time in the twentieth century, music played the leading part in an avant- garde movement that encompassed a variety of artistic media and strategies.” We would like to venture that critical improvisation studies was born out of a similar spirit: music scholars and practitioner-scholars have taken important leadership roles in the field. Reflecting the pre- eminent position of music in discussions of improvisation in performance, critical improvisation studies draws substantially from musical experience. In his essay for this Handbook, ethnomusicologist Bruno Nettl, one of the pioneers of twentieth- century scholarship on improvisation, found it “surprising that the word ‘improvisation’ (or any of its synonyms) appears rarely, if ever, in the early literature of ethnomusicology, and the concept is virtually untouched by the early scholars in this field.” While acknowledging that music historians had been interested in improvisation since at least the late nineteenth century, Nettl cites the work of Hungarian scholar Ernest Ferand as “the first attempt to synthesize the various kinds of improvisation in Western art music as a single concept.”

Around the 1960s, ethnomusicologists began producing detailed case studies of musical improvisation, concentrating on jazz, Hindustani and Carnatic classical music, and Iranian (Persian) music— a particular focus of Nettl’s that formed the basis for his important article, “Thoughts on Improvisation: A Comparative Approach.” Since the mid- 1970s and moving into the 1980s, historical musicology’s increasing interest in improvisation has gone hand in hand with the field’s turn to cultural history, popular music studies, and the investigation of experimental music scenes, as expressed by the term “new musicology.” William Kinderman’s work on Beethoven; Annette Richards and Kenneth Hamilton’s work on European Romanticism (a topic Dana Gooley extends in this Handbook); John Rink’s work in music theory on Heinrich Schenker; the work of Anna Maria Busse Berger, Julie Cumming, Peter Schubert, and Handbook contributor Leo Treitler on medieval music; and the editors’ engagement with experimental music, sound art, and interactive technology constitute only a small part of musicology’s current engagement with improvisation studies.

Proceeding from the example of Fluxus, however, critical improvisation studies is creating an agenda in which the arts become part of a larger network tracing the entire human condition of improvisation. Critical improvisation studies has “exploded” in recent years, with a surge in interdisciplinary inquiry across many artistic and nominally nonartistic fields; for this Handbook, we commissioned new articles from a sizable group of distinguished senior and emerging scholars representing a wide variety of disciplines in the humanities, sciences, and the arts.

One might look to musicology and ethnomusicology as among the earliest areas in which the study of improvisation might have gained traction, but we have evidence from Handbook essays by literary scholars Glyn Norton, Timothy Hampton, Angela Esterhammer, and Erik Simpson, as well as a recent edited volume by Timothy McGee, that serious scholarly and informed lay attention to improvisation’s effects and histories, both within and outside of the arts, have been an integral part of world intellectual history since early in the Common Era. For example, spontaneous oral composition has a very long history, appearing in the political arena well before the advent of the eighteenth-century Italian *improvvisatori*. One of the earliest focused critical works on improvisation, the first-century *Institutio Oratoria* of Quintilian, was forgotten for over a millennium until the sixteenth-century recrudescence of the theory and practice of extemporaneous rhetoric in Europe. A 1947 book by a Catholic nun, Sister Miriam Joseph’s *Shakespeare’s Use of the Arts of Language*, neatly analyzes and classifies the vast number of rhetorical devices that Elizabethan schoolchildren of Shakespeare’s time were expected to learn to deploy in extemporaneous debate.

Thus, while recognizing the important historical role played by music in the practice of improvisation, it is entirely in keeping with this larger history of improvisation as an aspect of the broader human condition that our Handbook is intended to explore both artistic and non-artistic ways in which improvisation functions in culture. We therefore asked authors to take particular care to contextualize their work in dialogue with larger debates and histories in their own and other fields.

We also decided to concentrate on theoretical, metatheoretical, critical, and historical engagements with improvisation. We fully recognize that this focus tended to leave out other encounters with the topic, some of which have been influential and even predominant, particularly in treatments of artistic practice. For instance, we decided not to feature (auto)ethnographies, analytical case studies, or treatments of particular traditions, methods, practices, genres, or works. Also essentially absent here are some regularly recurring features of edited volumes on traditional artistic media (in particular, the performing arts), such as (auto)biographies, interviews, first-person narratives, and how-to discussions of practice. Finally, although some of our contributors discuss music pedagogy, we decided to forgo discussions of skill development, and/ or working with children on musical improvisation. Although these kinds of writing on improvisation have produced important texts for the field, we took the view that critical and theoretical approaches would best enable cross-disciplinary conversation.

## Definitions And Issues

Once upon a time (at least in musical scholarship), constructing a definition of improvisation seemed a relatively straightforward matter. The Oxford Dictionary of Music’s pithy definition was typical, framing improvisation as a performance conducted “according to the inventive whim of the moment, i.e. without a written or printed score, and not from memory.” These perspectives appeared to draw implicitly upon an ideologically driven dialectic between improvisation and composition, reflecting widespread contention regarding not just the nature of improvisation, but its propriety as well. This debate dovetailed with improvisation’s fraught status in Western classical music history and culture, in which improvisation, particularly since the eighteenth century, was compared with

the practice of composition, with clear prejudices in favor of the latter's presumed advantages of unity and coherence in musical utterance.

The British experimental guitarist Derek Bailey's *Improvisation: Its Nature and Practice in Music*, one of the most widely cited books on the subject, simply avoids creating a definition at all, preferring to describe cases in which improvisation— as Bailey understands it— works, in order to fulfill the remit of the book to divine its nature and practice. Similarly, this Handbook makes no explicit attempt to negotiate a single overarching definition of improvisation. Rather, as we see it, the critical study of improvisation seeks to examine improvisation's effects, interrogate its discourses, interpret narratives and histories related to it, discover implications of those narratives and histories, and uncover its ideologies.

Particularly before 1995, scholarly commentary on improvisation in the West was found largely in discussions of traditional artistic expressive media— most centrally, music, dance, theater, and their tributaries. Reflecting its status as the West's preeminent improvised music, jazz received a large share of scholarly attention early on, both appreciative and disapprobative, from social scientists and philosophers in particular, including Alan Merriam, Howard S. Becker, and Theodor Adorno.

In dance, as Cynthia Novack, Melinda Tufnell, and Ann Cooper Albright have extensively documented, the emergence of contact improvisation in the 1970s was crucial to an emerging experimentalism. In theater, the first- person accounts and methodological interventions of Keith Johnstone were highly influential, while the work of Chicago's Second City scene looked back to the work of Konstantin Stanislavski and the sixteenth-century *commedia dell'arte*. The work of Handbook contributors Susan Leigh Foster, Amy Seham, Thomas DeFrantz, Danielle Goldman, and Anthea Kraut has opened up this area of scholarship with additional perspectives on issues of race, class, gender, and sexuality.

All three media attracted the attention of specialists in wellbeing and pedagogy— such as Émile Jaques- Dalcroze, Fritz Hegi, Tony Wigram, and Patricia Shehan Campbell— who developed therapies based in improvisation. The issues in this literature are well summarized and extended in the Handbook article by Raymond MacDonald and Graeme Wilson. Psychological, psychiatric, and psychoanalytic strategies employed improvisation as well, as in work by John Byng- Hall on family counseling.

A large number of key themes resonate throughout much earlier commentary. However, most of them can be taxonomized under a number of master tropes, the first of which concerns a certain reluctance actually to use the term improvisation in discussions of the practice. As a 2002 research proposal by Susan Foster, Adriene Jenik, and George E. Lewis noted, in art and music histories and criticism, "improvisative practices were often erased, masked, or otherwise discussed without reference to the term. Substitutions such as 'happening,' 'action,' and 'intuition' often masked the presence of improvisation." Even one of the most frequently cited texts among later generations in improvisation studies, sociologist Erving Goffman's 1959 *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, never invokes the term.

Related to the trope of masking is the trope of neglect, a point made by Nettl in the title of the introduction to his 1998 co- edited volume, *In The Course of Performance: "An Art Neglected in Scholarship."* This trope tends to animate first- generation new improvisation studies; thus, in compensation for the massive Western cultural investment in neglect, dismissal, parody, and general opposition to improvisation amid which their work was appearing, later scholars often (over)valorized the practice. For instance, as David Gere noted in a 2003 collection of essays on dance improvisation, "To improvise, it is held, is to engage in aimless, even talentless, noodling."

Gere provides his own riposte, averring that “improvisation is by its very nature among the most rigorous of human endeavors.”

Indeed, writers have emphasized that exhibitions of mastery and virtuosity compose part of the pleasure of improvisation. Domenico Pietropaolo identifies this as a preoccupation of long standing, to be found not only in musical genres, but also in the tradition of medieval rhetoric and its forebears in Greek and Roman oratory: “[A] great legacy of the second sophistic with its celebrated emphasis on virtuosity, improvisation was for medieval rhetoric a skill to be mastered after long hours of practice.”

Another trope that appears frequently concerns a binary opposition between process and product. An influential 1989 article by sociologist Alan Durant, “Improvisation in the Political Economy of Music,” maintains that the experimental improvised music that emerged in the United States and especially in Europe in the mid- 1960s “foregrounds— in its practice as well as in its name— the relationship between the product of performance (the musical ‘text’) and the process through which that product comes into being.” Particularly in music, it is frequently asserted that improvisers are more interested in the process of creation than in its products. In the influential formulation of Ted Gioia, this renders artistic improvisation (and jazz improvisation in particular) an “imperfect” art, governed by an “aesthetic of imperfection.”

For Andy Hamilton, writing in 2000, “Gioia’s point about the ‘haphazard art’ was that improvisation fails more often than art music; not that it always fails.” Hamilton’s formulation reminds us that the process- product opposition inevitably becomes mapped onto the improvisation- composition binary in Western music scholarship, as well as the great divide between low and high culture that is now so regularly bridged. His essay is one of many that invoke the process- product discussion as a way of opening the door to discussions of whether improvised music meets the criteria of the work concept in Western music.

Anticipating the 1990s work of ethnomusicologist Paul Berliner on jazz, Berliner, architectural designer Charles Jencks’s 1972 book *Adhocism: The Case for Improvisation* used the term improvisation as a trope for a process of “using an available system or dealing with an existing situation in a new way to solve a problem.”<sup>20</sup> Jencks declared that the principle/ practice of adhocism was observable in and applicable to “many human endeavours,” an observation also made by philosopher Gilbert Ryle, writing in 1976. In one of his last essays, titled simply “Improvisation,” Ryle intimates that “I shall soon be reminding you of some of the familiar and unassuming sorts of improvisations which, just qua thinking beings, we all essay every day of the week, indeed in every hour of the waking day.” Even if we may admit that, on some level, not all of our activities are improvised, the line between improvised and nonimprovised activities may not be as bright as we suppose, and it may well be that it is the non- improvised event that stands out as an anomalous event in the flow of everyday life. For example, in his influential book, *The Improvisation of Musical Dialogue*, philosopher theologian and Handbook contributor Bruce Ellis Benson identifies several improvisative moments within the nominally non- improvised activity of music composition.

Ryle’s essay invokes the quotidian and transposes the language of adhocism to a near-universal register that sounds a lot like “using an available system or dealing with an existing situation in a new way”:

I want now to go further and to show that ... to be thinking what he is here and now up against, he must both be trying to adjust himself to just this present once- only situation and in doing this to be applying lessons already learned. There must be in his response a union of some Ad Hockery with some know- how. If the normal human is not at once improvising and improvising warily, he is not

engaging his somewhat trained wits in some momentarily live issue, but perhaps acting from sheer unthinking habit. So thinking, I now declare quite generally, is, at the least, the engaging of partly trained wits in a partly fresh situation. It is the pitting of an acquired competence or skill against an unprogrammed opportunity, obstacle or hazard. It is a bit like putting some new wine into old bottles.

Remarkably, Ryle's essay does not mention music at all, an omission that could well be strategic rather than unmindful. After all, had philosophers of music of his day wanted to think about improvisation, numerous examples were on offer, but other than the work of Vladimir Jankélévitch and Philip Alperson, the philosophy of music offered little where improvisation was concerned. In this Handbook, Alperson directly confronts this near- erasure, while Gary Peters, whose 2009 book, *The Philosophy of Improvisation*, constitutes a new departure in the field, explores the relation between improvisation and Edmund Husserl's ideas on time- consciousness. One area that could be taken up by scholars working on the aesthetics of improvisation is the relation between an aesthetics of perfection/ imperfection and issues of moral perfectionism taken up by philosophers working largely outside of music but with significant musical interests, such as Stanley Cavell. Arnold I. Davidson's Handbook essay addresses moral perfectionism and improvisation, relating it to Pierre Hadot's ideas on the spiritual exercises conceived by philosophers of antiquity as a means toward transformation of the self, and taking as his example the music of Sonny Rollins. For Hadot,

Attention (*prosoche*) is the fundamental Stoic spiritual attitude. It is a continuous vigilance and presence of mind, self- consciousness which never sleeps, and a constant tension of the spirit. Thanks to this attitude, the philosopher is fully aware of what he does at each instant, and he wills his actions fully... . We could also define this attitude as "concentration on the present moment." ... Attention (*prosoche*) allows us to respond immediately to events, as if they were questions asked of us all of a sudden.

Samuel Wells's essay for the Handbook approaches ethics from an ecclesiastical perspective that invokes improvisational theater. Other philosophers engage improvisation without often invoking aesthetics or artistic examples, such as Martha Nussbaum and Barbara Herman's writing on moral improvisation and situational ethics, as well as J. David Velleman's work on collective intentions, an issue that Garry Hagberg's article in this Handbook takes up in detail.

Issues of identity have been strongly connected with discussions of musical improvisation through such putatively African American cultural tropes as signifying, storytelling and narrative, personal voice, and individuality within an aggregate.<sup>29</sup> The emergence of jazz studies as an important academic discipline has attracted both senior and emerging scholars in film, literature, history, social science, and cultural studies, as well as music, generating a set of new questions around jazz that are explored in edited volumes by Daniel Fischlin and Ajay Heble, Robert G. O'Meally, Brent Hayes Edwards, Farah Jasmine Griffin, Sherrie Tucker, and many others. As a field, literary studies has made significant contributions to jazz and improvisation studies, and this is reflected in Handbook articles by Walton Muyumba, Patricia Ryan, Hazel Smith, Sara Villa, and Rob Wallace.

Particularly in earlier jazz studies literature, the identity of the artist was often deemed homologous with the musical results, a relationship that Gioia has forcefully asserted:

Indeed, only a particular type of temperament would be attracted to an art form which values spur- of- the- moment decisions over carefully considered choices, which prefers the haphazard to the premeditated, which views unpredictability as a virtue and sees cool-headed calculation as a vice. If Mingus, Monk, Young, and Parker had been predictable and dependable individuals, it seems unlikely that their music could have remained unpredictable and innovative.



It is but a short step from an assumption of this nature to the invocation of notions of genius and self-expression, as Edgar Landgraf, one of the most wide-ranging among recent improvisation theorists, points out:

Instead of challenging the aesthetic tradition whose concepts fail to account for the specificities of this improvisational art form, Gioia propagates an understanding of jazz in terms of nineteenth-century aesthetics of genius that asks us to ignore this art form's "imperfections" and appreciate improvisation as "the purest expression possible of the artist's emotions and feelings."

Homologies between musical improvisative practice and sociopolitical expression were given powerful voice in LeRoi Jones's 1963 book, *Blues People*. Around the same time, the phenomenological sociology of Alfred Schutz, in his well-known 1964 essay, "Making Music Together," asserted that "a study of the social relationships connected with the musical process may lead to some insights valid for many other forms of social intercourse." Anthropologist John Szwed noted that

The esthetics of jazz demand that a musician play with complete originality, with an assertion of his own musical individuality... . At the same time jazz requires that musicians be able to merge their unique voices in the totalizing, collective improvisations of polyphony and heterophony. The implications of this esthetic are profound and more than vaguely threatening, for no political system has yet been devised with social principles which reward maximal individualism within the frame work of spontaneous egalitarian interaction.

In this way, improvisation is also frequently symbolically endowed with the potential for the overthrow of hierarchical practices. A contrary turn in this discussion is provided by political theorist Yves Cittons invocation of improvisations "diagonality in relation to the traditional parameters of vertical domination and horizontal equality: its (fundamentally political) challenge is to devise collective forms of agency which articulate the outstanding power of the participating singularities with the principle of equal respect necessary to find non-oppressive strength in numbers." In his Handbook article, Citton notices that Bruno Latour's declaration, "Il n'a pas de monde commun; il faut le composer" can easily be redirected toward a view of an improvised common world in which, following fellow contributor Daniel Belgrad, a "culture of spontaneity" exercises strong sociopolitical effects.

In any case, as pointed out by both Stephen Greenblatt and Tzvetan Todorov, improvisation can easily support imperial ideologies.<sup>38</sup> Greenblatt and Todorov see in improvisation a practice vital to the European conquest of the New World, in particular via what the former calls "the ability to both capitalize on the unforeseen and transform given materials into one's own scenario." Greenblatt calls this ability "opportunistic," a term that speaks to the oft-invoked foregrounding of attention and awareness in discussions of improvisation but without ceding to the practice any kind of moral high ground.

The mobile, improvisatory sensibility that Greenblatt identifies in imperial conquest (and the machinations of *Iago*) also marks epochal change: the sensibility, according to Greenblatt, emerges with the early modern period. We can identify a similar periodizing turn in Michel Foucault's late fascination with Kant's essay on *Aufklärung* and the specific qualities of modernity, which Foucault understood to be a kind of improvisational attitude or ethos toward the self, its contemporary moment, and its historical contingency—in short, a "mode of reflective relation to the present." Although he does not use the term improvisation, Foucault adopts many of its key characteristics in his description of the modern ethos, which is one of continual performance and testing of the self as an "object of a complex and difficult elaboration."

The point of this experimental historico-critical attitude, for Foucault, is “both to grasp the points where change is possible and desirable, and to determine the precise form this change should take.” The critic therefore attempts to convert states of domination, in which power relations are frozen or blocked, into mobile sites for the conscious practice of freedom. The philosopher’s employment of improvisational language (experimentation, adaptation, reflection on the present, mobility) in relation to considerations of freedom in his final years was not a coincidence— as many authors have noted, including Ali Jihad Racy in this Handbook, improvisation is frequently represented as symbolic of freedom and liberation. At the same time, however, moderating this image of improvisation as an engine for change is the binary opposition of freedom/ structure (or freedom/ constraint), routinely invoked in response to portrayals of musical “free improvisation.”

In these invocations, improvisation must always be entirely unfettered, leading the analyst to develop fettered alternatives in the form of “regulated,” “constrained,” or “structured” improvisation. For example, in her 2004 book *Undoing Gender*, Judith Butler presents a model of how constraint is encountered in social interaction:

If gender is a kind of a doing, an incessant activity performed, in part, without one’s knowing and without one’s willing, it is not for that reason automatic or mechanical. On the contrary, it is a practice of improvisation within a scene of constraint. Moreover, one does not “do” one’s gender alone. One is always “doing” with or for another, even if the other is only imaginary. What I call my “own” gender appears perhaps at times as something that I author or, indeed, own. But the terms that make up one’s own gender are, from the start, outside oneself, beyond oneself in a sociality that has no single author (and that radically contests the notion of authorship itself).

On this view, the primary constraints on human freedom lie in the social encounter with multiple agents, mediated as they may be through convention, language, tradition, or idiom. Often enough, discussions of constraint turn from the simple presumption of their presence in any situation to a further assertion of a fundamental need for constraint as a precondition for a “successful” improvisation, an assertion that can appear surprisingly bereft of corroboration. For example, in his 1964 book on the anthropology of music, Alan Merriam admitted, “While it is clear that there must always be limits imposed upon improvisation, we do not know what these limits are.” Perceptions of conceptual rigidity in the frequent mapping of the freedom/ structure binary onto low/ high culture oppositions, as well as the improvisation- composition binary (which Merriam adopted in his book), have prompted more nuanced approaches based in theories of mediation, such as in the recent work of Georgina Born.

In any event, attempts to elucidate the nature of constraint have suffered from a discourse that frames constraints as somehow outside of the system of improvisative production itself. Sociologist of science Andrew Pickering saw this discourse as “the language of the prison: constraints are always there, just like the walls of the prison, even though we only bump into them occasionally (and can learn not to bump into them at all).” Against this static, essentialist model, Pickering substitutes a related but more flexible notion of resistance:

In the real- time analysis of practice, one has to see resistance as genuinely emergent in time, as a block arising in practice to this or that passage of goal- oriented practice. Thus, though resistance and constraint have an evident conceptual affinity, they are, as it were, perpendicular to one another in time: constraint is synchronic, antedating practice and enduring through it, while resistance is diachronic, constitutively indexed by time. Furthermore, while constraint resides in a distinctively human realm, resistance, as I have stressed, exists only in the crosscutting of the realms of human and material agency.

Another frequently encountered trope of the constraints on improvisation involves the notion of a knowledge base from which improvisers are said to draw. In music this can involve larger questions

of an idiom, genre, or cultural milieu that grounds musical expression— in Derridás formulation, “the logic that ties repetition to alterity.” In his 1978 book Derek Bailey advanced the now-influential yet still theoretically rocky opposition between idiomatic and non- idiomatic music, and analogously, sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s 1977 book *Outline of a Theory of Practice* asserted that improvisation in social life draws from a habitus that forecloses the possibility of “unpredictable novelty.” Bourdieu’s notion of the habitus, worked out with and against his ethnography of rural Berber kinship practices, critiques the romantic notion of unmediated spontaneity. He discovers a “durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations.” For Bourdieu, the habitus exists (again) within a recursive logic, both producing and being produced through praxis. Each individual agent, acting without objectively structured correlation with others, “wittingly or unwittingly, willy nilly, is a producer and reproducer of objective meaning.” Those who produce these actions manifest a kind of “intentionless invention.”

More routinely offered than this early irruption of the notion of emergence is the idea of improvisation as a process of concatenation and recombination. Ethnomusicologist Paul Berliner’s 1994 book on improvisation in jazz described the practice as “reworking precomposed material and designs in relation to unanticipated ideas conceived, shaped, and transformed under the special conditions of performance.” Often these materials were portrayed in jazz parlance as “licks”— stock, memorized phrases (or as the saxophonist Eddie Harris called them in his book- length compilation, “cliché capers”)— that the players concatenate to produce the music. Cognitive psychologist Philip Johnson-Laird terms this (somewhat dismissively) the “motif theory,” and points out the theory’s inability to account for change and novelty. Organizational scientists Kathleen McGinn and Angela Keros, on the other hand, had no trouble asserting in a 2002 paper that, “improvisations are inherently both active and interactive and contain both familiar moves and unique approaches.”

Though distinct, motif theory is commonly linked to the notion of the referent or model to which improvising musicians take recourse and to the most widely referenced of all early knowledge- base theories, Albert Lord’s 1960 book, *The Singer of Tales*. Milman Parry’s pioneering discovery of recurring formulas in Homeric verse, combined with the fieldwork on Serbo- Croatian oral improvising poets conducted by Parry and his student Lord in the 1930s, uncovered major structural analogues between that poetry and Homeric verse, leading to the development of the now influential oral-formulaic theory. However, Parry was ambivalent about calling Homer himself an oral poet, and possibly reprising the trope of masking, Lord was wary of conflating oral composition with improvisation.<sup>59</sup> Both of these cautions, as Angela Esterhammer shows in this volume and other writings, had been thrown to the winds by nineteenth- century commentators.<sup>60</sup> Theodor Adorno’s anti- jazz polemics again raised the topic of formulas in the middle of the twentieth century, but in the context of his critique of a capitalist “culture industry” that only offered pseudo- individualized performances, standardization, and feigned authenticity.

Psychologist R. Keith Sawyer’s wide- ranging and influential work on improvisation, pedagogy, music, and theater is crucially informed by his work as a jazz pianist. Sawyer rethinks the notion of the “knowledge base,” this time in terms of higher- level cultural references rather than individual formulas:

It’s difficult for casual audiences to believe that improvisers do not draw on material that has been at least partially worked up in rehearsal, but I’ve performed with many improv groups repeatedly— and attended rehearsals— and I have never seen even a single line used twice. However, all groups draw on culturally shared emblems and stereotypes, which in some sense are “preexisting structures.”

As might be expected, the nature of improvisative temporality became a major point of commentary. An influential formulation in art music distinguishes between aleatoric or indeterminate modes of

expression and the improvisative. One well- expressed theoretical binary opposition is found in a 1971 essay by French musicologist Célestin Deliège, but in the United States the issue is best known through the writings of composer John Cage.

Reflecting reaction to the composition- improvisation binary, musical improvisation is frequently characterized as “real- time composition,” “instant composition,” and the like. Most frequently, however, artistic improvisation is portrayed as an immediate (and even unmediated), spontaneous, intuitive creation in real time that bears significant analogues to everyday experience. As dance theorist Cynthia Novack portrayed the expectations generated by contact improvisation,

The experience of the movement style and improvisational process itself were thought to teach people how to live (to trust, to be spontaneous and “free,” to “center” oneself, and to “go with the flow”), just as the mobile, communal living situations of the young, middle- class participants provided the setting and values which nourished this form. Dancers and audiences saw contact improvisation as, to use Clifford Geertz’s phrase, a “model of” and a “model for” an egalitarian, spontaneous way of life.

Here, the role played by memory and history becomes a particularly thorny issue. In a complex contradiction, improvisation is viewed as iterative and repetition- oriented, habit- based, and essentially unrepeatable— all at once. The presumed ephemerality of improvisative products became provisionally forestalled via sound recording technologies, and yet the emergence of these technologies also led to novel formulations of the iterability/ alterity binary in comparisons between the ontology of a real- time improvisation and its recorded version.

Another dimension of musical improvisation, this time of an aesthetic nature, is the expectation that a good improvisation be, as Bailey wrote, “a celebration of the moment.” The best improvisation will be unique, avoid stagnation and the common-place, and constantly display or embody innovation, originality (albeit via recombination of existing elements), novelty, freshness, and surprise. The improvisation must also take risks, which come in at least two flavors. Dance theorist Curtis L. Carter maintained that “improvisation as a form of performance runs the risk of falling into habitual repetitive patterns that may become stale for both performers and viewers.” The other kind of risk, as expressed by philosopher David Davies, draws upon the composition improvisation opposition, in that an improviser is “creating a musical structure without the resources for revision available to the composer.”

In his discussion of key issues and ideologies surrounding ethnomusicological interpretations of musical improvisation, Stephen Blum writes, “We are not likely to speak of improvisation unless we believe that participants in an event, however they are motivated, share a sense that something unique is happening in their presence at the moment of performance.” However, improvisation can take place on much larger time scales than “the moment,” and with much larger forces, such as the long- term coping strategies that anthropologist Paul Richards discussed in his Handbook essay on farming communities in Sierra Leone, where shifting rice cultivation requires dynamic analysis and response in real— if extended— time to changing natural and social conditions. A number of improvisative methods are deployed that must also change dynamically, and an extensive knowledge base is one result.

Before concluding an overview of this nature, one would need to consider the frequently invoked metaphorical relation between music and spoken language. Johnson Laird’s description presents the fundamental idea:

If you are not an improvising musician, then the best analogy to improvisation is your spontaneous speech. If you ask yourself how you are able to speak a sequence of English sentences that make sense, then you will find that you are consciously aware of only the tip

of the process. That is why the discipline of psycholinguistics exists: psychologists need to answer this question too.

Linguist François Grosjean also maintains that spontaneous language production shares important features with music improvisation, including recourse to knowledge bases. Most directly, Grosjean asserts that “spontaneous language production is a form of improvisation.” Extending this insight, Sawyer finds that everyday conversation is “both improvised and collaborative.”

[M]ost everyday conversation is improvisational—no one joins a conversation with a written script, and participants generally cannot predict where the conversation will go. Everyday conversation is also collaborative, because no single person controls or directs a conversation; instead, the direction of its flow is collectively determined, by all of the participants’ contributions. This view of conversation as both improvised and collaborative will be my starting point, leading me into a discussion of several key characteristics of group improvisation, characteristics that I will argue apply equally to both verbal and musical improvisation.

For Sawyer, the key characteristics of improvisation include

- Unpredictable outcome, rather than a scripted, known endpoint;
- Moment- to- moment contingency: the next dialogue turn depends on the one just before;
- Open to collaboration;
- An oral performance, not a written product;
- Embedded in the social context of the performance.

In Sawyer’s work, these features come together to describe a phenomenon of “collaborative emergence.” In a 2003 book on the topic, he presents an ethnographic study of improvisational theater in early 1990s Chicago that explores how conversations work, using analytic techniques developed for the study of everyday conversation. The result, in Sawyer’s terms, presents a challenge to traditional “individualist” psychological methods.

Ingrid Monson’s 1996 book, *Saying Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction*, provides an important perspective on the ongoing metaphor of music- as- language by situating jazz improvisation as a kind of conversation taking place in the context of African American cultural styles. The work draws upon the linguistics of Michael Silverstein, for whom an everyday conversation amounts to an “improvisational performance of culture” in which “an interactional text ... is a structure- in- realtime of organized, segmentable, and recognizable event- units of the order of social organizational regularity... . [S]ocial action in event- realtime has the capacity to be causally effective in the universe of identities as a basis for relationships and further social action.”

What emerges from this extended, yet necessarily incomplete, discussion of issues is the futility of drawing boundaries around the critical study of improvisation. Rather, in this project, we defer definitions in order to allow the scholarly conversation to wander into unforeseen areas. Our intent is to place scholars in virtual dialogue, where the totality of the compendium itself formulates an articulated, emergent, yet unbounded set of issues, drawn from multiple fields and thereby moving beyond the preoccupations of any one.

## Improvisation as a Way of Life

The view of artistic improvisation as symbolizing social and political formations was dear to many authors in an earlier moment of improvisation studies. Newer critical engagements with the practice tended to turn this view on its head, finding that social and political formations themselves improvise and that improvisation not only enacts such formations directly but also is fundamentally constitutive of them. This turn allows the new critical improvisation studies to free itself from musical and artistic

models while encouraging novel theoretical models of musical improvisation that can invoke the social in a higher register.

The kinds of theorizations found in abundance in this Handbook tend to feel comfortable invoking the term improvisation without either special pleadings or the earlier problematizations and maskings. This is in part because important new discussions of improvisation are taking place across a large range of fields: anthropology and sociology; organizational, political, cognitive, and computer science; economics, theology, neuroscience, and psychology; philosophy, cultural studies, and literary theory; gender and sexuality studies; architecture and urban planning; education; and many others. In working with the contributors for this Handbook, we realized early on that scholars working in these areas did not necessarily situate their work in dialogue with the tropes identified in the previous section of this Introduction, and often had little or no investment in musical histories and ideologies, such as the cherished opposition between improvisation and composition. For instance, McGinn and Keros sought to “define an improvisation in the context of a negotiation as a coherent sequence of relational, informational, and procedural actions and responses created, chosen, and carried out by the parties during the social interaction.” The prosaic and provisional nature of this definition, in expanding the frame of reference beyond the artistic, places considerable pressure on ideologies that impose upon the concept of improvisation the special sense of creative autonomy and uniqueness that so many commentators on music portrayed as fundamental.

Nonetheless, musical improvisation continues to play an important role as a model for how various fields of scholarship pursue the identification and theorization of improvisative structure and function in human endeavor more generally. For instance, in 1998 the influential journal *Organization Science* devoted an entire issue to the possibilities of conceptually migrating concepts from improvisation toward theories and practices of business management. The issue, which was later published in book form, was one outcome of a 1995 symposium held in Vancouver, Canada, “Jazz as a Metaphor for Organizing in the 21st Century.” The conference included performances by noted Canadian jazz musicians as well as organization scholars such as Frank Barrett, an accomplished pianist.

The title of the issue’s introduction, “The Organization Science Jazz Festival: Improvisation as a Metaphor for Organizing,” playfully cast individual articles as performances on a festival. Influenced by Berliner’s *Thinking in Jazz*, contributions by Barrett, Karl Weick, and Mary Jo Hatch spurred the field’s now influential “jazz metaphor” for reconceiving interaction and creativity in business and management interactions. This metaphor provides one route toward thinking of improvisation in ways that could be applied to both artistic and nonartistic exchanges.

Around this same time, Claudio Ciborra, whose work combined organizational theory and information systems theory, published another influential book, *The Labyrinths of Information: Challenging the Wisdom of Systems*, in which he introduced notions of bricolage and what he called “drift” in his work on improvisation in management systems and their associated technologies, including his early studies of the Internet. In Ciborra’s words,

Drifting describes a slight, or sometimes significant, shift of the role and function in concrete situations of usage, compared to the planned, pre- defined, and assigned objectives and requirements that the technology is called upon to perform (irrespective of who plans or defines them, whether they are users, sponsors, specialists, vendors, or consultants).

For Ciborra, drifting in the life of technological systems takes place in two related arenas:

the openness of the technology, its plasticity in response to the re- inventions carried out by users and specialists, who gradually learn to discover and exploit features, affordances, and potentialities of systems. On the other hand, there is the sheer unfolding of the actors’ being- in- the- workflow and the continuous stream of interventions, tinkering, and improvisations that colour perceptions of the entire system life cycle.



The encounter between freedom and structure ostensibly played out in musical improvisation also becomes connected with notions of planning. What is frequently heard is that the best improvisations are unscripted and unplanned, appearing with little or no preconceptions or premeditation, and/ or drawing upon intuition and the unconscious mind. Hamilton quotes trumpeter- composer Wadada Leo Smith to the effect that “at its highest level, improvisation [is] created entirely within the improviser at the moment of improvisation without any prior structuring.”

As it happens, both Ciborrás work and the improvisative approach to organization and management theory more generally do call into question the efficacy of traditional models and practices of planning. A 1999 Ciborra article contrasts planning- oriented views of organization, such as the work of Allan Newell, Herbert Simon, and the artificial intelligence research of Terry Winograd, with research that he sees as more compatible with real- time choice and memory processes, such as the social theory of Anthony Giddens, the sociology of Alfred Schutz, and the philosophy of Edmund Husserl. While the discourse of rules and constraints is never far from a discussion of improvisation, Ciborrás conclusion is that “ordinary decisions on markets and in hierarchies are de facto improvised, no matter how rules and norms are supposed to guide and constrain behavior.”

Research in ethnomethodology has exercised significant impact on improvisation studies. Tamotsu Shibutani’s 1966 book *Improvised News* anticipated actor-network theory in its investigation of the circulation of rumor, an outgrowth of his experience in a Japanese American detention camp during World War II. “If enough news is not available to meet the problematic situation,” Shibutani wrote, “a definition must be improvised. Rumor is the collective transaction in which such improvisation occurs.”

Like Ciborra, later generations of computer science theorists working on interactive systems design, such as Paul Dourish and Philip Agre, also draw upon ethnomethodology. Dourish’s interpretation of the ideas of Harold Garfinkel maintains that “work is not so much ‘performed’ as achieved through improvisation and local decision- making.”

The ethnomethodological view emphasises the way in which social action is not achieved through the execution of pre- conceived plans or models of behaviour, but instead is improvised moment- to- moment, according to the particulars of the situation. The sequential structure of behaviour is locally organised, and is situated in the context of particular settings and times.

Agre’s late-1990s work is critical of the notion of planning as intrinsic to the operation of a real-time, real-world, situated computational system. For Agre, a central question concerns how

human activity can take account of the boundless variety of large and small contingencies that affect our everyday undertakings while still exhibiting an overall orderliness and coherence and remaining generally routine? In other words, how can flexible adaptation to specific situations be reconciled with the routine organization of activity?

Agre maintains that

Schemes that rely on the construction of plans for execution will operate poorly in a complicated or unpredictable world such as the world of everyday life. In such a world it will not be feasible to construct plans very far in advance; moreover, it will routinely be necessary to abort the execution of plans that begin to go awry. If contingency really is a central feature of the world of everyday life, computational ideas about action will need to be rethought.

Asserting that “when future states of the world are genuinely uncertain, detailed plan construction is probably a waste of time,” Agre concludes that

activity in worlds of realistic complexity is inherently a matter of improvisation. By “inherently” I mean that this is a necessary result, a property of the universe and not simply of a particular species of organism or a particular type of device. In particular, it is a computational result, one inherent in the physical realization of complex things.

Agre’s use of improvisation as a computational metaphor brings him to a definition of improvisation that focuses less on materials, as with Berliner’s notion of recombination, than on an interactionist dynamics of decision making. Agre proposes a view of improvisation as “a running argument in which an agent decides what to do by conducting a continually updated argument among various alternatives,” where “individuals continually choose among options presented by the world around them. Action is not realized fantasy but engagement with reality. In particular, thought and action are not alternated in great dollops as on the planning view but are bound into a single, continuous phenomenon.”

The relationship of improvisation to planning has been explored at the level of management of software projects, particularly the emerging “agile project management” (APM) model. Stephen Leybourne sees agile models moving away from “plan- then execute” paradigms toward a multistage model: “envision, speculate, explore, adapt, and close.” “If the known attributes of APM are mapped onto these accepted and empirically derived constructs of improvisational working,” Leybourne maintains, “the overlaps and common areas can then emerge. These constructs are creativity, innovation, bricolage, adaption, compression, and learning.”

Of course, not everyone views bricolage as an unalloyed good. Togolese economist Kako Nubukpo’s scathing critique of African economic planning deploys the term pejoratively:

Few African economists have a clear theoretical positioning. We are primarily in the register of bricolage, of opportunism, or if you want to be kinder, of pragmatism! There are two kinds of bricolage. Some are not bothered by the inconsistencies, provided their power positions are assured.... The others have no clear theoretical positioning: we are in situations characterized by the absence of discussion of macroeconomic paradigms, with improvisation in the face of societal challenges.

The result of this lack of expertise, as Nubukpo sees it, results in improvisation: “Economic improvisation is the contextually rational response of African governments to events perceived as random. The lack of control of the instruments of economic sovereignty (currency, budget) translates in practice to an obligation to react instead of acting.” On the surface, Nubukpo’s lament is reminiscent of Richards’s account, in this Handbook, of shifting cultivation in Sierra Leone. However, what emerges from the economist’s account seems more in tune with a remark by Handbook contributors Ton Matton and Christopher Dell, who in their book on improvisation and urban studies, point out that “improvisation is often experienced as something rather forced than as emancipatory... . Well, we had to improvise, is what people say, in the hope that soon a situation will be established where order rules again.”

Rethinking traditional approaches to planning has become a focus of the field of emergency management, as with recent work by Tricia Wachtendorf, James Kendra, and David Mendonca. Noting that “improvisation has had something of a checkered history in the emergency management field since its appearance in a disaster response seems to suggest a failure to plan for a particular contingency,” Wachtendorf and Kendra nonetheless assert that “while planning encompasses the normative ‘what ought to be done,’ improvisation encompasses the emergent and actual ‘what needs to be done.’” Indeed, the authors assert, following sociologist Kathleen Tierney, that “improvisation is a significant feature of every disaster. ... [I]f an event does not require improvisation, it is probably not a disaster.”

One notes in this work on computation and emergency management a very different viewpoint on the relation between the indeterminate and the improvisative. Rather than posing a distinction between the two based on directed acts of aesthetic choice, these non-artistic theorists assert an understanding of indeterminacy as an aspect of everyday life that is addressed improvisatively. Also absent in this expanded context are ideological debates common in musical research concerning whether or not improvisations must inevitably rely upon preset, memorized formulae, rules, and cultural models. Finally, as we see in a number of this Handbook's articles, freedom and structure are not taken as oppositional. Rather, structure and freedom—as well as power, agency and constraint—become emergent in improvisative interaction. Indeed, in concert with those *fin de siècle* claims that improvisation is uniformly subversive, resistant, or utopian, we might also wish to see more research into the many other kinds of communities and institutions that have been “empowered” by their mastery of improvisational practices, such as the global financial industries, or the nation-state, which has proven remarkably resilient in spite of the rumors of its passing.

Computer scientists have also deployed mathematical analogues to improvisation, notably in process control algorithms, and in experimental models of Internet search engines. The evolutionary “harmony search” algorithm, in wide use in civil engineering and industrial applications, is a metaheuristic path optimization algorithm that adopts the metaphor of a jazz trio searching for the ideal harmony.

Musical performances seek a best state (fantastic harmony) determined by aesthetic estimation, as the optimization algorithms seek a best state (global optimum—minimum cost or maximum benefit or efficiency) determined by objective function evaluation. Aesthetic estimation is determined by the set of the sounds played by joined instruments, just as objective function evaluation is determined by the set of the values produced by component variables; the sounds for better aesthetic estimation can be improved through practice after practice, just as the values for better objective function evaluation can be improved iteration by iteration.

Beyond such specific applications in search algorithms, the general relation between technology and improvisation is explored by a number of contributors in this Handbook. Tim Blackwell and Michael Young explore both the mathematics and the social aesthetics of “live algorithms.” Computer programs that can be said to improvise, as well as interacting in meaningful ways with improvising musicians, go back to the 1970s advent of relatively small, portable minicomputers and microcomputers that made live, interactive computer music a practical possibility. During the 1970s and 1980s, composer-performers such as Joel Chadabe, Salvatore Martirano, Frankie Mann, David Behrman, George Lewis, David Rosenboom, and the California Bay Area scene surrounding the League of Automatic Music Composers (Jim Horton, John Bischoff, Rich Gold, Tim Perkis, Mark Trayle, and others) began creating computer programs that interacted with each other and human musicians to create music collectively, blurring the boundaries between improvisation (in the traditional sense of purposive human activity) and machine interactivity. Much of this work was influenced by discourses in artificial intelligence, and MIT's Marvin Minsky, one of the founders of the field and a virtuoso improvising pianist, was one of the first to propose musical improvisation as a gateway to understanding larger issues of knowledge representation. Later, as computing technology underwent its second wave of miniaturization, new possibilities opened up for collaborative, networked improvisation; Ge Wang surveys some of these new possibilities for mobile music making in his contribution to these volumes. Another widely influential figure in this area was the groundbreaking psychologist-percussionist-computer scientist David Wessel, who passed away suddenly while preparing his article for this Handbook.

Technologists often adopt improvisational theater as an area of focus. Research on computers as intelligent agents in virtual theater is the subject of Handbook articles by Celia Pearce and Brian

Magerko, while installation and gaming contexts are explored by Simon Penny and D. Fox Harrell. Psychologist Clément Canonne, working on Collective Free Improvisation (CFI), references earlier work by Michael Pelz- Sherman, who calls free improvisation “heteroriginal” music, in which artistic decisions are made in performance relationships between multiple agents who seek to construct a shared representation of the improvisation. Other models of real- time performances, both over the Internet and in live broadcasts, are recounted in Handbook articles by Sher Doruff, Antoinette LaFarge, and Adriene Jenik (in the human- to- human domain) and by David Rothenberg, who discusses his sound improvisation with a very tractable humpback whale. These articles also consider ways in which improvisation fosters new imaginings of the aesthetic, social, cultural, and political dimensions of human- computer and interspecies interactivity.

Research at the nexus of improvisation, neuroscience, music, and cognitive science has also provided new discoveries about the brain, as Aaron Berkowitz, David Borgo, Ellie Hisama, Roger Dean and Freya Bailes, and Vijay Iyer discuss here. This research is presaged by the 1980s and 1990s work of Jeff Pressing, a crucially important early figure in improvisation studies. His models of how people improvise encompass physiology and neuropsychology, motor control, skill, and timing; music theory and oral folklore; artificial intelligence; and much more.

## Conclusion

Since we began this project, a number of influential volumes have emerged that engage improvisation in unusual and exciting ways that challenge prior orthodoxies within fields, revise histories that preserve traditional lacunae in the areas of gender and race, and construct new historiographies. Spearheaded by University of Guelph scholars Ajay Heble (literary theory) and Daniel Fischlin (theater studies), the Improvisation, Community, and Social Practice (ICASP) international research initiative has consistently provided leadership in the field. Founded with a grant from Canada’s Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), ICASP’s remit begins with the assertion that “musical improvisation is a crucial model for political, cultural, and ethical dialogue and action.”

ICASP features seven interrelated research areas: gender and the body, law and justice, pedagogy, social aesthetics, social policy, text and media, and transcultural understanding, all of which come together to produce an ongoing series of colloquia, summer institutes, publications, postdoctoral fellowships, and its open- source peer- reviewed web journal, *Critical Studies in Improvisation/ Études critiques en improvisation*. One important focus of ICASP’s social policy team is on ethics, democracy, and human rights, as represented in recent books by Tracey Nicholls, as well as Heble, Fischlin, George Lipsitz, and Jesse Stewart. Other ICASP-affiliated authors have contributed to legal studies, with recent books and articles by Sara Ramshaw, Tina Piper, and Desmond Manderson.<sup>105</sup> For example, Ramshaw’s analysis of Jacques Derrida’s remarks on improvisation cites the “openly responsive dimension of improvisation, which, although never complete or absolute, glances toward the singular other and keeps alive the possibility of democracy, ethics, resistance and justice in society.” In fact, both scholars and journalists routinely offer the notion of musical improvisation as symbolic of democracy itself.

Like ICASP, this Handbook is designed to serve as a marker for what the interdisciplinary study of improvisation has already achieved in terms of an exemplary literature. Particularly influential on this project has been the work of many scholars we have not already cited in this Introduction. The five edited volumes on improvisation in Walter Fähndrich’s *Improvisation* series (1992– 2003) have included work on improvisative dimensions in semiotics, psychology, anthropology, music therapy, aesthetics, film, dance, and linguistics, among other fields.

As this Handbook goes to press, we’d like to make mention of some recently published books that bode well for the diverse future of the field: *Improvising Medicine*, Julie Livingstone’s ethnographic study of an African oncology ward; Peter Goodwin Heltzel’s ringing Pentecostal call to justice,

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Resurrection City: A Theology of Improvisation; Edgar Landgraf's Improvisation as Art; and the important volume edited by Hans- Friedrich Bromann, Gabriele Brandstetter, and Annemarie Matzke, *Improvisieren: Paradoxien des Unvorhersehbaren*.

With scholarship of this quality emerging, we can be sure that this Handbook will become a spur to further exploration. So much work has been going on in so many fields that as researchers and readers become more familiar with the diversity of new approaches to improvisation— perhaps more than ever before— they will be surprised to find analogies and similarities between findings in disciplines seemingly far distant from their own. In the coming years, we hope to see new work that engages with topic areas in the posthumanities: new materialism, vitalism, and assemblage theory, among others. Spanning a wide range of disciplines in the humanistic, natural, and social sciences, this research examines concepts— like adaptation, self- organization, uncertainty, translation, and emergence— that could be profitably viewed through an improvisational squint. If, as Rosi Braidotti has recently observed, new work on the posthuman has already begun (and will continue) to bridge the two cultures of science and the humanities, then critical improvisation studies is well poised to make significant contributions to these unfolding conversations.<sup>108</sup> Indeed, one important outcome of the volume is to demonstrate that at levels of theory and practice, improvisation provides a site for the most fruitful kind of interdisciplinarity. One can also expect that a volume of this magnitude and scope will generate some controversies as to the propriety and usefulness of studying improvisation. In our view, sparking this kind of debate is a prime objective.

We feel that the study of improvisation presents a new animating paradigm for scholarly inquiry. Borrowing a conceit of David Harvey's, we can consider a fundamental "condition" of improvisation, and the essays we have commissioned for this Handbook demonstrate the ways in which the study of improvisation is now informing a vast array of fields of inquiry. Our hope is for these volumes to serve as both reference and starting point for a new, exciting, and radically interdisciplinary field. <>

## **CHAN BUDDHISM IN DŪNHUA'NG AND BEYOND: A STUDY OF MANUSCRIPTS, TEXTS, AND CONTEXTS IN MEMORY OF JOHN R. MCRAE** edited by Christoph Anderl, Christian Wittern [Series: Numen book series: studies in the history of religions, Brill, 9789004431911]

**CHÁN BUDDHISM IN DŪNHUÁNG AND BEYOND: A STUDY OF MANUSCRIPTS, TEXTS, AND CONTEXTS IN MEMORY OF JOHN R. MCRAE** is dedicated to the memory of the eminent Chán scholar John McRae and investigates the spread of early Chán in a historical, multi-lingual, and interreligious context. Combining the expertise of scholars of Chinese, Tibetan, Uighur, and Tangut Buddhism, the edited volume is based on a thorough study of manuscripts from Dūnhuáng, Turfan, and Karakhoto, tracing the particular features of Chán in the Northwestern and Northern regions of late medieval China.

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Excerpt: John R. McRae (1947–2011) was a leading scholar in the field of Chán Buddhist studies, one who left his mark on the field from the late 1970s and until the moment of his untimely passing. After studying at Stanford University (BA 1969), John completed his master degree (1971) at Yale University, where he also commenced his PhD research under the guidance of Prof. Stanley Weinstein. During the work on his PhD thesis he spent an extended period of time in Japan, studying with the two leading Chán scholars of that time, Yanagida Seizan f fflRd! (1922–2006) and Iriya Yoshitaka ^^^^ (1910–1998). After the completion of his PhD at Yale University (1983, “The Northern School of Chinese Ch’an Buddhism”), he taught and conducted research at several universities in the USA, including Cornell and Indiana Universities, before becoming a lecturer at Komazawa University, Japan. In the course of his life, he conducted research and taught at numerous academic institutions, including the Universities of Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, Princeton, Harvard, Hawaii, Stanford, Tokyo, Bangkok, Chengchi (Taiwan), and St. Petersburg State University.

As one of the most promising students of Yanagida Seizan, John is especially recognized for his contributions to what is commonly referred to as “Early Chán,” i.e., early sectarian formations of Chán Buddhism, including the Northern School the Niútóu School and Shénhuì's Mkt Southern School, and as such has left us several monographs and numerous illuminating articles on various related topics (for a list of John's publications, please consult the bibliography at the end of this volume). His meticulous study of the primary sources has set a model for younger scholars to follow, and it is fair to say that Chán studies would not be what they are today without his sustained input.

John was a pioneer of Chán studies in the West and before the publication of the Northern School (1986) there was little available on Early Chán in a Western language. As such, before its publication, it was difficult for young scholars to find academic materials in English and French on the earliest texts of Chán Buddhism, and they had to rely primarily on Japanese materials, the majority of them provided by Yanagida Seizan. One of the contributors to this volume, John Jorgensen, recalls, when he went to Japan in 1974 in order to attend seminars conducted by Yanagida and Iriya Yoshitaka, John McRae and Bernard Faure were already there. At that time, training in mainland China was not an option due to the Cultural Revolution and an anti-Buddhist atmosphere, and even Chinese scholars in Taiwan like Yinshùn WE, (1906–2005) relied heavily on the works of Japanese scholars.



Around 1983 there was a sudden flourishing of work on Chán in English and French, with Jeffrey Broughton editing *Studies in Ch'an and Hua-yen* (University of Hawai'i Press, 1983), in which John had a chapter on Niútóu, and David Chappell, editing *Early Ch'an in China and Tibet* (Asian Humanities Press, Jain Publishing Company, 1983), in which John translated an article by Yanagida ("The 'Recorded Sayings' Texts of Chinese Ch'an Buddhism"). In 1984, Bernard Faure finished his thesis in French ("La volonté d'orthodoxie: Généalogie et doctrine du bouddhisme Ch'an de l'école du Nord"), concentrating on the Lèngqié shìzìjì and Northern Chán. Another scholarly work, on a much later period, Robert Buswell's *Korean Approach to Zen: The Collected Works of Chinul*, also was published in 1983 (University of Hawai'i Press). John's Northern Ch'an book of 1986 then significantly added to the impetus that was growing in Chán studies and made much available to those scholars who did not read French.

Thus, it was in the period between 1983 and 1986 that there was enough scholarly material available on early Chán to allow this field to flourish. The training and fostering of a younger generation of scholars by Yampolsky, McRae and Faure, among others, led to a surge on new works on Chán/Zen and a deepening of critical approaches, with more studies on Dūnhuáng materials and monographs on later periods.

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The papers collected in this volume aim to address various aspects of Chán studies that have previously received insufficient scholarly attention. The focus is on Chán developments in peripheral regions (from the perspective of the center of the Chinese Empire), and on the Buddhist centers in these areas' role in preserving, defining, and spreading Chán texts and ideas. To illuminate these issues, the publication introduces and analyzes manuscript material from Dūnhuáng, Turfan, and Karakhoto. It also presents high-quality reproductions of hitherto unpublished material (see, for example, Kirill Solonin's paper), critical editions, and translations. Through these case studies and the thorough investigation of extant manuscript material, we hope to enhance understanding of the complex interactions among Buddhists of different ethnic origins from different areas, and the transformations that took place in the Northwestern regions during the medieval era.

### Focus on Dūnhuáng

As the book's title indicates, the region of Dūnhuáng is central to this project. This is not merely because of the tens of thousands of manuscripts that have been found in the "Library Cave" (Mògāo Cave 16/17)—one of the main sources for the study of medieval Chinese culture and religion over the past century—but also because it is located on the western border of the Héxī 河西 Corridor, and as such was a major hub on the eastern section of the Silk Roads. Originally the home of nomads, the region came under Chinese control for the first time during the Hàn 漢 Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). At the end of the Eastern Hàn 東漢 Dynasty (25–220 CE), many families from Central China migrated to this relatively peaceful area, bringing with them the culture of the Chinese heartland. Dūnhuáng fell under the control of various Northern Dynasties. However, from the eighth century onward, when the early Chán movement started expanding, Dūnhuáng was again a city with a strong military garrison. Indeed, the third-largest army of the Táng 唐 Dynasty (618–907) was stationed there, and the city's economy and population gradually expanded. The location of Shāzhōu 沙洲 (as Dūnhuáng was known during the medieval period) enabled it to develop into a key hub for trade between China and the Western regions, and into a vibrant meeting point for various ethnicities, cultures, religions, and philosophies. Consequently, in addition to being an important strategic stronghold, a transit city frequented by traveling merchants, and a temporary dwelling place for itinerant pilgrims and monks, it developed into a religious center that not only passively received ideas from other regions but also molded its own distinctive Buddhist practices and produced a

variety of ground-breaking Buddhist scriptures. Most importantly, it became a key player in the dissemination of specific Buddhist ideas and practices throughout the Northwest and North, while simultaneously receiving innovative concepts from the Central regions, the Twin Capitals, and the western sectors of the Silk Roads.

The discovery of the Dūnhuáng manuscripts around 1900 CE and the subsequent research into these documents have played a pivotal role in increasing our understanding of medieval Chinese literature, language, religion, and culture. Throughout the twentieth century and especially over the last few decades, “Dūnhuáng studies” (*Dūnhuángxué* 敦煌學) has developed into a major field of research. Moreover, because of the vast array of genres, texts, and topics covered by the manuscripts, this umbrella term now encompasses a growing number of increasingly specialized sub-fields.

The Dūnhuáng hoard—including a particularly rich trove of “non-canonical” sources that were not transmitted in any other form after the Táng, Five Dynasties, and Early Sòng periods—has provided a glimpse into myriad forms of Táng Chinese Buddhism in terms of doctrines, practices, and popular rituals (although it can be difficult to determine whether some of these forms of Buddhism were specific to the Northwestern region or rather were over-regional developments). Regarding the various Buddhist sectarian and doctrinal formations that flourished during the Táng Dynasty, the Dūnhuáng corpus is an especially rich source of texts representing the various “schools” (or rather factions) of the early Chán movement. Systematic study of these documents commenced more than fifty years ago, first in Japan, then in the United States (often among scholars who had trained in Japan) and (to a lesser degree) France. Subsequently, John McRae and others introduced these early Chán texts to a wider Western readership. Scholarly research into the formative period of Chán peaked during the 1980s and 1990s; thereafter, attention shifted to the formation of the institutionalized Chán schools during the Sòng Dynasty and—more recently—to developments during the Míng and Qīng.

Although the studies of the early Chán texts have challenged and corrected numerous stereotypes, misconceptions, and historical projections (many of which were based on the historiographical material of the Sòng Chán schools themselves, coupled with Japanese authors’ accounts of the origins of Chán/Zen when introducing Western audiences to the subject), many questions remain, and many aspects of Chán during the Táng demand more thorough and contextualized studies in the future.

### Challenges in the Study of Early Chán

Although our understanding of the development of Chán Buddhism during the Táng, Five Dynasties, and Sòng periods has improved dramatically over recent decades, a number of issues remain. Rather than trying to construct the notion of a historically *coherent* movement, we should focus on the actual circumstances under which Chán was practiced during its early phase of development, with an emphasis on specific locations and periods. Recent studies that have followed this approach have yielded some important results, identifying significant regional differences in doctrinal frameworks, lineage systems, and practice.

Buddhism in China should be seen not as a uniform structure, but as an amalgamation of a multitude of local traditions following their own specific courses of development. These local traditions could have preserved elements of Chinese Buddhist doctrinal and textual heritage not available, or otherwise neglected, in Song-era China.

Indeed, many of the most distinctive and local features of Táng Buddhism seem to have been preserved (or even developed) *outside* the core areas of China proper (for instance, in terms of Chán Buddhism, the Northwestern areas, Sichuān, Fùzhōu, Hángzhōu, Jiāngxī, etc.). By contrast, in

the Central regions, such features often fell victim to fragmentation or destruction due to rebellions and political unrest that targeted the heart of government, or—as happened at the beginning of the Sòng Dynasty—to standardization and “text sanitation” processes that either neglected or actively erased “non-orthodox” features in official historiographies and transmission records. As such, the local forms of Buddhism that developed in the Northwest, Sìchuān, and various other regions have come into sharper focus over recent decades.

### Isolation from the Central Regions

The material found at various cave sites in the Dūnhuáng area (Shāzhōu 沙洲 in historical records) testifies that Buddhism had an increasing influence on the lives of the elite and the general populace in the region, especially during periods of relative isolation from the Central regions. Thus, the religion helped to define the area’s local identity and contributed to the establishment of regional alliances. The Ān Lùshān 安祿山 Rebellion (beginning in 755), which had a devastating impact on the population and culture of the Táng state, also affected Dūnhuáng, since troops left the area to fight the rebels in the Central regions. The Tibetans seized this opportunity to occupy Dūnhuáng, retaining control of the city and the surrounding area until 848. It was under their auspices that Buddhism started to flourish in the region, as Rong Xinjiang (2013: 40) observes:

At the beginning of the Tibetan rule, Shāzhōu [i.e., the Dūnhuáng area] had nine monasteries and four nunneries, with the number of clergy amounting to three hundred and ten. In contrast with this, at the end of the Tibetan rule, there were a total of seventeen monasteries and the number of clergy had escalated to several thousand, even though the entire population of Shāzhōu was only about twenty five thousand.

It is also important to note that the Huìchāng 會昌 persecution of Buddhism—which peaked in 845, with devastating consequences for Buddhist institutions in regions controlled by the central government—had relatively little impact on the Dūnhuáng area.

### Chán Buddhism in the Dūnhuáng Area

The caves in the Mògāo complex, Dūnhuáng, were first inhabited by monastic immigrants to the area. The northernmost section of Mògāo is characterized by the absence of wall paintings or Buddhist icons in the caves (with the exception of those in the “Tantric cave,” D-MG 465). The many caves in this sector would have housed monks engaged in Buddhist practice, as well as a few burial sites.

The Dūnhuáng communities’ fascination with Chán is demonstrated not only by dozens of manuscripts that present a wide variety of early Chán doctrines and lineages but also by numerous extant appraisals and Chán songs. In addition, the corpus features several Tibetan translations and Chán texts that were produced in the area itself, for example by the famous monk Mahāyāna (Móhēyǎn 摩訶衍), who was active there during the late eighth century. Furthermore, stele inscriptions and captions dating from the Late Táng and Five Dynasties periods are important sources of information on Chán activities. It was during this period that interest in Chán peaked in the area. As some recent studies have shown, Chán was frequently referred to as the “Great Vehicle of Sudden Enlightenment” (*dùnwù dàshèng* 頓悟大乘), and adherents could be found among both the general population and the elite. Captions in several Mògāo caves also associate Chán monks and their meditation practice with specific caves.

### The Structure of the Book

This collection of papers is divided into three parts. Part One, “Early Chán History Revisited,” comprises two chapters. In Chapter I, John Jorgensen sets the stage for the rest of the book with an

extensive study and reevaluation of the historical sources relating to early Chán. Chapter 2 then focuses on a genre that has received insufficient scholarly attention: early Chán songs and appraisals. This material is of great historical value as it provides ample evidence of the enduring appeal of many early Chán concepts and practices until the tenth century (in the Dūnhuáng area, at least).

Part Two, “The Spread of Chán in the Northwestern Region,” focuses on the transmission of Chán from an interregional, intercultural, and cross-lingual perspective. In Chapter 3, the *Siddham Song* studied in Chapter 2 is analyzed in its Uighur translation. Chapter 4 then reevaluates certain aspects of Tibetan Chán on the basis of a study of the cultural and multilingual context of Dūnhuáng in the final centuries of the first millennium. Finally, Chapter 5 presents a detailed study of Liáo and Tangut Buddhism through meticulous analysis of Karakhoto manuscripts.

The two chapters in Part Three, “Chán in an Interreligious Perspective,” focus on Táng (Chán) Buddhism from an intersectorian and interreligious perspective by studying relevant Dūnhuáng manuscripts and other textual material. Specifically, Chapter 6 investigates the interactions between Chán and Esoteric Buddhism, while Chapter 7 explores the connections between Táng Buddhism and Daoism.

### Part One: Early Chán History Revisited

The volume opens with a thorough account of early Chán from a historian’s perspective. It is important to reassess many early sources on Chán with a critical eye in order to arrive at a more detailed understanding of its early history. In his paper, Jorgensen reexamines the historical material on Bodhidharma and Huikě, asserting that a critical reading of the historical sources can reveal information that goes “beyond the myths and hagiographical patterns.” This is of great significance since many of the later developments in Chán were based on parameters established during the early historical phase of the formulation of Chán thought. Studying a variety of early Chán texts, Jorgensen attempts to reconcile several historical sources in order to clarify the stages of Bodhidharma’s life and the origins of the texts that are attributed to him. Likewise, when turning his attention to Bodhidharma’s disciple Huikě, Jorgensen presents a close reading of the available sources to explain that biographical descriptions should not be automatically dismissed as “hagiographies.” Indeed, he demonstrates that, if critically assessed, they may provide a wealth of important historical information. He also observes that early Chán figures are frequently linked to specific scriptures, such as the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra*, which remained a highly influential text over the course of many generations, as a number of tenth-century manuscript copies in Dūnhuáng testify. (Other chapters in this collection also discuss the significance of this *sūtra* within early Chán.)

In Chapter 2, Anderl and Sørensen explore a genre that has previously received relatively little scholarly attention in the West—so-called “Chán songs” (*Chán-gē* 禪歌)—in order to demonstrate that early Chán doctrines and practices, including those traditionally associated with the “Northern School,” enjoyed unbroken popularity (at least on a regional level) until approximately the tenth century (see also Chapter 4, this volume). One particular text, the *Siddham Song*, is critically edited through collation of a number of extant manuscripts, and an annotated English translation is provided. Close analysis of this text reveals that many of the motifs that appear in the ninth- and tenth-century Dūnhuáng manuscript copies—including key terminology reminiscent of the Northern School—can be traced back to the earliest phase of the Chán movement. Moreover, the relatively large number of copies of the text that remained in circulation until the tenth century confirm the enduring appeal of early Chán concepts. Interestingly, the text was written in verse form, using a highly complex pattern of rhymes. In addition to brief doctrinal statements and words of encouragement for Chán practitioners, it features a host of phonetic characters. The majority of these seem to be attempts to imitate foreign sounds that were thought to have powers of salvation

similar to those of *dhāraṇīs*, rather than transliterations of actual Sanskrit words. In addition, the preface connects the text to Bodhidharma and the *Laṅkāvatāra* tradition, while the Siddham alphabet is reminiscent of Kumārajīva's *Tōngyùn* 通韻. Overall, the text reflects Chán adherents' multifaceted attitude to Buddhist teaching, and their willingness to employ a variety of genres depending on the target audience. As such, it is just one of many contemporaneous texts to display not only an acute awareness of the sectarianism within Chán Buddhism *but also a conscious decision to adopt a pragmatic, conciliatory approach toward rival factions*. This attitude is similarly evident in other Chán songs and eulogies, some of which were written by monks who were active in the Dūnhuáng area.

## Part Two: The Spread of Chán in the Northwestern Region

### Uighur Chán Buddhism

The extant sources provide only limited evidence of Buddhist activities during the First (552–612) and Second (692–742) Turkic Khaganates, and indeed during the Uighur Steppe Khaganate (744–840), when Manichaeism became the state religion. Closer contact with Buddhism probably did not emerge before the collapse of the last empire, followed by the Uighurs' expansion to the Gānsù Corridor and the Tarim Basin. Most of the extant Buddhist literature was produced in the West Uighur Kingdom between the ninth and the fourteenth centuries. Hundreds of these manuscripts lay undisturbed in Turfan and the Mògāo Library Cave for several centuries before a series of Western and Japanese expeditions discovered them in the early 1900s. This corpus consists of a wide variety of Buddhist texts, translated from a number of languages, including Sanskrit, Chinese, Tocharian, and Sogdian, with the Chán Uighur texts comprising only a small portion of the total. The translations include Chán poems and songs, the apocryphal *Yuánjué jīng* 圓覺經, which was popular among early Chán practitioners, and the Northern Chán School text *Guānxīn lùn* 觀心論 (*Treatise of Contemplating the Mind*). Peter Zieme (2012) has explored the relationship between Dūnhuáng and Turfan through detailed analysis of Berlin's collection of Turfan manuscripts. His research has revealed that Dūnhuáng Buddhism was the driving force behind Chinese-to-Uighur translation activities during the tenth and eleventh centuries (a period which witnessed a significant shift from Manichaeism to Buddhism in Uighur society).

In Chapter 3 of this volume, Zieme presents an annotated English translation of an Uighur translation of the *Siddham Song* (the subject of Chapter 2), comparing it with the original Chinese text and highlighting any variations and reinterpretations that were introduced during the translation process. His conclusion is that, notwithstanding several inconsistencies between the two versions, the Uighur translation helps to clarify several of the Chinese source text's more enigmatic passages.

### Tibetan Buddhism in Dūnhuáng

The era that followed the Tibetan occupation of the Dūnhuáng area is usually known as the "Return of Righteousness Army" (*guīyì jūn* 歸義軍). Although the Tibetan rulers had been ousted, Tibetan language and culture remained defining features of the period, and researchers believe that a large proportion of the populace were bilingual (see Takata 2000). As there are only a few native sources on the period of Tibetan rule, several Dūnhuáng manuscripts—such as the *Old Tibetan Annals* (P.t.1288; Or.8212.187) and the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* (P.t.1286, 1287)—have key roles to play in shedding light on the occupiers' impact on the region. In addition, many manuscripts provide details on the local administration of Dūnhuáng during the occupation. These are of great significance because they allow researchers to reconstruct events that occurred during that period. By contrast, official Táng Dynasty historiographical sources on China's peripheral regions are very scarce. In addition to these administrative and historiographical texts, manuscripts written in Tibetan are especially rich sources of material on Chán Buddhism. Recent research into these Tibetan Chán manuscripts has challenged the traditional narrative (which was mostly based on later



Tibetan sources) concerning the so-called “Debate of Lhasa” between Indian and Chinese monks on the nature of enlightenment. These studies have demonstrated that many of Dūnhuáng’s Tibetan manuscripts date from *after* the Tibetan occupation, indicating that Tibetan influence persisted in the region for much longer than was previously thought. Moreover, as Sam van Schaik and Jakob Dalton point out, Chinese Buddhism continued to have a parallel impact on Tibetan Buddhists long after the period of Tibetan control of Dūnhuáng had come to an end:

With no controlling religious authority, Tibetans were able to develop their own Buddhist traditions, drawing upon those of their neighbours in China and India, as well as their own cultural concerns. Tibetans living in Dunhuang after it was regained by China loyalists were particularly well situated to absorb these various influences.

This “cross-fertilization” was especially dynamic during the tenth century, when Chinese Chán traditions merged with Tibetan Tantric Buddhist traditions. In this context, the role of multi-religious, multi-ethnic Dūnhuáng was crucial, resulting in “syncretism on a level one might expect in a vibrant and multicultural religious centre like Dūnhuáng.” In the texts studied by van Schaik and Dalton, Mahāyoga practices are described using Chán Buddhist terminology, such as *kàn xīn* (Ch. 看心; Tib. *sems la lta*). Such techniques are usually associated with Northern Chán practice, providing further evidence that Northern Chán beliefs and methods continued to circulate in the Dūnhuáng region long into the tenth century. The Tibetan Chán manuscripts include translations of texts by two highly influential masters—the Indian monk Móhēyǎn 摩訶衍 (Skr. Mahāyāna) and Shénxiù from Central China—as well as doctrines that are characteristic of another early Chán school, the Bǎotáng School of Sìchuān (as represented by the work of Wúxiàng 無相; 684–762).

In Chapter 4 of this volume, Sam van Schaik presents a reconsideration of Tibetan Chán. First, he critically examines the accounts on the monk Móhēyǎn 摩訶衍 as well as the ongoing debates over simultaneous and gradual enlightenment. Next, he demonstrates that most of the Tibetan manuscripts recovered from Dūnhuáng date from *after* the Tibetan occupation, that Tibetan Buddhists retained a strong interest in Chinese Chán texts, and consequently that the copying and translation of these texts continued for many years. As such, he concludes that Chán thinking probably exerted a powerful influence over Tibetan Buddhism until the eleventh century, when attention started to shift to new concepts from India. He also investigates key manuscripts associated with Tibetan Chán and highlights their focus on the *Diamond Sūtra*, as used in precept rituals in the context of ordination platforms. Finally, he presents a thorough reevaluation of the lineage system associated with Tibetan Chán.

### Liáo and Tangut Buddhism

Kirill Solonin (2013: 93) has suggested that “Tangut Buddhism emerged under substantial Liao influences, so that one can even suggest that Buddhist traditions in Xixia [Xīxià 西夏] which were traditionally believed to originate from China had, in fact, penetrated from Liao.” As such, the expansion of Buddhism in the Northwestern regions after the tenth century should be seen as a highly complex phenomenon that was driven by multiple intersecting influences. Solonin observes the tendency to “unify” diverse traditions and practices and wonders whether this was a distinctive feature of Buddhism in the “border regions” on account of those regions’ complex contact patterns and waves of imported ideas. Presented with a wealth of choice, the inhabitants may have selected the most compatible elements from each of the rival systems of thought. Or perhaps their distance from the sectarian contexts in which the competing ideologies originated enabled them to focus on the elements they shared, rather than their more divisive aspects. Alternatively, the local Buddhist communities may simply have chosen whichever doctrines and practices best suited their specific needs and expectations. More research into Buddhism in the border regions is needed before a definitive conclusion may be reached.

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As Solonin points out in his contribution, Chán Buddhism cannot be understood as an independent entity in the context of the Liáo. Liáo Buddhism was based on a version of Huáyán 華嚴 Buddhism intermingled with elements of Esoteric Buddhism (this combination is sometimes referred to as “perfect teaching,” *yuánjiào* 圓教) and certain doctrinal features of Chán Buddhism. This approach by the Liáo was adopted by Tangut Buddhists, who eventually incorporated some Tibetan Tantric practices into the system. Consequently, another fascinating transformation of Chán Buddhist thought is evident in the emergence of several forms of Tangut Buddhism, each of which conflated indigenous, Chinese, and Tibetan elements. A reconciliation with Huáyán Buddhism was achieved through selective translations and reinterpretations, providing evidence of alternative forms of Chán Buddhism that coexisted alongside those documented in Northern Sòng texts. Our main sources for the specific forms of Tangut Buddhism are manuscripts found inside a *stūpa* in Khara-Khoto in 1908–1909.

In Chapter 5, Solonin provides a detailed study of the Khitan (Liáo) influence on Tangut Buddhism, focusing specifically on the Khitan Buddhist master Héngcè Tōnglǐ. This monk does not appear in any of the standard Buddhist history works, but he surely exerted considerable influence during his lifetime and played a key role in the *sūtra* carving project of the Liáo Buddhist canon. Solonin concludes that Tōnglǐ was an adherent of a particular Liáo Dynasty form of Chán Buddhism that he promoted within the Tangut state. As such, he and several other important Tangut monks, such as Dào chēn, helped to formulate and disseminate their unique interpretation of Chán (sometimes labeled “Huáyán-Chán” 華嚴禪) in the Northern region.

Solonin presents translations of two previously untranslated texts (one based on a Chinese source and the other on a Tangut manuscript) as well as high-quality reproductions of material from the St. Petersburg collection. He concludes that the exchanges between the various forms of Buddhism in the Northern and Northwestern regions were highly complex, and admits that they can be difficult to trace in geographical and temporal terms. That said, the extant manuscript texts indicate that Liáo Buddhist texts were disseminated throughout these regions, reaching at least as far as Dūnhuáng and even influencing the Uighurs’ understanding of Buddhism. Moreover, they suggest that, in return, Uighur monks were highly active in the establishment of Tangut Buddhism.

### Part Three: Chán in an Interreligious Perspective

The final part of the book explores the fact that early Chán evolved in an environment where multiple Buddhist and non-Buddhist factions competed for resources and attention from China’s political and cultural elites. From at least the mid-eighth century onward, many Chán masters engaged with a wider Buddhist audience, frequently at mass congregations where they administered the precepts during platform ceremonies (*tánjiè* 壇戒). As the Dūnhuáng manuscripts testify, Chán also actively engaged with Esoteric Buddhism, which was imported to China during the eighth century and quickly gained great popularity.

Henrik H. Sørensen investigates this conflation of Chán and Esoteric Buddhism in Chapter 6. Contrary to Sòng Dynasty accounts of the evolution of Chán, Táng Dynasty Chán was a highly complex amalgamation of multiple lineages and local transformations over which other Buddhist and even non-Buddhist schools exerted considerable influence. Based on a study of Dūnhuáng sources, Sørensen attempts to reconstruct the first contact between early Chán and Esoteric Buddhism, which occurred with the arrival of Indian masters such as Śubhākarasimha and Vajrabodhi in the early eighth century. His suggestion is that Chán’s subsequent preoccupation with ceremonies connected with the ordination platform and the bestowal of Bodhisattva precepts (a topic that is analyzed from a variety of angles elsewhere in this volume) might have been prompted by these monks’ promotion of Esoteric Buddhist rituals. Sørensen then turns his attention to the genre

of *Siddham* songs (see also Chapter 2) as well as the spells and mantras that were chanted during meditation, which leads to his conclusion that a number of esoteric texts must have circulated among Chán practitioners in the Dūnhuáng area.

In the second part of his paper, Sørensen demonstrates that Esoteric Buddhism had a significant impact on both Northern and Southern Chán. He also discusses the *Tánfǎ yízé* 壇法儀則—a text that synthesizes the Chán patriarchal lineage and Buddhist Esoteric thought (and features several of the deities who are associated with it)—which enjoyed great popularity in the Dūnhuáng area. This analysis includes the caveat that it is often difficult to classify the Dūnhuáng texts, because many of them are products of rearranging preexisting material and inserting it within new contexts (known as the “cut-and-paste” technique).

Although direct references to Daoism are relatively scarce in early Chán material, there is historical evidence that the former religion was flourishing when Chán adherents formulated key concepts and practices in a series of late seventh- and eighth-century treatises. Indeed, some scholars (e.g., Sharf 2002) have argued that several key scriptures, such as the *Bǎozàng lùn* 寶藏論 (*Treasure Store Treatise*), were direct results of interactions between Daoism and Buddhism. In addition, the Dūnhuáng manuscripts include a handful of early Chán texts that make explicit references to Daoism, longevity, and alchemical practices (which are usually presented as inferior to Buddhist practices).

In Chapter 7, Friederike Assandri investigates the complex interactions and “confluences” between Buddhists and Daoists in medieval China. She points out that there were frequent public debates between the two groups from the late Six Dynasties period to the Mid-Táng, so neither religion should be regarded as a hermetically sealed theology. Rather, their respective adherents engaged in a continual process of exchange during which each side appropriated concepts, terms, and scriptures from the other. In her paper, Assandri explores this process through a study of the development of the Twofold Mystery teaching and its impact on the development of early Chán Buddhism. This form of teaching employed an epistemological system based on Mādhyamaka teaching that was utilized during analysis of the *Dàodé jīng* 道德經. After analyzing various sources, Assandri concludes that interactions between Daoists and Buddhists in the sixth and seventh centuries were not only frequent but enthusiastic, and that proponents of the Twofold Mystery teaching made full use of all the relevant terms, concepts, and soteriological schemes that were available to them, regardless of whether they were Daoist or Buddhist in origin. Meanwhile, many of the ideas developed in the context of the Twofold Mystery teaching found their way into the emerging Táng schools of Buddhism, including “proto-Chán,” and scriptures such as the *Treasure Store Treatise*. <>

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**BUDDHISM AND MODERNITY SOURCES FROM NINETEENTH-CENTURY JAPAN** edited by Orion Klautau, and Hans Martin Krämer with contributions by Orion Klautau, Hans Martin Krämer, Micah Auerback, James Baskind, Nathaniel Gallant, G. Clinton Godart, Seiji Hoshino, Mami Iwata, Jason Ananda Josephson Storm, Mitsuhiro Kameyama, Stephan Kigensan Licha, Michel Mohr, Fabio Rambelli, Erik Schicketanz, Jeff Schroeder, James Mark Shields, Jacqueline I. Stone, Jolyon Baraka Thomas, Dylan Toda, Ryan Ward, Garrett L. Washington [University of Hawaii Press, 9780824884581]

Japan was the first Asian nation to face the full impact of modernity. Like the rest of Japanese society, Buddhist institutions, individuals, and thought were drawn into the dynamics of confronting the modern age. Japanese Buddhism had to face multiple challenges, but it also contributed to modern Japanese society in numerous ways. *Buddhism and Modernity: Sources from Nineteenth-Century Japan* makes accessible the voices of Japanese Buddhists during the early phase of high modernity.

The volume offers original translations of key texts—many available for the first time in English—by central actors in Japan's transition to the modern era, including the works of Inoue Enryō, Gesshō, Hara Tanzan, Shimaji Mokurai, Kiyozawa Manshi, Murakami Senshō, Tanaka Chigaku, and Shaku Sōen. All of these writers are well recognized by Buddhist studies scholars and Japanese historians but have drawn little attention elsewhere; this stands in marked contrast to the reception of Japanese Buddhism since D. T. Suzuki, the towering figure of Japanese Zen in the first half of the twentieth century. The present book fills the chronological gap between the premodern era and the twentieth century by focusing on the crucial transition period of the nineteenth century.

Issues central to the interaction of Japanese Buddhism with modernity inform the five major parts of the work: sectarian reform, the nation, science and philosophy, social reform, and Japan and Asia. Throughout the chapters, the globally entangled dimension—both in relation to the West, especially the direct and indirect impact of Christianity, and to Buddhist Asia—is of great importance. The Introduction emphasizes not only how Japanese Buddhism was part of a broader, globally shared reaction of religions to the specific challenges of modernity, but also goes into great detail in laying out the specifics of the Japanese case.

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## Buddhism and Modernity in Japan, An Introduction by Orion Klautau and Hans Martin Krämer

The challenges faced by Japanese Buddhists since the middle of the nineteenth century were in many respects homegrown. The iconoclastic movement to “abolish the Buddha and smash Sakyamuni” (haibutsu kishaku) was certainly a local phenomenon, as was the particular configuration of state and religion during the early Meiji period, when the new government still grappled with a religious policy for the young nation-state. Yet, Japanese Buddhism also shared many of the difficulties modernity brought to religions worldwide. Perhaps the most fundamental of these was the new type of secularism that went along with Enlightenment. This was not necessarily an objective process of secularization, but certainly brought with it a change in attitudes toward and expectations from religion(s), primarily from the modern natural sciences and philosophical materialism. None of the major religious traditions around the world remained unaffected by this new challenge. The type of reaction that took place in each religion—internal reform, conservative reassertion, creation of eclectic new religions, or religious universalism—varied, as did its timing.

While this new secularism may be seen as an indirect effect of the ascent of industrial capitalism, another of its consequences, the imperialist encroachment upon the rest of the world by the West, made possible a new solution to the threat felt by Christianity at home: reaching out globally through missionary efforts. It was through this—mainly Protestant—mission that Asian countries including Japan first met religious modernity head-on. Asian religions such as Japanese Buddhism had to react to the competition posed by Protestant Christianity, which came with the market advantage of representing modernity. Debates about the reconfiguration of the relations between state and religion were heavily tinged by the question of what to do with Christianity.

Japanese Buddhists—or at least some of them—were acutely aware of the changes around them. Since the 1850s, Buddhist authors had addressed the new threat posed by Christianity, and some

sects even introduced “enemy studies” into the curricula of their academies. Buddhist authors were among the first in Japan to write about evolutionary theory and the particular problems this new scientific theory implied for revealed religion. Buddhist authors also introduced modern historiographic methods into the writing of religious history. Although different sects adjusted in different ways, there was a general mood of readiness for reform almost unparalleled in other major religious traditions around the world, where conservative attempts at reassertion usually played a much larger role—be it in South Asian Hinduism and Islam, Southeast Asian Islam, European Christianity, or Middle Eastern and North African Islam—where reform attempts frequently entailed a split from the mainstream religious institutions and the creation of new religious movements. In contrast to these cases, Japanese Buddhists enthusiastically embraced the changes necessitated by the modern age, which they interpreted as new possibilities.

Japanese Buddhism as we know it today was formed in this era of tremendous change. The modern period, largely the decades between the middle of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, has nonetheless received scant attention in historical research on Japanese Buddhism. In Japan, it has been dwarfed by doctrinally oriented sectarian studies and the towering attention devoted to the late ancient and medieval periods, supposedly the time when Buddhism in Japan flourished and engendered its most original innovations under the great reformers of the Heian (Saichō and Kūkai, the founders of the Tendai and Shingon, sects, respectively) and Kamakura periods (Hōnen, Shinran, Dōgen, and Nichiren the founders of the Jōdo, Jōdo Shinshū, Sōtō Zen, and Nichiren sects, respectively). Together with the niche subjects of early modern Buddhism (i.e., that of the Tokugawa period) and contemporary Buddhism (since 1945), modern Buddhism has only slowly taken ground as an accepted field within Buddhist Studies since Yoshida Kyūichi <sup>^</sup> (1915–2005) pioneered work on the Meiji period, emphasizing its “modernity,” in the late 1950s. In Western-language scholarship on Japan, the transformative era of the nineteenth century has taken even longer to catch on, despite the importance of the Meiji period more generally in European and North American scholarship on Japan since the early postwar period. In the following sections, we will first trace the major transformations Buddhism underwent at an institutional level in nineteenth-century Japan, especially in connection with the broader religious policy of the Meiji state. With those factors in mind, we will move to an overview of how scholarship on the topic developed in both the West and in Japan, before identifying the major issues that Japanese Buddhists faced in the nineteenth century, which will also inform the makeup of this volume.

## Buddhism in Nineteenth-Century Japan: An Overview

Before we enter into the history of scholarship on modern Japanese Buddhism proper, it will be useful to gain a general insight into the main institutional changes experienced by the Japanese schools of Buddhism after the Meiji restoration of 1868. Historian of religion Hayashi Makoto (b. 1953) has recently proposed, in response to an earlier division by Yoshida Kyūichi, a new periodization for the history of modern Buddhism in Japan. Diverging from the more Marxist-influenced classification of Yoshida, Hayashi asserts the need to understand the history of nineteenth-century Japanese Buddhism not only as the making of something new—or in other words, of the “modern” itself—but also as the gradual process of dismantling a centuries-old religious system with its own intrinsic rationale.<sup>3</sup> That is, we can only begin to comprehend the “modernization” of Buddhism in Japan if we take into consideration the adaptational struggles that came with the sudden abolishment of Tokugawa institutions, then indissociable from the Buddhist establishment itself. From that perspective Hayashi divides the history of post-Restoration Buddhism into three periods, which will function as a guide for the brief historical overview below.

## The Age of Negotiation (1868–1872)

In 1868, after over a decade of complicated internal debates among the political elites and a few years of actual military conflict, the young Mutsuhito <sup>^^</sup> (1852–1912) was crowned emperor of

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Japan. Although fighting against Tokugawa forces would continue in northern Japan well into the following year, in areas already under Imperial authority the process of “restoring” institutions of the ancient *ritsuryō* state—or rather, idealized versions thereof—had begun. This meant, of course, the abolition of social and legal structures then considered by different factions within the new government as being both impediments to the “restoration” of Imperial power and “former evil practices” associated with the Tokugawa regime. The Buddhist institution was, unmistakably, one such structure, and for Meiji ideologues it had to be dealt with accordingly. The government thus issued the many individual directives that became known in later historiography as the *shinbutsu bunri* (edicts). These, as John Breen explains, were aimed at putting “an end to all state privileges” enjoyed by Buddhism and transferring those social functions to “Shinto.” While their most immediate objective seems to have been to prompt all involved parties to “clarify” (*hanzen*, i.e., distinguish between the worship of *bud-dhas* and *kami* at a mostly material and ritual level), they eventually led to the sometimes violent outbursts known as the *haibutsu kishaku* move-ment.<sup>6</sup> However, the foremost preoccupation of Buddhists was that the Meiji state, seeking friendly relations with Western countries, would now allow the free practice of Christianity in Japan. The social role of keeping Japan a “Jesus-free” land was perceived by many late-Edo Buddhists as the main *raison d’être* of their institution, a trend readers can verify in several texts included in this sourcebook.

The way Buddhists reacted to these policies was, however, not as one would at first expect: although some of the government actions could be read as unmistakably anti-Buddhist, the most representative part of the clergy did not act with contempt nor did it engage in direct protest. Rather, they proceeded to acknowledge their “past mistakes” and proposed a renewed relationship with their new secular leaders. During the early months of 1869, clerics representing different Buddhist schools—a number of them included in this volume—came together and founded the League of United Buddhist Sects (*Shoshū dōtoku kaimei*), the first supra-sectarian Buddhist association of modern Japan.

They drafted a joint document in which they declared the “inseparability of secular law and Buddhist law,” the “critique and proscription of heresies” and, most significantly, the “sweeping away of the past evils of each sect,” among other items.

The proposal set forth by the League of United Buddhist Sects was not to set themselves against the new government, but to assert that the Buddhist institution, despite its numerous problems, could still be useful in the years to come—for instance in keeping away the “heresy” of Christianity, still forbidden in Japan at the time. Between 1869 and 1872, however, state policies aimed at disestablishing the Tokugawa regime would continue to shake the very foundations of Buddhist institutions: in early 1871, in preparation for the abolition of the domain system that would take place a few months later, the Meiji state confiscated all land that had been granted to both Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines by the shogun and daimyo. Although this remains an understudied topic, the confiscation had a far larger material impact on the Buddhist institution than any of the isolated *haibutsu kishaku* events. By mid-1871 the government had also issued a new state-centered family registration system. This led, a few months later, to the official abolition of the Buddhist-controlled religious census that had formed the basis of the *danka* system, a feature characteristic of Tokugawa Japan. In 1872, a law was issued decriminalizing clerical marriage and meat eating, both of which had been considered illegal in the Tokugawa context. Later that year members of the clergy were also made to take surnames, and were now, in essence, no different from commoners (*heimin*).

By the end of 1872, Buddhism had been stripped of both its main sources of income and of its social status. It was also on the verge of seeing the decriminalization of Christianity, perceived as its great enemy. Indeed, in the beginning of 1873, the Meiji state decided to withdraw the centuries-long



prohibition against the “heretic teaching.” Although by this point many a cleric was convinced that the government was truly setting out to “eradicate” Buddhism, others continued to seek state approval, emphasizing the myriad ways the dharma could contribute to the national goal of enriching the country and strengthening the army (*fukoku kyōhei*) and, as we will see below, to the emperor-centered national promulgation campaign.

### The Age of Kyōdōshoku (1872–1884)

In order to eliminate Buddhism from the public sphere and transfer its social functions to Shinto, the government had promulgated, in early 1870, the Imperial decree on the Great Promulgation Campaign (*Taikyō senpu no mikotonori*). This edict asserted the unity of ritual and government (*saisei itchi*), and established the office of *senkyōshi* (propagandists), who were supposed to elucidate to the nation the “Great Way of obedience to the gods.” Nativist and Confucian scholars were recruited for the position, while Buddhist priests were deliberately excluded from participating. However, for a number of reasons, which included lack of consensus regarding what these officials should in fact “propagate,” by mid-1872 the *senkyōshi* had been abolished; now under a different ministry, the *Kyōbushō* their role was reformulated and incorporated into the newly created office of doctrinal instructor (*kyōdōshoku*). The latter now included not only Nativist and Confucian scholars, but also Buddhist priests and whoever else was considered to have experience with audiences, such as haiku poets and rakugo storytellers.

The main role of the *kyōdōshoku* was to preach to the population based on the “Three Standards of Instruction” (*sanjō kyōsoku*) which were as follows: “To embody reverence for the deities and love of the country,” “To clarify the principles of heaven and the way of humanity,” and last, “To revere and assist the emperor and obey the will of the court.” These aimed at inculcating into the population the ideal of a new *tennō*-centered Japan. With a few notable exceptions, most of the Buddhist world revealed a rather positive attitude toward these standards, even contributing to the formation of an entire exegetical genre surrounding them. This national proselytization plan focused on the Three Standards was further expanded in the following year, with the opening of the Great Teaching Institute (*Daikyōin*), set up on the grounds of *Zōjōji* temple in Tokyo. One should note that 1872 was also the year of the promulgation of Japan’s first Code of Education (*gakusei*). At this early stage, there was not yet a clear differentiation between *kyōka* ^^, which would be a duty of the *Kyōbushō*, and *kyōiku*, which would be the responsibility of the *Monbushō* (Ministry of Education).

Nevertheless, this relationship did become an issue after 1873, when *Monbushō* officials returned from Europe at least partly convinced of the ideal of separating religion and education.<sup>13</sup> From around this time, *Monbushō* bureaucrats began advocating a clear distinction between the roles of proselytizers and schoolteachers, which eventually led to the exclusion of Buddhist priests from public education. This ban was later relaxed, and then ultimately lifted in 1879, when it became clear that the Buddhist clergy was essential in terms of personnel for the *Monbushō* enterprise. Note that although the *Daikyōin* had been dissolved in 1875 (and the *Kyōbushō* itself abolished in 1877), the *kyōdōshoku* system itself continued well into the following decade. This meant that the time between the late 1870s and early 1880s was one of accommodation for Buddhists, who now had to find their role amid this new division between “education” and “religion.” In fact, while *kyōdōshoku* members of the Buddhist clergy still had a public role, the office also increasingly lost importance, making it clear that it was just a matter of time until it was abolished altogether. In the “enlightened” environment of Meiji Japan, asserting themselves vis-à-vis the old “enemy” of Christianity as a positive force for the state became the highest commitment for most Buddhists.

From the early 1880s, as Japan embarked on the journey to become a constitutional state, Buddhists strove at the intellectual level to adapt to the myriad new discourses required by current times. Besides the abovementioned concept of “education,” the concepts of “science” and “religion” also

posed their challenges, as did those of “individual” and “faith.” Another important development at this time was the rise of lay Buddhist movements. Whereas until the early Meiji years nonclerical persons in positions of leadership in Buddhist institutions were virtually unheard of, laypeople began playing a major role around this time, as we can observe in the work of individuals such as Ōuchi Seiran (1845–1918) and Nakanishi Ushirō (1859–1930). Their less directly engaged position—or in other words, the fact that they were not as committed to institutional demands—was also important in overcoming, when necessary, the sectarianism so characteristic of Japanese Buddhist schools. This in turn became an essential tool for reframing Buddhism as a “religion.”

### Establishing the Modern Buddhist Institution (1884–1900)

Between the late 1870s and early 1880s, as the Freedom and People’s Rights Movement (*Jiyū minken undō*) gained strength, so did the demand for a constitution. The idea of a constitutional environment—and the possibility of Japan adopting a state religion—provided Buddhists with a new type of awareness, which can be observed, for instance, in the work of Shaku Unshō (1827–1909) included in this sourcebook. At the same time, the realm of religious policy also experienced its own crisis. With the demise of the Daikyōin in 1875—due mainly to the lack of cooperation by Jōdo Shin priests prompted by Shimaji Mokurai (1838–1911)—a new Shinto-centered bureau took over much of its role. A dispute arose between the chief priest of the Ise Shrines, who had been appointed the head of this new Office of Shinto Affairs (*Shintō jimukyoku*), and the chief priest of Izumo Shrine over which deities to enshrine in the office. As a consequence of this “Pantheon Dispute” (*saijin ronsō*), which could only be solved by the arbitration of the Imperial court, in 1882 the government forbade priests working in national and Imperial shrines (*kankoku heisha*) from serving as *kyōdōshoku*. They were also forbidden to perform funerals. The dissatisfied factions went on to establish their own institutions, giving rise to the distinction between “Shrine Shinto” and “Sect Shinto.”

This internal dispute, intrinsically related to the very issue of Imperial authority, constituted the final blow to the already moribund *kyōdōshoku* system. Between March and April 1884, Inoue Kowashi (1844–1895), one of the architects of the Meiji Constitution, proposed the elimination of the office. He emphasized the ideal of religious freedom alongside a legal framework for regulating religious corporations. Indeed, a few months later in August 1884, the Council of State promulgated a directive abolishing the position of *kyōdōshoku*, an event of utmost importance for Buddhism. The proclamation not only ended the twelveyear existence of the office, but also reformulated the sectarian administrator system (*kanchō seido*), giving religious institutions the autonomy to appoint and dismiss their own clergy. Furthermore, it also stipulated that Buddhist schools had to prepare, according to the principles of their own foundational doctrines (*rikkyō kaishū no shugi*), a sectarian constitution (*shūsei*), laws for governing temples (*jihō*), and rules for appointing clerics for various positions. These would be submitted to the minister of home affairs (*naimukyō*), who would then authorize the sects’ provisions.

This right to self-determination affected Buddhist sects in very different ways. Some sects had to come up with solutions for long-term internal rivalries, such as the centuries-old friction between the Sōjiji and Eiheiiji temples in Sōtō Zen, or even give consideration to what would, in essence, be their “foundational doctrine.” Others had relatively little trouble developing a centralized administration based on the tenets of modern bureaucracy. This newly gained autonomy, albeit limited by the boundaries set by the home minister, introduced yet another sense of crisis for Buddhists—they needed a clear “doctrine,” which, as per contemporary requirements, had to accord with ideals such as “science” and “rationality.” That is, in a context in which the influence of Christianity grew each day, Buddhists emphasized that their “religion,” despite its many flaws, was still in harmony with the moral goals of the Japanese nation and could, therefore, contribute to

uniting people's spirits. Buddhism, they held, was a better aid than Christianity for the national enterprise not only because it had been in Japan for longer, but because "rationally," it made sense.

The 1890s, however, brought yet new developments. The Meiji Constitution of 1889 and Imperial Rescript on Education in 1890 both settled the idea of religious freedom alongside the understanding of emperor worship as civic duty. The 1891 *lèse-majesté* incident involving Uchimura Kanzō (1861–1930), who as a Christian had hesitated to fully bow during a ritual reading of the Rescript, provided the Buddhist world with further ammunition to question the role of their old enemy in the new constitutional framework. Could Christians uphold their beliefs without compromising their duties as subjects? The Buddhist answer was obviously "no." This became a still more pressing issue in 1894, when the government signed, just before the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, the Anglo-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation (*Nichiei tsūshō kōkai jōyaku*). By the terms of the agreement, scheduled to come into force five years later in July 1899, British nationals in Japan would be subject to local laws, which implied an end to the system of extraterritoriality and the enactment of what the Japanese referred to as "mixed residence" (*naichi zakkyō*). At a time when Japan was becoming more aggressive in its colonial enterprises, the new system meant that foreigners were no longer limited to inhabiting specific settlements such as Kobe or Yokohama, but could now live anywhere in Japanese territory as long as they complied with the law. The idea of Christians roaming around as they wished felt like a threat to many, which prompted the government to begin considering a law of religions.

### Into the Twentieth Century

Such a law of religions was proposed in 1899, the same year in which the mixed-residence system was scheduled to begin. It established somewhat equal regulations for Sect Shinto, Buddhism, and Christianity, but as scholars have pointed out, failed to satisfy any of the representatives of the different groups. While it did find some advocates among Buddhists, most schools united against the law,<sup>20</sup> claiming that Buddhism, as the religion of the majority of the Japanese, should be granted a special legal status, akin to what Catholic and Protestant churches experienced in France and Germany, respectively. They were successful in their lobbying efforts, as in early 1900 the law, which had been approved by the (lower) House of Representatives, was rejected by the (upper) House of Peers. This caused the government to revise its plans and establish, in April 1900, two new offices within the Home Ministry: the Shrine and Religion Bureaus. The latter was supposed to oversee all "religions" (including Sect Shinto), whereas the former would be in charge of official "Shrine Shinto" (*jinja shintō*) affairs. This division, which in a sense formalized the influential discourse of Shrine Shinto as "non-religious," is considered by scholars as a major turning point in the establishment of what we now refer to as "State Shinto" (*kokka shintō*).

The late nineteenth century was, as seen above, a time of rapid change not only for Buddhism, but for the entire Japanese religious landscape. For Buddhist schools, in particular, it was a time of adaptation and negotiation, a time of finding new justifications for their existence vis-à-vis the state and in relation to each other. Indeed, although Hayashi Makoto mentions the years between 1900 and 1945 as the last stage of his periodization, he does imply that the impact of the above challenges continued to influence the way Buddhists acted and thought well into the twentieth century, a point readers can confirm in several of the texts included here. In the following section, we will provide a brief history of how scholarship has dealt with this complicated period, after which we will provide an overview of how this volume relates to some of these questions.

### The History of Research on Modern Japanese Buddhism in Western Languages

Although the question of modernity was in a way one of the defining issues in postwar Western-language scholarship on Japan, religion was conspicuously absent from research in modern Japanese history long after 1945. The paradigm of modernization theory that dominated the field well into the

1970s implied that secularization had rendered religion more or less obsolete in the modern age. The Japanese case seemed to bear out this assumption particularly well, given the aggressively secularist stance of Japanese elites.

The role of religious institutions or religious thought within modern Japanese history was not entirely absent in Western scholarship, but it did not become a main focus of studies until around 1980. The first important monographic study, Kathleen Staggs's 1979 dissertation *In Defense of Japanese Buddhism* remains unpublished, yet it is still often cited. It was not until 1990 that a landmark study of Meiji Buddhism with a legitimate claim to present a comprehensive picture introduced the importance of this subject into English-language scholarship with force. James Ketelaar's *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan* to this day remains the point of departure for anyone dealing with Meiji Buddhism in the English language, given that it effectively covers central aspects including Tokugawa-period preconditions, the *haibutsu kishaku* narrative central to the book's title, attempts of intra-Buddhist reform in response to the crisis of the first years of the Meiji period, and the early years of the global spread of Japanese Buddhism.

This groundbreaking work has since then been complemented by more specialized studies in a number of important subfields. One of these has been the introduction of individuals important to the story of modern Buddhism. In 2002, Peter Kleinen contributed to this genre with a study on the bakumatsu priest Gesshō (1817–1858), including a full German translation of his *Buppō gokoku*. The same author had already penned a monograph on Tanaka Chigaku earlier, although this was written more within the context of the Japanese ultranationalism and fascism of the 1930s. More recently, Hans Martin Krämer has produced a study of the early Shimaji Mokurai, a pioneer of many modernist innovations, particularly in the field of the relationship of religion and the state. Mokurai's contributions were to characterize modern Buddhism, and especially the modern Jōdo Shinshū institutions, throughout the last decades of the nineteenth century.

Even before Ketelaar's study, interest in the history of Christianity in modern Japan had led to the publication of Notto Thelle's *Buddhism and Christianity in Japan* in 1987. For the bakumatsu and the late Meiji period, Thelle offers a comprehensive account of the changing character of the relationship between the two religions, introducing a plethora of historical actors and texts from both sides. A work of similar character was written by Monika Schrimpf in German, extending the time frame somewhat up to the end of the Meiji period. More recently, Michel Mohr has complicated the picture of Buddhist-Christian relations by looking beyond the mainline denominations and focusing on the cooperation between Unitarians and Japanese Buddhists toward the end of the Meiji period.

Another focus of Western-language studies has been the internal institutional changes of Buddhist sects in the Meiji period. Two dramatic changes stand out, especially when viewed in comparison to the preceding Tokugawa period. One concerned the way of dealing with death. While Buddhism had had a virtual monopoly on entombing the dead and conducting funeral rites up to 1868, this was now challenged by competition from Shinto shrines. The challenge was more than symbolic, as the livelihood of priests largely depended on the funerary business. In his 2006 *Modern Passings*, Andrew Bernstein has looked into how Buddhism weathered these difficulties in the early Meiji period. Richard Jaffe has researched the other great change imposed upon Buddhist priests by the new government in 1868, namely the rescission of the prohibition of marriage that had been upheld by the state until then. This is also one of the few works in English that has taken up the question of monastic rules, the future of which was a hotly contested issue in Buddhist circles in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

One of the major topics pioneered by Ketelaar's *Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan* was the beginnings of the propagation of Japanese Buddhism in Europe and North America, especially through the participation of Japanese priests in the 1893 World Parliament of Religions in Chicago.

The Japanese activities at the Parliament have been the subject of two monographic studies, *Presenting Japanese Buddhism to the West* by Judith Snodgrass and *Mahayana Phoenix* by John Harding. In contrast, the introduction of Japanese Buddhism to Europe has not been a central object of scholarship so far and has mostly been treated either marginally within the framework of the introduction of Buddhism overall or within Japanese religions more broadly, such as in the case of Frédéric Girard's book on Émile Guimet and Japanese religions.

Surprisingly, despite the groundwork laid by Kathleen Staggs, the vicissitudes Buddhist thought underwent in modern Japan have not been the central subject of monographic studies, although they do play some role in many of the studies mentioned already. Galen Amstutz's diachronic study of Pure Land thought in Japan includes a substantial chapter on the modern period. Similarly, Clinton Godart's recent study of evolutionary theory in modern Japan includes an in-depth consideration of how Buddhists situated themselves vis-à-vis this specific challenge of the modern natural sciences.

Another subject that until very recently was marginal is the connection that emerged, since the 1890s, between Buddhism and progressive politics. While some scholarship on the later twentieth-century movement of Engaged Buddhism had been available for some time, two recent English-language monographs have now advanced our understanding of this movement's Meiji-period precedents. While Melissa Curley's *Pure Land, Real World* focuses on the Jōdo Shinshū, James Mark Shields's *Against Harmony* casts a slightly wider net to include Zen as well as Nichiren Buddhism. Both works only partially deal with the Meiji period and include events up to 1945 and even the early postwar period. Equally marginal, but perhaps even more important, is the subject of Japanese Buddhism in relation to "Asia." Although, as we will see in the section below, a number of volumes on that subject have been published in Japanese in recent years, there is still very little work on it in other languages. Notable exceptions are Micah L. Auerback's unpublished PhD dissertation and Hwansoo I. Kim's *Empire of the Dharma*, both focusing on the role of Japanese Buddhism in colonial Korea. Although Richard Jaffe's recent *Seeking Śākyamuni* addresses the issue of Japanese connections with South and Southeast Asia, there is, other than in Japanese, still no monograph-length study in English (or any other European language) of the position of Japanese Buddhist schools in either continental China or colonial Taiwan, for instance.

Lastly, a number of recent studies are already beginning to have great impact on the field of the history of modern Japanese Buddhism, despite being of a more synthetic character. The most important to mention in this context is Jason Ā. Josephson's 2012 monograph *The Invention of Religion in Japan*, the first work to take up the question of how the concept of religion was "invented" in modern Japan and what consequences its appropriation yielded, including its effects on modernizing Buddhism. A similar work with a greater focus on the relationship between religious groups and the state is Trent Maxey's 2014 monograph *The "Greatest Problem."* Finally, there is Isomae Jun'ichi's *Religious Discourse in Modern Japan* of the same year, which also sets its main focus on the complicated consequences of the introduction of the modern concept of "religion" into Japan, but this time with a focus on its effects within the academy, especially the emerging field of religious studies in Japan.

Almost all of the studies mentioned above stand in close relationship to Japanese scholarship on the same subject, in that they were prompted by or developed in close cooperation with Japanese scholars of modern Buddhism. In fact, although relatively marginal within Japan, Japanese scholarship on the history of modern Buddhism predates that in Western languages by several decades and may be thought crucial for the agenda setting of the latter.

## History of Research of Modern Japanese Buddhism in Japanese

Domestic considerations of the post-Restoration development of Buddhist history began during the 1890s and became both more frequent and robust around 1930. For instance, in 1894 the journal

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Bukkyō (Buddhism) published a call for papers on historical sources of “Meiji Buddhism,” which was followed, from the next issue, with contemporary accounts by important figures such as Nanjō Bun’yū (1849–1927) and Maeda Eun (1855–1930). Ten years after this early attempt, Ōuchi Seiran would publish, in the pages of the journal *Shin Bukkyō* (New Buddhism), an article titled “Lectures on the History of Meiji Buddhism,” which in a vein similar to the papers mentioned above, relied on the contemporary eyewitness character of its author.<sup>46</sup> The establishment of the journal *Bukkyō shigaku* (Studies in Buddhist history) in 1911 meant yet another important step in the historical study of Buddhism, and served as a catalyst to the gathering of sources that would, in the following decade, culminate in the *Meiji ishin shinbutsu bunri shiryō* (Historical sources on the separation of Shinto and Buddhism during the Meiji Restoration), a true tour de force in five volumes published between 1926 and 1929.

Although important works on the Restoration’s impact on Buddhism were published from the mid-1920s, the following decade saw far more important developments in terms of monographic studies on the topic. For instance in 1933, Tomomatsu Entai (1895–1973), encouraged by French orientalist Sylvain Lévi (1863–1935), established in Tokyo the Historiographical Institute for Meiji Buddhism (*Meiji bukkyōshi hensanjo*, which, despite being only a minor influence at the time, did help pave the way for a whole generation of scholars focusing on the modern history of Buddhism, and revealed the then increasing preoccupation to save as many primary sources from the Meiji period as possible.

After 1945, the postwar generation would build upon this documentary groundwork and, based on a new interpretation of the meaning of “modernity,” turn the study of “Meiji Buddhism” on its head. The generation of scholars represented by Yoshida Kyūichi and Kashiwahara Yūsen (1916–2003), who had lived through the Pacific War as male adults in their late twenties and were influenced by Marxism, presented a narrative of modern Japanese Buddhism critical to the role of religious institutions in the formation of the so-called Emperor System (*tennōsei*). This group of scholars, active mostly between the 1950s and 1980s, understood the collaborationist attitude of Buddhist schools in the modern war efforts as marks of a “feudal character” that somehow survived into the Meiji period. They saw an exception to this affirmative position only in the few instances when Buddhists openly defied the state or, rather and more frequently, proposed alternatives to what these postwar scholars perceived as a totalitarian system.

In this sense, to the point that they served to affirm state ideology, the majority of Buddhist activities was criticized as “feudal,” whereas innovative and sometimes “anti-establishment” movements such as Kiyozawa Manshi’s (1863–1903) *Seishinshugi* (Spiritualism) or Sakaino Kōyō’s (1871–1933) *Shin Bukkyō* (New Buddhism) were deemed worthy of the rubric “modern,” or *kindaiteki*. These early postwar scholars followed the mainstream of non-Marxist social science and historiography in Japan. Associated with names such as Maruyama Masao (1914–1996) or Ōtsuka Hisao (1907–1996), the concern with Japan’s modernity—or rather its lack thereof—dominated those disciplines well into the 1970s and even 1980s.

Despite this modernist view of history, scholars such as Yoshida and Kashiwahara, alongside their junior Ikeda Eishun (1929–2004), produced important works that remain authoritative in the field to this day, and were responsible for encouraging a new generation of younger students of modern Buddhism. Indeed, while these earlier scholars saw the history of modern Japanese Buddhism as the process of the realization of their own postwar ideal of modernism—and criticized everything that was not part thereof as “feudal”—the following generation, represented by Okada Masahiko (b. 1962), Fukushima Eiju (b. 1965), Moriya Tomoe (b. 1968), and Ōtani Eiichi (b. 1968), would take yet a different stance. Influenced by the discursive approach that had a decisive impact upon the Japanese humanities from the 1990s onward, this generation of scholars was less interested in the issue of



war responsibility and more focused on understanding the strategic self-styling of the historical actors—that is: what did it mean, in the context of modern Japan, to be a “Buddhist”?

The research results presented by those younger scholars need to be understood in connection with the handful of studies on the establishment of the modern concept of “religion” (*shūkyō*) published after the mid-1990s. Despite some earlier works on the topic, monographs such as those by Haga Shōji, Yamaguchi Teruomi, and Isomae Jun’ichi, as well as the edited volume *Reconsidering “Religion”* by Shimazono Susumu and Tsuruoka Yoshio, showed that issues of self-identification were as much at the core of the so-called modernization process as were institutional changes. The attention to identity formation included a new focus on how Japanese national identity was shaped vis-à-vis Asia, and this translated into new studies focusing on cultural aspects of Buddhist proselytization in China and Korea. Moreover, research into the activities of Japanese Buddhists on the mainland, and other aspects of accommodation of sectarian institutions with the wartime state, now aimed less at facile criticism of these instances of “collaboration,” but rather at identifying the inner logic behind it.

By the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, enough works had been published that the first critiques of the field itself started to appear. Spearheaded by the abovementioned Hayashi Makoto—who also served for several years as president of the Society for the Study of Modern Japanese Buddhist History (*Nihon Kindai Bukkyōshi Kenkyūkai* the main hub for scholars in the field)—these critiques sometimes pointed to how the field had changed in terms of self-identification, in the course of the 1950s and 1960s, from Meiji Buddhism to Modern Buddhism, and how the actual contents of these studies had shifted along with our very understanding of “modernity.” He alluded, for instance, to the lack of studies on the transition between the Edo and Meiji periods, on the early Shōwa period, and on the transition into the postwar period.

Consciously or not, more recent scholars have produced studies that, in many ways, fill in at least some of the gaps pointed out by Hayashi. Having experienced graduate education in an environment where the dialogue with non-Japanese scholarship was already the norm, studies by Tanigawa Yutaka (b. 1973), Hoshino Seiji (b. 1973), Ōsawa Kōji (b. 1975), Iwata Mami (b. 1980), Shigeta Shinji (b. 1980), Kondō Shuntarō (b. 1980), and Ōmi Toshihiro (b. 1981) have more explicitly connected Buddhism and its institutions with other areas of social activities, thus expanding the narrower traditional “History of Buddhism” into broader historiographical inquiries. For instance, what was the role of Buddhism in the development of modern education or the modern disciplinary institutions? How did the idea of “Buddhism” function in the establishment of “religion” or “art” as modern discourses? What was the ideological and practical role of Buddhism in the formation of panAsianism? How did Buddhism connect with the reception of Marxist theory in modern Japan? How did Japanese Buddhism negotiate the role of women within the emerging modern gender relations? These are, obviously, not simple questions to be answered in a single monograph; nonetheless, they show us that in terms of both perspective and scope, the field is now thriving as never before.

### Major Issues of Modern Japanese Buddhism

As already emphasized, during the nineteenth century Japanese Buddhists faced a number of challenges, ranging from their identity as Buddhists (i.e., the very reconception of Buddhism as a “religion”) to their role as subjects of an increasingly larger empire. With that in mind, and for the purposes of this volume, we have divided the voices of nineteenth-century Japanese Buddhists, represented by the twenty-two chapters of this book, into five sections. These sections reflect major issues they faced, as identified in the scholarship summarized above, namely: 1) sectarian reform; 2) the nation; 3) science and philosophy; 4) social reform; and 5) Japan and Asia. The bulk of non-doctrinal writing by Japanese Buddhist authors was in one way or the other devoted to one or

several of these themes, which also came to inform their identity, be it primarily sectarian or more integrally Buddhist. Furthermore, none of these issues can be analyzed in a national vacuum; the role of Western precedent, competition, or cooperation is prominent throughout.

### Sectarian Reform

The role of comparisons to the West is clear even with regard to the most inward of the five themes, that of sectarian reform. Undoubtedly, the most important trigger of inner reform was the severe criticism Japanese Buddhism faced from a variety of quarters. Confucian-inspired critique had been a mainstay of Tokugawa-period elite discourses since the early seventeenth century. Confucianists attacked the clergy as corrupt and the Buddhist teaching as otherworldly, a distraction from the paramount concerns of real life, that is, ethics. From the eighteenth century onward, the Nativist school of Kokugaku added to the mix with its vitriolic emphasis on the foreignness of Buddhism, supposedly unsuited for Japan. There was not much that was substantially new in the movements of the Late Mito School and Restoration Shinto, which sprang up in the first half of the nineteenth century. They were, however, important conduits for transporting and amplifying older critiques of Buddhism and translating them into action, such as the anti-Buddhist policies of the late Edo period.

A number of these points of criticism were grudgingly accepted by members of the Buddhist clergy, and a precept revival movement, aimed at rooting out the most widespread degenerations that had become the target of criticism, emerged from the mid-eighteenth century, associated with the names of Jiun Onkō (1718–1804) and Fujaku (1707–1781), among others. This movement was prominently continued in the Meiji era by the Pure Land priest Fukuda Gyōkai (1809–1888). Indeed, the concern with monastic rules and the interference of the government into priestly life is the main concern of the first text introduced in this volume, Gyōkai's 1876 "Questions and Answers from Beneath a Snowy Window" (part I, chapter 1), which includes a pointed critique of the contemporary focus of Buddhist priests on conducting funerals for securing their livelihood, a very appropriate object for reform in his eyes.

Institutional reforms were spurred on by the *haibutsu kishaku* policies and the disestablishment of Buddhism immediately following the Meiji Revolution of 1868. An early example was the establishment of a new regional school for priests by a reform group of the Jōdo Shinshū in Yamaguchi in 1866. The older academies also slowly took up the cause of reform, such as the Takakura Gakuryō of the Ōtani branch of the same sect, which established a Department for the Protection of the Dharma (*gohōjō*) in 1868, where for the first time texts from other religions, especially Christianity, were studied.

These early reform initiatives, however, were dwarfed by the inner changes the sects underwent during the course of the Meiji period, which some observers have called a "Protestantization" of Japanese Buddhism. Among the observable transformations were standardizations and unifications (such as of the Zen rituals for school founders or of koan phrasebooks) and simplifications and abridgements (such as those rituals in the esoteric schools now deemed too superstitious, or making Shugendō into a distinct institution). Many of these concrete reforms were notionally based on a new understanding of Buddhism as a "religion," that is, a social system of action fairly clearly delimited, no longer encompassing all walks of life, but restricted to the spiritual dimension. It was by living up to its full potential as an "ideal religion" that Japanese Buddhism might also prove its superiority to the rival Christianity, as Nakanishi Ushirō argued in his 1889 *On Religious Revolution* (part I, chapter 2). While this rethinking of the nature of Buddhism by Buddhists themselves began in the early Meiji period, it gained considerable momentum with the formation of the The Fraternity of Puritan Buddhists (*Bukkyō Seito Dōshikai*) in 1899 and establishment of its journal *Shin Bukkyō* in the following year. As the editorial from the inaugural issue of that journal introduced in this volume

(part I, chapter 3) shows, the “New Buddhists” literally derided the “Old Buddhism” as superstitious, while calling for the “improvement of inner character through religious faith.”

A genuinely new element of anti-Buddhism had come into play when Christian missionaries began proselytizing and publishing in Japan. They mainly took aim at Buddhist cosmology, rituals, and elements of faith that they viewed as superstitions. A potent weapon they employed in doing so was the historicization of what used to be elements of revelatory religion, following recent trends of liberal theology in Europe and North America. It took Japanese Buddhists until the 1890s to come to grips with this challenge, and only then did a historical approach to scriptural commentary and interpretation begin to take hold. As the authors—it is attributed to Kiyozawa Manshi—of an 1897 editorial for the journal *Kyōkai jigen* argued (introduced in this volume as part I, chapter 4), the independent study of scripture, unmediated by traditional commentaries, actually aided in understanding the core meaning of sacred texts.

In this way, Japanese Buddhist reform in the Meiji period pervaded both form and content. Institutional reform, educational reform, and the reform of the idea of and scholarship on Buddhism were intimately intertwined. Reform also had from the very beginning an eminently political dimension, which will be explored in the next section.

## The Nation

The early modern period in Japan has been characterized as an era of budding nationalism. First articulated as the call for emancipation from Japan’s “unforgettable other,” China, the incursions by Russia and other Western powers into Japanese territory from the late eighteenth century onward markedly accelerated articulations of proto-nationalism. From the 1830s onward, tracts on national defense appeared, and religion also became a prominent topic in writings on national independence, as a Christian infiltration was seen as a first step toward conquest by the Western nations. Japanese Buddhists were not part of this discourse until the 1850s, when some of them began portraying Buddhism as the ideal bulwark against the spiritual onslaught of Christianity. More than anyone else, it is the Jōdo Shinshū priest Gesshō who is associated with this movement that sought to protect both the dharma (gohō) and the nation (gokoku). In his *On Protecting the Nation through Buddhism*, posthumously published in 1858 and introduced in this volume (part II, chapter I), Gesshō explained how Buddhism, and the Jōdo Shinshū in particular, was the best means to provide spiritual guidance in order to repel the Westerners whose strategy it was to weaken Japan spiritually through the introduction of Christianity.

Efforts at proving the utility of Buddhism in the face of national crisis were prominent in, but not limited to, the Jōdo Shinshū. Given its historically strong rhetorical emphasis on saving the nation, it is no wonder that similar positions could be found in the Nichiren sect in the years immediately preceding the Meiji Revolution. A good example of this is the tract “Upholding Faith in the Buddhadharma and Repaying the Nation” penned by the layman Ogawa Taidō (1814–1878) in 1863 (part II, chapter 2). He traced the origins of the contemporary political crisis in Japan, its existence threatened by foreign powers, to a “neglect of the Buddhadharma.” Tellingly, the way to protect the nation for Ogawa lay in correct practice, which first meant internal reform. This was necessary given the dismal situation Ogawa thought much of current Buddhism to be in.

However, as we have seen above, much to the chagrin of the Japanese Buddhist establishment it was to Shinto that the young government turned as the main building block of post-Restoration religious policy. The separation of the Tokugawa-era link between state and temples and the turmoil in religious policy in the first few years of the Meiji period prompted some of the more perceptive among the clergy to fundamentally rethink the relationship between religion and state, or indeed, to think through this relationship in those terms for the very first time, given that the conceptual framework to do so was just emerging in the Japanese language. It was in particular the Three

Articles of Instruction that prompted debate and invited criticism by Buddhists who felt that it was time that Buddhism was recognized as a vital force by the new Meiji state. An already very senior scholar priest joining the debate over the Three Articles of Instruction was Higuchi Ryūon. (1800–1885) of the Jōdo Shinshū. In his 1873 “Lectures on the Three Articles of Instruction” (part II, chapter 3), he argues that the hearts of the people need to unite in order to form a strong nation. Just as the Western nations were built on Christianity, the Japanese nation needed a religious foundation. Concurrently with Higuchi, the idea that Shinto is unsuitable for this task was spelled out most aggressively and most prominently by his fellow Jōdo Shinshū cleric Shimaji Mokurai. This mostly intra-Buddhist discussion coincided in the early 1870s with the debates among the secular intellectuals of the Meiji Six Society (Meirokeisha). Although these intellectuals agreed in principle that religion might be useful for uniting the nation, they also saw that a situation of religious plurality might best be dealt with by establishing the separation of religion and state and the freedom of religion. Given the tendency of the early Meiji state to prefer Shinto, this position was attractive to Buddhists, since it promised the protection of their creed, if not as a state cult, then at least as a private religion. This status came to be enshrined in the Meiji Constitution of 1889.

Throughout these early years of the Meiji period, the other predominant political issue that religious groups in Japan were faced with was the question of Christianity. Pressure by the Western imperialist nations to lift the ban against Christianity had grown since the first unequal treaties had been signed beginning in 1854. Finally, its practice was permitted generally since 1873. For most Buddhists, the question was not whether to repel Christianity or not, but how to do so most effectively. A prominent representative of Buddhist intellectuals devoted to the antichristian cause was Ugai Tetsujō (1814–1891), who (under the pseudonym Kiyū Dōjin) published his textbook for Buddhist priests *Laughing at Christianity* in 1869 (part II, chapter 4). Ugai largely relies on the old Sino-Japanese tradition of anti-Christian pamphlets dating back to the seventeenth century, which is visible both in the items of Christian doctrine he singles out for attack as well as in his positive advocacy of a cooperation between Buddhism, Shinto, and Confucianism, which would soon be replaced by a more self-confident stance arguing on the basis of the strength of Buddhism alone.

Refutations of Christianity remained acute for Buddhist scholars well into the Meiji period. They were frequently articulated within a political argument for the predominance of Buddhism, especially before the compromise of the Meiji Constitution. The Shingon priest Shaku Unshō (1827–1909), for instance, argued that Buddhism had always been the main religion of the Imperial house and was thus fit to be the national doctrine of Japan. In his 1882 work “On the National Doctrine of Greater Japan” (part II, chapter 5), Unshō, like many of his contemporaries, stressed the need for moral reform of Buddhists themselves before Buddhism could serve as the religion of the nation.

The emphasis on the need for inner reform receded somewhat after the 1880s and was replaced by a more openly articulated support of the new nation-state. A further self-confident Buddhism also began to engage in social reform of society at large. The most pressing concern of Buddhist intellectuals in the 1880s, however, was the commensurability of Buddhism with modern forms of thought, especially modern academic philosophy. This ushered in a debate that was to dominate Buddhist writing in Japan in the 1880s and 1890s, which will be taken up in the next section.

## Science and Philosophy

No scholar of religion is a stranger to the old adage that “Buddhism” is a religion compatible with “Science.” As Donald S. Lopez Jr. has repeatedly pointed out, the history of this relationship overlaps, in many ways, with the very story of how we came to understand ourselves as “modern.”<sup>68</sup> In Japan, in particular, this is certainly the case, as both concepts of “science” and “philosophy” were only established in the archipelago through the mediation of a type of “Buddhism” that was, more than a mere “religion,” also both “scientific” and “philosophic.”

As explained in the previous section, the nineteenth-century (re-) encounter with Christianity functioned for Buddhists everywhere in Japan as a call to arms of sorts. Although earlier critiques such as those by Ugai Tetsujō had been based on late medieval anti-Christian tracts, and even later works by the likes of Shaku Unshō still grounded themselves on a highly idealized primeval relationship between Buddhism and the Imperial court, several Buddhists began dabbling in what they regarded as far more sophisticated methods for criticizing Christianity, which in the mid-Meiji context now “threatened” Japan in yet a different way.

With the establishment of European-inspired political institutions in the 1870s and into the 1880s, the question was always present as to which religion Japan should adopt as a nation—or whether it should do so at all. Japanese Christians emphasized that if Japan were to follow in the footsteps of Euro-American nations, it needed Christianity, which was the very ethical cornerstone of those regions. Buddhists, on the other hand, naturally rejected this idea, but the gist of their argument now was no longer Christianity’s belligerent character, but its philosophical unsoundness in terms of “science.” Sada Kaiseki (1818–1882) (in part III, chapter 1), argued for a uniquely Japanese idea of progress that did not rely on things Western, which led him to dispute the very core of Christian cosmology, suggesting it presented a demiurgical idea of God. Although in some respects disparate even for contemporary eyes, Sada’s text does pose questions related to theodicy that, in essence, are meant to convince the reader of the usefulness of Buddhist science as an alternative to the Christian paradigm of modernization.

Although not yet explicitly present in Sada, the recurrent issue of whether Buddhism is a “religion” or “philosophy” was considered in depth by one of his contemporaries, fellow cleric and University of Tokyo instructor Hara Tanzan (1819–1892) (see part III, chapter 2). In the late 1880s this author would claim that, to the extent it cares little about the existence of “ghostly realms” and rather focuses on the elimination of affliction and sickness, Buddhism is not a “religion” but a “philosophy.” Influenced by the Japanese translation of Henry S. Olcott’s *Buddhist Catechism* (orig. 1881), Tanzan’s statement was a clear reaction against the type of faith-centered concept of “religion” that was starting to take root at the time. That is, in the sense that it is essentially a scientific endeavor, Buddhism was not supposed to be even considered in the same framework as Christianity, a system based entirely on what he regarded as blind belief.

Having attended Tanzan’s classes at the University of Tokyo, Inoue Enryō (1858–1919) (see part III, chapter 3), would take the above discussion one step further and claim that Buddhism was indeed a “religion,” albeit a “philosophical” one. In a context in which it was common knowledge that a constitution was in the works—and it was still unknown whether a political system with a state religion would be adopted—attempts to assert Buddhism as superior to Christianity became all the more frequent. The latter was but a “religion” based on emotion, whereas Buddhism, in turn, did share that aspect but went beyond, also constituting what Enryō dubbed an “intellectual religion” (*chiryokuteki shūkyō*). He did acknowledge, however, that the Buddhism present in his time was not Buddhism as it should be, and for it to actually function as the true religion of Japan, it needed to be appropriately “revived.” What Enryō argued for, then, was the (re)construction of a Buddhism rooted in reason, which unlike Christianity could guide the nation on the path of modernity.

The issue of constructing Buddhism as a sound “religion” was, therefore, one of the most pressing of Meiji Japan. However, the question also arose of what was, precisely, the scope of this religion: while Christianity was, in the late nineteenth century, presented to the Japanese as a more or less well-defined system, Buddhists still struggled in that regard. Amid the myriad schools and sects of Buddhism, there was no historical consensus as to what should be the core of their teachings, a fact that prompted Meiji Buddhists to distill their canon(s) and produce textual compilations reminiscent of the Christian Bible.



This contemporary demand to present Buddhism as a single religion was, however, not a struggle solely devoted to finding common doctrinal grounds, but also in terms of convincingly presenting the internal consistency of these teachings. It is precisely this issue that Murakami Senshō (1851–1929), professor of Buddhist Studies at the then Tokyo Imperial University, attempted to address in the intended five volumes of his *Discourse on Buddhist Unity*, published from 1901. Murakami's work is also, in many senses, a response to contemporary European Buddhologists who presented as most authoritative a version of Buddhism centered on the Pali Canon, dismissing Mahāyāna developments as latter-day corruptions. Murakami, therefore, not only endeavored to produce a synthesis of Buddhist thought, explicating the connection between contemporary Japanese forms and their purported Indian past, but also, as the text translated in this volume (part III, chapter 4) reveals, strove to show the meaning of this unified doctrine in terms of a sound “faith.”

From the turn of the century, as Christianity settled in Japan, discussions over the legal status of religion moved toward a consensus. Moreover, European scholars became more receptive to the Mahāyāna as a form of Buddhism worthy of respect, and thus the need to present (Japanese) Buddhism as a philosophical religion in accordance with the principles of science decreased. The new idea of a reformed, “unified” Buddhism was connected, as seen in the previous section, not only to the rise of harsh critiques of sectarian identity, but also led, ultimately, to the ways in which Buddhists related to society as a whole.

## Social Reform

As explained above, internal sectarian reform was a crucial element in the modernization of Japanese Buddhism. Even statements challenging Christianity or Shinto were frequently accompanied by the caveat that only a reformed, modern Buddhism would be able to wield a superiority over other religions. This reformist zeal, however, also affected Buddhist attitudes toward the broader society. Although endeavors in social reform can be seen as reactions to conventional critiques of Buddhism as of a purely otherworldly orientation, they were certainly also driven by genuine religious convictions.

Social engagement by Meiji-period Buddhists took many shapes. One of the earliest, and somewhat less explicit, was their involvement in the movement now referred to as “civilization and enlightenment” (*bunmei kaika*). The Meiji Six Society included in its ranks important sectarian leaders such as Ishikawa Shuntai (1842–1931) and Shimaji Mokurai, the latter of whom established, with Ōuchi Seiran, the journal *Hōshi sōdan*, one of the first dedicated Buddhist periodicals of modern Japan. Seiran was also the editor of important publications such as the *Kyōzon zasshi* and the *Meikyō shinshi*, as well as an active performer of the *enzetsu* type of public lecture characteristic of the *bunmei kaika* era. The translation in part IV, chapter 1 is an example of one such speech by Seiran, in which he emphasizes, from the perspective of a Buddhist, the “spiritual” values of “Eastern Civilization” vis-à-vis its then overestimated “Western” counterpart.

Another early form of social engagement was the establishment of schools. Building on both the early modern heritage of running temple schools and experiences with institutions of priest training, individual Buddhist clerics as well as sects started establishing general schools, as opposed to schools geared toward training the clergy, from as early as the 1870s. As in so many other instances in Meiji-period Buddhist history, the Christian challenge again looms large in the background: Christian missionaries in Japan had founded general purpose non-theological schools since the 1870s. Many of these were schools for instruction in English at first (such as Channing Moore Williams's [1829–1910] English School in Osaka [1870] and Nijima Jō's [1843–1890] *Dōshisha* English School in Kyoto [*Dōshisha eigakkō*, 1875]), but the net was soon cast wider. Women's education, perceived as lacking by Christian missionaries and converts, was targeted especially. Schools such as Meiji *jogakkō*



(1885) were set up with Protestant backing, albeit without Christian ceremonies on campus or even overtly Christian educational content.

Given the experience of Buddhist institutions in the field of education, it did not take long before similar institutions with a Buddhist background appeared, such as in the field of women's higher schools. An early example of the latter was Joshi bungei gakusha, founded in 1888 by Shimaji Mokurai. The former Buddhist academies were gradually transformed into modern universities, many of which are still in existence today. Their role for training the future clergy diminished while an increasing majority of students enrolled in general degree programs.

Another Jōdo Shinshū school, the Futsū kyōkō had opened in 1885 and would be, through new media in general, the breeding ground for several other influential Buddhist social reform organizations in the realms of temperance and outreach to society. Indeed, the proliferation of Buddhist journals—in the 1890s, over a hundred of them existed—points toward the trend of Buddhism interacting with society in this era. Created by Futsū kyōkō members, one of these journals, the Hanseikai zasshi (see part IV, chapter 2), made temperance, but also a more general humanism, its goal. Avoiding alcohol was just one step toward moral improvement, this time not aimed at priests, but rather as a movement aimed at society broadly defined.

The conceptual—and practical—jump from reforms of the clergy, to those of laypeople, and eventually those of society at large had to include a reconsideration of the role of women within Buddhism. In a time when universal education became the norm, a number of Buddhists felt the need to address the issue of (in)equality between the sexes, a phenomenon of which the 1888 text by Shimaji Mokurai included in this volume is a clear example (see part IV, chapter 3). Also intended as a critique of the idea that the type of equality between men and women observed in the West was a result of Christian values, Shimaji's text asserted that for Buddhism (and Confucianism) true equality lay in accepting the different roles of both genders. The question of women was also addressed by Tanaka Chigaku, himself a lay follower of Nichiren Buddhism who developed his own organization after having broken with orthodoxy. Tanaka's 1894 *On Buddhist Marriage* (part IV, chapter 4) not only argues for the marriage of clerics, but more broadly aimed at "correcting the image of Buddhism as unworldly, emphasizing its connectedness to life, society, and the modern state."

By the turn of the century, Buddhist social outreach had multiplied. In theoretical terms, Buddhist thinkers began to grapple seriously with the profound social change wrought by industrialization and with the major political schools already developed in reaction to this in Europe, such as social democracy or state socialism. The Western-educated Shinshū priest Chikazumi Jōkan (1870–1941) situated Buddhism within these trends in his 1904 text *The Problem of Faith* (part IV, chapter 5). He argued that the historical Buddha had been a social reformer, preaching the equality of people regardless of caste. Among the Buddhists of contemporary Japan, Chikazumi continued, social justice should not remain theoretical but translate into social activism, and he clearly enumerated "workers' education, illness insurance, family assistance, and so on" as fields of action.

Indeed, by the turn of the century, Buddhists had reached out to society in numerous ways. They had founded hospitals and other welfare institutions, employed prison chaplains, sent out military chaplains (see also part V, chapter 2), and engaged heavily in mission work in (mostly) other Asian countries, especially China and Korea. This was part of a more general turn toward Asia, as will be taken up in the next section.

## Japan and Asia

Since the Heian period (794–1185), people on the main islands of the Japanese archipelago understood the world as being constituted of three "nations" or "realms." This cosmology is obviously connected to a narrative of how Buddhism reached Japan and can be traced back at least

as far as to the works of Saichō (767–822). This idea was, for the inhabitants of the Japanese archipelago, an essential element in the ingraining of traditional Buddhist cosmology that placed Mt. Sumeru (Shumisen) at the center of the universe. Humankind would reside on a continent located in the southern part of this mountain, of which Tenjiku (which included, but was not necessarily limited to, the Indian subcontinent) occupied the center. Neighboring Tenjiku was Shintan (that is, China) and far in the periphery, almost falling off the edge of the world, was the realm of Japan, or Honchō \*fl. The story of Buddhism, which had its origins in Tenjiku, spread through Shintan, and was then propagated into Honchō, was itself, in this sense, a narrative of global history.

Although the arrival of the Portuguese in the sixteenth century— and consequently of modern European cartographic knowledge—did bring new developments to this cosmology, the essential narrative of Buddhist history remained. That is, far before the Western idea of “Asia” spread throughout Japan in the course of the Edo period, the story of how Buddhism came to the Japanese islands was already intrinsically connected to imagined versions of the continental mainland. The bakufu’s isolationist policy meant, however, that Buddhists in Japan were not allowed more than the imagining of India and China, save perhaps for sporadic contact with visitors from the continent in limited quarters of cities such as Nagasaki. With the “reopening” of the country in the 1850s, along with the easier access to transoceanic transportation, however, Buddhists could now experience the mainland themselves, without the textual filter imposed thus far. That is, besides the encounter with “religion” and a new sense of their role within society, Japan’s relationship with “Asia” was one of the issues that would (re)define the character of Buddhism in modern Japan.

The first case of a Japanese Buddhist priest visiting China was that of Ogurusu Kōchō (1831–1905), who traveled not long after the ratification of the Sino-Japanese Amity Treaty in June 1873. However, contrary to the vigorous practice he might have expected, he found Chinese Buddhism to be decadent, a reality that prompted him to draft the text partially translated here (part V, chapter 1), meant to revive Chinese Buddhism on his terms. Calling for cooperation against the common Western enemy, *On Protecting the Dharma in Beijing* is an essential text that represents the transformation of a theretofore subservient relationship: Japan is no longer the student, but now the teacher, who can save the Chinese dharma from its downfall.

This self-representation as the leader of East Asia was ideologically fundamental for the colonial enterprise, in which Buddhists were to play an important role. With the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1894, Buddhist priests were sent to the continent in order to serve as chaplains, an activity they would continue to perform over the course of all Japan’s modern wars. Yamagata Genjō (1866–1903), whose *The Iron Scepter* is partly translated here (part V, chapter 2), was one such chaplain. A scholar-priest within the Shingon tradition, Yamagata recorded his accounts of the battlefield in diary form, which reveal cooperation with Chinese Buddhists in what he then regarded as “new Japanese territory.” A clearer picture of how Buddhist rhetoric was used in order to justify Japan’s colonial enterprise can be seen in Shaku Soen’s (1860–1919) “The Japanese People’s Spirit,” a talk given in Manchuria but two years after Japan’s 1910 annexation of Korea (see part V, chapter 3). The lecture, obviously aimed at a Japanese audience, presents Japanese superiority in racial overtones that would become all the more frequent over the course of the following decade, alongside discourses on the nation’s *kokutai*.

Yet, the Asian experience was also important in a doctrinal sense. The appropriation of European buddhological knowledge during the late nineteenth century helped to conclusively establish in Japan the idea that Chinese was not the “original” language of Buddhism, and that Sakyamuni’s “golden words” were to be found elsewhere. This led Rinzai priest Kawaguchi Ekai (1866–1945) to leave Kobe in 1897 in search of these authentic texts, becoming the first Japanese to enter the “hermit nation” of Tibet in 1901. He recorded his impressions in *A Travelogue in Tibet*, partly translated in

part V, chapter 4. A widely popular text at the time, it shows that, besides his will to garner the “sacred texts” of his tradition, Kawaguchi also saw Tibet as a somewhat inferior nation in terms of civilization, which could again be “illuminated” by the wisdom of his native Japan.

The increasing contact with the Asian reality ultimately changed the way Japanese clergymen and laypeople alike understood their own selves as “Buddhists,” in terms not only of their role as leaders of an imagined Asian coalition, but also in the sense of refashioning “Buddhism” as the most essential Pan-Asian construct.

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Many of the chapters below actually concern several of the five dimensions that we have presented and which inform the structure of the book. Anxiety about the nation could fuel sectarian reform; social reform measures were taken up within the framework of the mission in mainland Asia; through educational efforts, the pursuit of new trends in science and philosophy were thought to contribute to sectarian reform. Moreover, the challenge posed by the encounter with the (Christian) West was a contributing factor in all of the instances discussed here, so it will be treated as present within and throughout the five chapters instead of dealing with it separately. We hope that the diversity of the challenges of modernity and of Japanese Buddhists’ answers to these challenges becomes palpable in the volume, thus leading to a better understanding of where Japanese Buddhism stands today and how it arrived there. <>

## **DRIFTING THROUGH SAMSA: TACIT CONVERSION AND DISENGAGEMENT IN GOENKA’S VIPASSANA MOVEMENT** by Masoumeh Rahmani. [AAR Academy Series, Oxford University Press, 9780197579961]

In **DRIFTING THROUGH SAMSA**, Masoumeh Rahmani provides a fieldwork-based study of Goenka's Vipassana meditation movement in New Zealand. This group is distinguished by its refusal to identify as Buddhist and by a rich rhetorical repertoire for repackaging Theravada Buddhist teachings in

pseudo-scientific and secular language. Drawing from qualitative research, the book examines the way the movement's discourse shapes unique processes and narratives of conversion and disengagement. Rahmani argues that conversion to this movement is tacit and paradoxically results in the members'

rejection of religious labels and categories including conversion. Tracing the linguistic changes associated with the process of conversion and increased commitment, she outlines three main disengagement pathways: (1) pragmatic leaving, (2) disaffiliation, and (3) deconversion. Pragmatic leavers are

individuals who were disengaged prior to developing a commitment. Rahmani argues that the language of these leavers is characterised by pragmatism, dualistic discourse, and ambivalence, and their post-disengagement involves an active gravitation towards practices with easily accomplished goals.

Disaffiliates and deconverts are individuals who disengaged after years of intense commitment to the movement. One of the distinguishing features of disaffiliation narratives is self-doubt resulting from the movement's ambiguous discourse regarding progress. For these people post-disengagement often

involves the retrospective adoption of Buddhist identity.

Rahmani finds that as a consequence of its linguistic strategies, deconversion is a rare exit pattern from this movement. In general, however, the themes and characteristics of both disaffiliation and deconversion fit the contours of exit from other traditions, even though conversion was tacit in the first place. The book thus questions the normative participant recruitment approach in conversion studies and argues that a simple reliance on the informants' identification with or rejection of religious labels fails to encompass the tonalities of conversion in the contemporary spiritual landscape.

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Excerpt: Vipassana meditation as taught by S. N. Goenka inhabits a niche in the life of many individuals who desire fulfilment through self- transformation, yet who also wish to keep religious traditions at arm's length. Goenka has achieved global popularity by divorcing his teachings of Vipassana meditation from its foundations in Theravada Buddhism and refashioning them in a scientific and world- affirming language. People from various walks of life find themselves in the unique environment of ten- day silent meditation courses where they are asked to disconnect from the external world, commit to a strict code of conduct, and meditate for ten hours per day. While some people are content to experience this novelty once and move on, others become committed meditators, advance to longer courses, and shape a life around this practice. However, regardless of their level of commitment, Vipassana practitioners in New Zealand commonly reject religious labels and conceptualise their commitment in non- religious terms. In fact, the more they are socialised into this movement, the more likely they are to conceive of it as a secular institution; the more they are converted to this movement and its Buddhist worldview, the more likely they are to deny the category of conversion.

This book explores religious disengagement in a context where the concept of conversion is ignored and taken for granted in the first place. A great deal of scholarship on conversion has been limited by taking the informants' rejection of certain categories (for instance, religion, conversion, and Buddhism) at face value. Despite the growing call to view conversion as culturally constituted phenomenon that varies across traditions, the field heavily relies on a person's self- identification as a convert to the point that for decades the etiquette for participant recruitment in conversion studies has (more or less) boiled down to one question: 'Are you a convert?'. One of the aims of this book is to disturb this etiquette in participant recruitment and the normative view of conversion as whatever 'a group or a person says it is'. I argue that this approach fails to encompass the tonalities of conversion in light of an increasing aversion to religious labels and in contexts where people exhibit a certain anxiety about being perceived as religious.

In this book, I introduce the term tacit conversion to describe a peculiar form of conversion that is unacknowledged. The term describes a process whereby increased socialisation into a movement and the adoption of its language paradoxically conceals conversion to the member. Tacit conversion is the product of a complex interplay of historical, social, cultural, institutional, linguistic, ideological, and biographical structures— all of which I explore in this book. It explains circumstances where there is a disconnect between language and the lived experience, a disconnect between non-religious self- identification and representation of selves that are constructed and interpreted within a particular religious language. Tacit conversion occurs in movements with rich rhetorical repertoire

for rejecting associations with religion. Goenka's Vipassana organisation is a case in point; instead of teaching Buddhist meditation, the movement claims to teach a 'scientific', 'non- sectarian', self-development 'tool' based on the 'core teachings of the Buddha' or 'pure Dhamma', which are 'universal' and do not involve religious conversion. Indeed, other studies on this movement have confirmed that almost all Vipassana practitioners reject religious (Buddhist) identities and often self-identify as nones, secular, and even atheists. By introducing the term tacit conversion, I expand the category of conversion in ways that encompass new religious movements (NRMs) with ostensibly blurred religious/ secular boundaries.

In the field of religious disengagement, this book makes two contributions. First and foremost, it explores whether the contours of disengagement from the Vipassana movement are coterminous with other existing models of religious disaffiliation. Second, empirical studies on religious disengagement are primarily built on the experience of individuals who exit a religious tradition after years of participation and commitment. This book explores the characteristics of disengagement narratives, particularly as they occur at early stages of conversion, before the meditator has developed a commitment to the movement. In this regard, this book aims to advance the field of meditation studies by examining what prompts practitioners to stop and effectively disengage from Vipassana meditation. Understanding how disengagement occurs from meditative movements, such as Goenka's Vipassana, has significant implications for expanding our knowledge of the kinds of needs that promote individuals to seek meditation in the first place, as well as assessing the efficacy (or inefficacy) of meditation groups in meeting those needs.

This chapter begins with an introduction to Goenka's Vipassana movement, a description of a standard ten-day Vipassana course and the field site at which ethnographic research for this book was conducted. Next, the chapter briefly introduces the participants involved in this research and provides an overview of some of their shared perspectives including their conception of categories such as religion and spirituality. Finally, the chapter reflects on the recent developments in conversion studies and situates this book within this field. Most notably, it includes my conception of conversion as a process of personal transformation reflected in the adoption of a new universe of discourse and outlines the linguistic approach I have adopted to achieve the objectives of this book.

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## Research Design and Personal Orientations

This research engages in a bricolage to create a methodological garment tailored to the context of inquiry: it is an interpretive research informed by reflexive ethnography, in- depth interviews, and a dynamic combination of thematic and structural narrative analysis. This approach responds to the collage of perspectives and theories about conversion and disengagement that influenced this research.

In- depth interviews constitute a substantial portion of the material collected for this research. Between June 2014 and February 2016, I conducted interviews with twenty- six individuals: six old students, four new students, and sixteen individuals who have departed from the movement, all of which were digitally recorded. Moreover, I conducted follow- up interviews with three individuals who accepted the invitation to be interviewed roughly a year after the initial interview took place. Thus, a total of twenty- nine formal interviews were collected. These culminated in detailed longitudinal reports on two new students (initial interviews were conducted two weeks after their first course and the follow- up interview took place a year later) and a disaffiliate (Damian, the key informant in chapter 4). In addition to formal interviews, I had informal follow- up meetings and conversations with six participants, which also informed the process of this research and substantiated some of my ideas.



Since the participants in this research fall into three main categories (new student, old student, and disengagers), recruitment strategies varied depending on the level of accessibility of each group. For instance, new students could only be accessed at the centre, and therefore recruitment was in person, whereas old students were recruited with the help and promotion of my gatekeeper—the movement’s administration—who kindly introduced me to a group of volunteers during the work period.

Facebook constitutes another arena from which a number of participants were recruited. There are several Vipassana public groups on Facebook with over 45,000 members in total. Memberships to these groups are free but require the approval of the page administrator (usually an active member of the community). As a member of these groups, the search graph on Facebook allowed me to identify individuals with reference to their location. Therefore, it was relatively easy to identify New Zealanders affiliated to one of these groups or have simply ‘liked’ Goenka’s Vipassana Facebook page. Additionally, there is a specific group called Vipassana (New Zealand), which hosted approximately 360 members at the time. Through this method, sixty- one individuals were initially contacted and invited to participate in this study. The invitation briefly explained the purpose of the research, the anticipated time of commitment, and my contact details. Twenty- two individuals responded to the initial recruitment message and expressed interest in participating in the study and were thus provided with further details including a copy of the University of Otago Human Ethics consent form and participants’ information sheet. From the total of twenty- six participants in this research, eleven individuals (including a number of disengagers) were recruited through this method (two of whom reside in Australia).

Snowball sampling was another method through which a number of disengagers were recruited in this research. Snowball sampling is a type of purposive sampling technique useful for accessing ‘hidden populations’. This technique simply relies on a small pool of initial participants to nominate further eligible participants among their existing social networks. This method, although very useful for recruiting hard-to-reach participants, poses a risk of capturing a biased sample group. To avoid this danger, the initial recruited participants were chosen from all three categories (new students, old students, and disengagers) and were asked to nominate only one potential candidate each. Thus, the recruitment of the twenty- six participants consisted of a combination of recruitment in person (ten), via Facebook (nine), and snowball sampling (seven).

Moreover, with the development of the research, the criteria for participant recruitment became narrower in order to address the tonalities of disengagement such as the case study of an individual who no longer understood the world through the prism of Vipassana meditation’s teachings—a deconvert. Therefore, I made use of a theoretical sampling approach (commonly used in grounded theory research) to recruit roughly half of the participants. This is because the process of data analysis ran parallel with the data collection.

In this research, I adopted a semi- structured, open- ended interviewing technique, steered to some extent by an interview guide. The aim was to maintain a level of consistency across all interviews while simultaneously allowing participants to build up their narratives at their own pace and to discuss issues they considered important. However, as a result of this flexibility, the length of the interviews varied between forty- five minutes to two hours, although the vast majority of the interviews (eighteen) exceeded sixty minutes (culminating in roughly forty hours of recordings).

Conversion (and disengagement) is not some sort of a physical object ‘out there’, waiting to be discovered; it is a lived experience of gradual processes. As a researcher, I do not have unmediated access to other peoples’ experience; I rely on their retrospective narratives. This study thus involves a double hermeneutics; my interpretation of the participants’ narratives that are already imbued with

their interpretations of the phenomena. In this book, interpretations were made in relation to the aspects of the wider sociocultural and historical realities that shape and influence the participant, the phenomena, and the participants' understanding of it.

Interpretive research is inevitably value laden since the researchers' biases and assumptions are brought forth in the study. This feature of hermeneutic inquiry has long been the target of oppositional criticism in the social sciences. Some have argued that hermeneutic studies are biased towards the researchers' knowledge and are not true to the participants' lived experience. Correspondingly, Taylor reminds us that human sciences are essentially 'open-ended hermeneutical endeavours' and the knowledge and findings they produce are incomparable with the knowledge desired by the natural sciences. This is directly due to the ontological property associated with human beings— as self- interpreting beings— and therefore the human sciences should not be assessed by the criteria assigned to natural sciences. For example, what a rock may think of itself— at least at this point in history— is irrelevant to the geologist. From this perspective, the knowledge is no longer perceived as the mere reflection of some objective reality, but the construction of a social world. The anchor points have moved towards linguistics and interpretations of the meaning of the lived reality. As a result, the quest for an absolute form of knowledge and validity gives its place to multiple interpretations (or possibilities) of the lived world.

On what basis, then, are we to assess notions of validity and credibility in hermeneutic studies? Kvale suggests, when the dichotomy of facts and values is forsaken, beauty and the ethics of the constructed knowledge come into the foreground. In such circumstances, validation is best understood to resemble the craftsmanship of research. Consequently, in the absence of any fixed measurements, Taylor considers the justified movement from one interpretation to another to be the basis on which interpretations should be weighted, while others emphasise reflexivity. Through self-reflexivity some of the complex political and ideological agendas are brought to the foreground of the research. The aim is to partially undermine the writer's authority so that her/ his interpretations become one perspective with no superior claim to truth or validity.

Due to the interpretive nature of this research, a reflexive approach was adopted to overcome some of the limitations caused by my involvement in this group. Hence, while some researchers may prefer to bracket their views in the hope to see anew, 'as if for the first time', my approach is to acknowledge my orientations and to reflect on the ways in which my position influenced the direction of this research. Moreover, Reich argues that our lived experiences circumscribe the kind of research one is interested in and/ or is best equipped to undertake. In saying this, I do not claim that others cannot understand the processes of conversion and disengagement in Goenka's Vipassana movement, but that it should not be surprising that the selection of this research topic was strongly intertwined with my personal experience with this movement.

I am a middle- class, Iranian woman, and although I come from a different cultural background, I shared with the participants in this book similar motivations for attending a Vipassana course and somewhat similar reasons for disengaging from it. For instance, like many participants in this research, my attraction to Vipassana was partially motivated by an interest in Buddhism, Asian philosophy, and a desire to learn meditation. Despite these similarities, there are several points of departure that lead to different horizons between my perspective and that of the participants: first, my position as a researcher, which allowed me to reflect on the nature of this organisation without affectional ties. Second, I do not perceive the practice to be evenly beneficial for everyone (including myself). Third, I do not entertain the possibility of attending another course for personal gain— an outlook that situated me in opposition to the vast majority of the participants consulted for this research. Finally, the process of my conversion to this movement was not tacit, and in fact, upon the completion of my first Vipassana course in 2006, I comfortably appropriated a Buddhist identity.

Reflecting on my past, I consider this to be rooted in difference in individual, cultural, and political structures. I was born in a country, which despite its religious hegemony, embodies undercurrents of diversity— from Kabbalists to Eckists, from Bahá'ís to Zen Buddhists. However, these unconventional clusters are not apparent on the surface of the society (of course, except for recognised minority groups such as Armenian Christians and the Jewish community); nor are they accessible to the masses, unless one is born into these groups, or is somehow connected with these networks, for example, through friendship. In my case, access to the Vipassana movement was gained through the latter. After developing a fascination for alternative religions— thanks to Tom Cruise— I began learning about ‘world religions’, Buddhism, and eventually, I located the nearest meditation centre to my region: the Iranian branch of Goenkás Vipassana meditation (Dhamma Iran) near Tehran.

At that time, my participation at this specific centre required a signed recommendation letter from a committed member, an interview with the centre’s management, attendance at an Anapana day course for teenagers, and reading the Farsi translation of *The Art of Living*. This is to say, by the time that I had sat through Goenkás first evening discourse, I was somewhat aware of the movement’s origins, had a rudimentary understanding of its doctrines, and had made a certain effort to be there. In these biographical traits, I am not radically dissimilar from some of the interviewees in this research (most participants expressed prior interest in Buddhist philosophy). The important difference from my experience was that this background knowledge was coupled with the desirability of an unconventional religious identity, in this instance a Buddhist one. Of course, I did not recognise this until I saw myself through the bewildered eyes of Andy Letcher, a substitute lecturer in religious studies, who was taken aback by the presence of an Iranian- Buddhist in his class.

During a long academic break in 2009, I attended another ten-day Vipassana course at Dhamma Dipa in Herefordshire, England. During this visit, and with exposure to academic study of religions, I became interested in the discrepancies between the content of Goenkás teachings and his representations of it to the outside world and subsequently devoted my BA thesis to an analysis of this topic. Concurrently, I drifted away from the movement’s ideas and eventually disclaimed the Buddhist identity in favour of atheism. In simple terms, my disengagement was derived, to a degree, from ethical considerations and was contingent upon individual factors (e.g. the field of education, which allowed me to objectify the movement and my experience of it).

By the time I commenced my postgraduate research, every person I knew from Goenka’s Vipassana movement had effectively disengaged from this practice— some had joined other movements. Given that the technique of Vipassana meditation aims for ‘deconditioning’ the participants’ understanding of the conventional self and reality, I was fascinated to understand the ramification of disengagement on the practitioners’ perspectives and worldview. For instance, I was interested in whether (and how) the individual reintegrates into mainstream culture and its dominant understanding of reality. However, during the early stages of data collection (and the analysis phase), it became clear that there were disconnections between the participants’ self- representations and the lived experiences they narrated; I became enthralled with the role of language in this process. Consequently, the anchors of my study shifted towards exploring these disconnections and explaining their implications on disengagement trajectories.

Given this biographical context, my position on the insider/ outsider continuum is complex, to say the least. In a narrow sense, and based on my previous lived experiences, I am an insider: I have an understanding of the technique of Vipassana meditation and Goenka’s teachings of it; I am also familiar with certain explicit and implicit codes of behaviour that define a meditator’s role within the premise of the meditation centre. From an institutional perspective, I am considered as an old student.

However, in relation to the old students, Vipassana teacher(s), and even some of the former meditators in this research (who had several years of intense participation), I am an outsider to an extent. In addition to the gap between the richness of our lived experiences, these individuals have certain insider knowledge that it is inaccessible to me. For instance, advanced course materials (e.g. Goenka's instructions for the twenty-day courses) are only available to advanced students who attend these courses, and therefore my understandings of these materials are not derived from personal experience.

More importantly, regardless of my position in relation to the institutional insider/ outsider boundaries, I am also an outsider to the cultural context of the research participants (New Zealand). While my cultural heritage has certainly shaped who I am as a researcher, I argue that, in the context of this research, my outsider position enabled me to question the function of certain Western cultural structures in ways that previous scholarship has neglected (simply because most scholars operate from within the same structures and consequently are at the risk of taking certain ideologies for granted). In other words, my unique outsider position to the culture of New Zealand allowed me to perform the task of the *flâneur*, classically described by Walter Benjamin.

Further complicating my position in relation to this movement and the participants in this research (i.e. old students) is my role as a researcher and the type of counter-institutional research I have undertaken in this study. That is, the comparisons I draw between the categories of religion and spirituality, conversion and self-transformation, the movement and religious organisation, and so forth are not particularly favoured, approved, or supported by the movement, or the insider's perspective. Indeed, people's attitudes towards this research ranged from interest and curiosity to suspicion, depending on where they positioned themselves on the insider/ outsider boundary and how they construed my positionality.

Given that from its inception this research was focused on disengagement, within the field, I frequently faced the questions of motivation— 'Why are you focusing on the negative side?' In order to negotiate my role as a researcher in such contexts, I exemplified my own previous involvement with the practice, and expressed my genuine interest in wanting to understand the effects of disengagement on participants' understanding of self and reality. In the most unexpected scenario, I became the subject of an interview myself. That is, one of my initial interviews turned on its head towards the end, as the interviewee revealed their role within the organisation and noted that their participation was partially motivated by a curiosity to learn what the research was about. While claiming that the movement is 'indifferent' to and 'ambivalent' towards outside research, this participant expressed a personal interest to learn whether the findings about the cause of disengagement can help the movement deliver a 'better product'. Given that this interview occurred before I gained access to the field, I suspect that my conversation with this participant influenced my access to the field.

## Outline of the Book

The first chapter provides an overview of the participants' biographical narratives and scrutinises the changes associated with language at different levels of religious participation and commitment in order to distinguish disengagement pathways in subsequent chapters. In that chapter, I adopt Gooren's (2010) conversion career model as a heuristic framework to achieve the abovementioned objectives in a coherent manner. I see the linguistic transformation involved in the process of conversion analysable in two gradations of conversion and commitment. Therefore, I divide this chapter into four sections: the first section explores the participants' preaffiliation context by looking at their biographical narratives and the practices they engaged with prior to their introduction to Vipassana meditation. The second section reflects on practices that mark formal affiliation to Goenkā's movement and the significance of these for the process of conversion. The third section

reflects on the sociocultural and institutional factors that harbour participants' rejection of the category of conversion and the Buddhist identity. This section subsequently proceeds with detailed exploration of the participants' language, and the linguistic patterns associated with their transition to conversion. The final section on commitment depicts the characteristics of a core member identity based on the meditators' language, reasoning, and their self-representation or performance of the Vipassana meditator's role. I therefore use the linguistic markers explored in this chapter (conversion and commitment) to distinguish two broad disengagement pathways: (1) pragmatic leavers, who disengaged prior to the development of commitment, and (2) disaffiliates, who disengaged after years of intense commitment (see figure 1.5).

The second chapter introduces the concept of tacit conversion as an analytical framework for conceptualising the process of personal transformation and increased commitment to Goenkás Vipassana movement. This chapter is based on a detailed examination of an old student's language and his performance of the role of a Vipassana meditator. My analysis in this chapter is inspired by Stromberg's (1993) linguistic approach to conversion narratives. By paying attention to the content of speech, as well as other modalities of communication, including the inflections, tonalities, and the delivery of the narrative, I illustrate that committed old students essentially perform a narrative that in many ways resemble what have been categorised as 'conversion narratives' in other traditions. Moreover, this chapter outlines several themes central to the participants' experience of self-transformation such as self-acceptance, agency, and the mind-body relationship.

The third chapter explores the linguistic characteristics of the narratives of pragmatic leavers, which represent the accounts of those individuals who disengaged prior to developing commitment and therefore had minimum exposure to this movement. Because empirical studies on exit are primarily built upon the experience of those individuals who leave a movement after long periods of intense devotion and commitment, this chapter prioritised a descriptive approach in order to adequately depict this phenomenon. Accordingly, I argue that pragmatic leavers are (to some extent) experience seekers, and their narrative plots were amenable to the types of meditative experiences they had (traumatic, unpleasant, or extraordinary). I present three interrelated themes that characterised the language of these disengagement narratives— (1) pragmatism, (2) dualistic discourse, and (3) ambivalence— and demonstrate how each narrative differs based on a particular dynamic between these features.

The fourth and fifth chapters explore disaffiliation narratives and disaffiliation trajectories respectively. Disaffiliation narratives describe the accounts of those individuals who disengaged after years of intense commitment to the movement. Through a detailed linguistic analysis of a case study, I argue, in the fourth chapter, that Vipassana disaffiliation narratives are characterised by an ambivalent language, which involved the participants' ongoing convictions about the transformative efficacy of the technique and a certain doubt about their own abilities to progress towards enlightenment. The fifth chapter thus goes on to outline the two common disaffiliation trajectories based on the manner these doubts were dealt with: (1) drifters in samsara, and (2) pursuers of the gateless gate. This chapter illustrates that a phenomenon known as deconversion (migration outside the movement's universe of discourse) rarely occurs in the context of tacit conversion.

The sixth chapter explores deconversion as the third and final disaffiliation trajectory. Through a detailed exploration of a single case study, this chapter explores the narrator's attempt to flee the movement's universe of discourse. In this chapter, I introduce the term authenticity talk to refer to a style of discourse that functions both as (1) a recourse for self-reconstruction postexit and (2) a rhetoric that provided the narrator with a sense of autonomy, empowerment, and self-validation. I claim that the disengagement literature takes authenticity talk at face value and mistakenly conceives of it as an actual motive behind exit.

The concluding chapter summarises the findings of this study and its contributions to the existing scholarship. The chapter subsequently addresses the limitations of this work and ends with a note on the implications of this study for future research. <>

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