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Editorial Appraisals:

Some qualified reviewers offer their own brief evaluation of the book. Otherwise, most of our content represents the authors'-editors' own words as a preview to their approach to the subject, their style and point-of-view. <>

THE DAODE JING COMMENTARY OF CHENG XUANYING: DAOISM, BUDDHISM, AND THE LAOZI IN THE TANG DYNASTY by Cheng Xuanying, translated by Friederike Assandri [Oxford Chinese Thought, Oxford University Press, ISBN: 9780190876456]

This book presents for the first time a translation of the complete *Expository Commentary to the Daode jing* written by the Daoist Cheng Xuanying in the seventh century CE. This important commentary is representative for Tang dynasty Daoist philosophy and Daoist Twofold Mystery philosophy, also called *chongxuanxue*. Following the philosophical tradition of *xuanxue* authors like Wang Bi, Cheng Xuanying read the *Daode jing* using a framework of the then-current Daoist religion. His conceptual framework included the assumption that Laozi had written the *Daode jing* to guide the beings to unite with the Dao and thereby reach ultimate salvation. Salvation is interpreted as a metaphysical form of immortality, reached by overcoming the dichotomy of being and non-being, and thus also life and death. He thus connects epistemological concerns with soteriological concerns. The process proposed to overcome these dichotomies relies on reasoning along the lines of *tetralemma* logic, a form of reasoning that had become known in China mainly through the Buddhist Mādhyamika śāstras. One of Cheng Xuanying's prominent commentarial strategies is therefore the consistent application of *tetralemma* logic in his reading of the *Daode jing*. His philosophical outlook ties together the ancient text of the *Daode jing* and the more recent developments in Daoist thought, which to a rather large extent occurred under the influence of an intense interaction with Buddhist ideas.

Review

"This is landmark translation, astutely introduced, and greatly contributing to our understanding of Tang Daoism. Assandri must be commended." -- Lukas Pokorny, *Religious Studies Review*

"This is landmark translation, astutely introduced, and greatly contributing to our understanding of Tang Daoism." -- Lukas Pokorny, *Religious Studies Review*

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Context: The Challenges of Being a Daoist in Early Tang Chang'an

Cheng Xuanying, like many Daoists living in the early Tang capital, does not quite conform to the commonplace image of a Daoist. He did not live on some secluded mountain, eating pine nuts and practicing longevity exercises or silent meditation; he lived in the capital, in the center of power, politics, and intrigue. He was an ordained Daoist master but also a highly educated intellectual and an astute philosopher. Invited to the capital by the emperor, he lived in a large state-financed temple and presumably socialized with high society, such as officials, Buddhists, and scholars.

His philosophy is thus not the upshot of secluded meditation on solitary mountains but the product of an intense intellectual exchange between highly cultured Buddhists, Daoists, and laymen.

As a Daoist, Cheng was interested in the many questions Daoism had engaged in for centuries—from pragmatic issues of how to gain long life and how to create peace in the world, to abstract philosophical inquiries into the ontological substrate of all being, to the question of how the world came to be, how human beings can be explained in all

their physiological and psychological complexity, and how they could be saved from harm, including death. Yet the answers to all these questions had to fit into his concrete time and place as well and thus had to address some specific issues.

Since the end of the unified empire of the Han in 220 CE, Daoism and Buddhism had become important players in society and in the environment of the courts. Offering concepts and practices for personal salvation and self-cultivation, which were attractive to rulers as much as to their subjects, both religions had gained esteem and followers among the elite and the common people. Furthermore, both religions offered the courts access to divine support and ideological and pragmatic advice on how to govern based on their respective teachings. Last but not least, they proposed new legitimation strategies when the traditional legitimating concept of the emperor as the Son of Heaven had lost much persuasiveness in the divided empire.

On the other hand, the popularity of the two religions also created the need and wish of the court to control them. Different systems for control of the religious clergy, from direct administrative control, to influence through financial patronage, to purges of the clergy, were put in place during the Six Dynasties period.

Throughout the Period of Division, Buddhism and Daoism were competing in the environments of the various courts for influence, recognition, and imperial patronage.

In 570, Zhou Wudi, preparing to unite the empire, was the first to establish an official ranking of the teachings. After organizing a series of public debates between proponents of the three teachings in the years 568-570 (Kohn 1995, 31), he established an official ranking with Confucianism first, Daoism second, and Buddhism last (see Zhou shu 5, 2590b). When this ranking met with resistance especially from the Buddhists, he initiated a persecution of Buddhism in 574. However, his plans for a unification of China as well as his persecution of Buddhism ended abruptly, when he suddenly fell ill during one of his military campaigns and died shortly after in 578. Three years later, in 581, the Northern Zhou dynasty was overthrown by the Sui dynasty. Yang Jian, first emperor of the Sui dynasty, completed the unification of China in 589.

Buddhism played an important role in Yang Jian's attempts to create a unifying ideology for his newly united empire. In public acts, he presented himself as a supreme ruler and benefactor of the Buddhist sangha. He established Buddhist monasteries at the five holy mountains of China as well as in forty-five prefectures throughout the country. The apex of his Buddhist activities was when, between 601 and 604, he had 110 stupas built, and in 604 enshrined relics in all of them. His son and successor, Yang Guang (r. 605-618) seems to have continued the legitimation and political ideology of his father, which relied much on Buddhism. Overall, during the Sui dynasty Daoism was of minor importance in comparison to Buddhism, even though in the official discourse of the Sui ideology, the age-old tradition of the emperor honoring Laozi seems to have been revived to some extent (Xiong 2006, 143ff.): a stele was erected in Laozi's presumed birthplace, and a hall of worship was established there (Wright 1979, 77-78; Kohn 1998, 42). Yet Daoism lost ground to Buddhism in the capital during the Sui dynasty.

The Sui dynasty was to be short-lived. Increasing rebellions after 613 and an unsuccessful Chinese military campaign against Koguryô in Korea weakened the standing of the emperor. By 617, the Sui empire was in utter chaos. Different rebel leaders were fighting for power over the newly unified empire. One of the rebel leaders was Li Yuan who would become the first

emperor of the Tang dynasty. In 618, he conquered the capital Chang'an and established himself as first emperor of the Tang dynasty (Tang Gaozu, r. 618-627). However, it would take him years to vanquish all other rebels; peace and order were restored in 624.

In the time of chaos and fighting after the fall of the Sui, Daoists and Buddhists prophesied the ascent to power of Li Yuan and reported sightings of favorable portents and omens (see Benn 1977, 26-27). Among the many

portents reported at the time, a theophany at Mount Yangjiao had

the greatest impact. It was reported that a divinity appeared several times to a commoner, named Ji Shanxing (Mr. Good-omen Good-conduct). The visions began in early 620 rather obscurely, leading by the eighth month of that year to a clear statement of the divinity: the divinity claimed to be

Li Laozi and he claimed to be the ancestor of the Li Tang.

Most probably, Daoists in the entourage of Li Yuan had manipulated the series of visions and their reports (see Benn 1977, 29). Be that as it may, the idea of being descended from Li Laozi, a god, and thus getting divine protection from a god-ancestor must have been very appealing—and indeed, the idea became central to the building of Tang ideology.

The Tang rulers, beginning with Gaozu and Taizong (r. 627-650), used the myth of Laozi being the ancestor of the Tang ruling family to build a powerful ideology to consolidate their power. Laozi became the god-ancestor of the Tang. This myth was confirmed in edicts and public acts. In 626, Tang Gaozu established the official ranking of the three teachings as Daoism first, Confucianism second, and Buddhism last—ironically at the celebration of the sacrifices for the former teachers and wise men at the imperial university, a thoroughly Confucian institution (*Li gujin Fo Dao lunheng*, T 2104, 3, 381a22-23). While there are no clear indications of the reaction of the Confucians to this new hierarchical order of the three teachings, Buddhist protests are well documented. In fact, the early Tang dynasty, all the way to the time when Cheng was living in Chang'an, saw very lively polemical exchanges between representatives of Buddhism and Daoism (Assandri 2015).

In 637, the same year Cheng is said to have presented his Expository Commentary, Emperor Taizong, who had called Cheng to the capital, reconfirmed in an edict the ranking of Daoism as first among the three teachings, based on the idea that Laozi was the imperial ancestor (*Quan Tang wen*, vol. 1, j. 6, 26a-b). Again, the Buddhist clergy reacted with resistance and polemics against Daoism. However, Emperor Taizong stayed with his initial decision.

Ranking as the first of the three teachings entailed many benefits for the Daoists, including state-sponsored temples and rituals. Yet their move into the center of power also brought new challenges.

One was the necessity to compete in open debate. Different from a secluded life in faraway mountains, here the Daoists were in the limelight of a vibrant intellectual life. Debate was one of its most vivid expressions. Debates could be greater or smaller events, from a setting in a temple, with one Daoist or Buddhist being questioned by a patron on doctrinal points, to

private outings of friends, who would debate in Pure Talk (qingtan)

manner, to debates at court with an audience of hundreds, even thousands. Those large organized religious debates served not only for edification but also to determine ranking and patronage at court. Daoism was in difficulty here, because many of its most valued scriptures, such as the Shangqing

(Highest Clarity) and Lingbao (Numinous Treasure) texts, were esoteric and could not be divulged to the uninitiated—much less to a huge audience (Assandri 2005, 434).

Another challenge was internal diversity. Daoists at court represented "the" Daoist view, yet they must have been keenly aware that there were many different, at times competing, groups, sects, traditions, or communities of practice that claimed to be Daoist. Some would be organized around the possession or study of particular, often esoteric scriptures, such as the traditions of the southern Jiangnan region, where the Shangqing and Lingbao scriptures had appeared in 364-370 and 400 CE, respectively. These scriptures had introduced an expanded cosmology with layers of heavens ever higher and ever closer to Dao, where exalted deities, such as the highest deity of the Lingbao scriptures—Yuanshi Tianzun—dwelt. Yuanshi Tianzun was conceived of as much more exalted than Lord Lao, the deified Laozi. Other Daoist groups were centered in particular temples, such as the Louguan

temple which claimed to be the place where Laozi had composed the Daode jing. Others again were the descendants or offshoots of the first social organization of

Daoism, the Celestial Masters (tianshidao), which maintained parishes and registered families of adepts. Different groups revered different texts and different deities and proposed different practices. The long period of political separation of northern and southern China had exacerbated this phenomenon.

While Daoist scriptures from the Six Dynasties period betray the competition between different Daoist groups (see Assandri 2008; Strickmann 1977; Bokenkamp 1983), there were also important incentives for unification of these disparate traditions, among them also the competition with Buddhism. Imperial administrations contributed to the drive for integration by treating Daoism, just like Buddhism, as one religion, for administrative purposes.

One rationale for the trend to unify was certainly the claim of all groups and scriptures to originate in and lead back to Dao as ultimate source, substance, and rule of all that is. Yet the process of organizing competing sacred scriptures, gods, rituals, and practices was challenging.

So, for a prominent Daoist in the capital, the tasks at hand were many. He had to prove that Laozi, ancestor of the Tang rulers, was a deity and sage who could stand up to any comparison with Buddha or the Confucian sage kings. Furthermore, Laozi had to be integrated with other Daoist gods, in particular with the highest deity of the Lingbao scriptures, Yuanshi Tianzun, who until the last quarter of the sixth century had eclipsed Laozi in many ways. Then it had to be proven that Daoist teachings were as good as or better than those of the Buddhists in providing universal salvation and practical guidance for governing and legitimization.

In addition, there were the core concerns of Daoism, such as the search for a way to grasp or obtain Dao, which then would afford the person who obtained it power and immortality.

Cheng Xuanying's Expository Commentary and the "Chinese Conquest of Buddhism"

Cheng Xuanying develops in his Expository Commentary to the Daode jing a vision of Daoist teachings that answers these challenges. It covers the exploration of the mysterious relation of Dao to the phenomena, the characteristics of the sage as model for a ruler and model for a Daoist adept, ethical rules that would allow an adept to reach Dao and a ruler to hold power, detailed instructions for the Daoist adept on how to live and practice, and the portrayal of Laozi as a deity and sage who would be superior to Buddha and to the sage kings of the Confucian tradition, because he united the most appealing qualities of both. Furthermore, Cheng proposes a systematic analysis of the Daode jing, which emphasizes (or, better, constructs) the internal coherence of this rather vague and enigmatic text, and thus he transforms the Daode jing from a loose collection of aphorisms and utterances to a well-organized philosophical exposition.

Thus, Laozi, presumed the divine author of the Daode jing, is confirmed as compatible with or superior to Buddha and the Confucian sages, and his work, the Daode jing, is presented as a philosophically sophisticated text that is in no way inferior to any of the more recently imported or revealed texts, Buddhist or Daoist, that had dominated the intellectual and religious field in early medieval China.

Interpreting the Daode jing, a text that had a long and illustrious history as a subject of debate, Cheng manages to position the Daoist teaching as a continuation of earlier exegesis, like that of the Xuanxue, which had never lost its appeal among the cultured elite, and at the same time as a salvational teaching that could match the teachings of their Buddhist competitors.

The conceptual tools Cheng employed to achieve this endeavor came from different backgrounds, many of them from Buddhism. How should we think of this? In the past, the general consensus was that Buddhism "conquered" China, and Daoism was "influenced" by Buddhism. However, understanding the interaction of Buddhism and Daoism in terms of conquest or influence, where one active agent shapes a passive

agent, or in terms of borrowing (or even plagiarizing), where conceptions of another school of thought are simply appropriated, falls short of the complex and creative processes that took place. Conceptualizing these processes in terms of "influence" implies conceiving of religions as firmly bounded entities, which "own" certain dogmas, concepts, and practices, which can then be stolen, borrowed, influenced, or transformed. This conception of religion seems to be difficult to maintain in the rather fluid environment of early medieval religions in China. Therefore, I propose to consider Cheng as an author who lived in an intellectually vibrant environment, where much discussion and debate among the three teachings resulted in an enrichment of the conceptual tools at his disposal and in a philosophical discourse that encompassed all three teachings.

In early medieval China, the boundaries among the three teachings were demarcated, as the voluminous Buddhist apologetic literature especially documents. However, texts such as the "Three Mysteries" (Daode jing, Book of Changes, and Zhuangzi) or the "Five Classics" (Book of Songs, Book of History, Book of Changes, Book of Rites, and Spring and Autumn Annals) were studied and discussed among all the educated elite, including secular scholars and Buddhist and Daoist clergy. Just as the early Xuanxue philosophers would study the Daode jing but essentially considered Laozi a mere philosopher, while they held Confucius to be the last of the real sages (Wagner 2000, 120), Buddhist monks such as Kumārajīva, for example, would also write commentaries explaining the Daode jing while revering Buddha. On the level of philosophical debate, classic texts such as the Daode jing or the Confucian classics were free to be used and studied by everybody, independent of religious or philosophical affiliations.

The Daode jing had a double role, though: where scholarly commentators such as Wang Bi (226-249) considered the Daode jing as an apt "exploration of the Dark" (Wagner 2003b) by a philosopher called Laozi, Daoists claimed that the Daode jing was revealed by a deity Lord Lao in order to instruct the people. Daoists eventually produced commentaries that were intended to be read only by believers, and they added esoteric "oral instructions" (koujue) to the Daode jing. However, they never

contested that the text of the Daode jing itself was part of the public intellectual realm. Thus, the Daode jing also became a focal point for interaction of the ideas of adherents to the three teachings. And as such, it became a vector for engagement with different ideas, including novel concepts and theories that were proposed by Buddhist masters and Buddhist texts.

To construct meaning in his Expository Commentary, Cheng used concepts, methods, and terminologies that had come to China with Buddhism. However, I argue that the Expository Commentary should not be judged as a more or less genuine copy of Buddhism or a more or less diluted or impure Daoism. Cheng simply used all the conceptual tools and devices he had at his disposal to complete his hermeneutic endeavor to understand the notoriously difficult text of the Daode jing and to extract from this text answers for the questions and issues of his times. It is in this context that I propose to speak of a "Chinese conquest of Buddhism." Cheng had "conquered," or mastered, many of the complex Buddhist concepts to a degree that he could not just "coopt" (or plagiarize) them, as had been done in many of the Daoist scriptures of the Six Dynasties period. He was able to use them as conceptual tools in his interpretation of the Daode jing. This allowed him to achieve a reading of the Daode jing that is remarkable both for its coherence and for its powerful approach to addressing the various challenges faced by Daoists at the Tang court. Furthermore, he managed to present several originally Buddhist concepts, which presumably were attractive for the Chinese thinkers, as an integral part of Laozi's teachings. <>

DREAMTIMES AND THOUGHTFORMS: COSMOGENESIS FROM THE BIG BANG TO OCTOPUS AND CROW INTELLIGENCE TO UFOs by Richard Grossinger [Park Street Press, 9781644115640]

Examines animal intelligences within a greater evolutionary context, detailing in particular the remarkable intelligence of crows and octopuses

Looks at the Australian Aborigine Dreamtime as an attempt to understand the combined geological and geomantic landscape

Investigates a range of ideas as they relate to the intersections of consciousness and reality, including reincarnation, past-life memories, ghosts, and UFOs

From the origins of the cosmos to the microbiome, COVID-19 pandemic, UFOs, and the shapeshifting of octopuses and language of crows, Richard Grossinger traverses the mysteries and enigmas that define our universe and personal reality.

Beginning his narrative with the Big Bang, origin of the Milky Way, and birth of our solar system, Grossinger offers a chronology of Earth's geological, climatological, biological, and sociological evolution, leading to the current environmental and psychospiritual crisis. He explores the origin of cell life, RNA-DNA, and larger biomes, detailing in particular the remarkable intelligence of crows and octopuses. He uses the Australian Aborigine Dreamtime to understand landscapes as thoughtforms. He then offers reimaginings, from the perspective of "dreamings," of a wide variety of animals, including tardigrades, llamas, sea turtles, pigeons, bees, and coyotes.

Examining the scientific dilemmas and paradoxes of consciousness, time, and quantum entanglement, Grossinger carries these into the range of issues around reincarnation, past-life memories, messages from the afterlife, and ghosts. Sharing exercises from his personal practice, Grossinger makes a distinction between the Buddhist description of reality and how Buddhist practitioners create an operating manual for the universe and an assured path of salvation. The author then examines UFOs and their connections to elementals, fairies, and cryptids in terms of psychoids, Jung's term for transconscious processes that enter our world as autonomous entities.

Taking the reader on a journey through the seen and unseen universe, from the Big Bang to the imaginal landscape of Dreamtime, Grossinger shows that matter is infused with spirit from its very beginning.

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Reading Gateway Cards

Cosmogogenesis is the creation of universes. It is also Creation itself—Genesis—in every tradition and dimension, at every scale and echelon, as cosmoses and as what Tibetan lamas call "bardos," bridges between cosmoses or states of consciousness. Bardos were traditionally intermediate phases, in Himalayan lineages of Bonpo and Buddhism, between deaths and rebirths (reincarnations) during which consciousness occurs but is not attached to a physical body. As the concept was more deeply interrogated, the bardo after death proved no more definitive or transitional than many other bardos, including those of (1) waking life, (2) dreams, (3) entheogen-induced spells, (4) shamanic trance-journeys to other heavens, (4) astral, etheric, and higher-plane outof-the body travel, (5) proprioception-altering illnesses, (6) epileptic, migranoid, and other seizures, (7) comas, (8) deep meditative reveries of insight, (9) near-death experiences, and (10) any transient state of euphoria, rapture, depression, terror, shock, or sustained hallucination. Bardos are themselves fully endowed—as bottomless,

believable, and conditional in their framings as waking realms are to their habitants and vagabonds.

The subtler undertone is that consciousness moves between provisional states without discontinuity because "discontinuities" are equally states. Underlying this concept is an even deeper precept: that all worlds as well as all mind states arise from pristine awareness or pure consciousness transcending both thought and form, roughly defined by the Tibetan word *rigpa*. Reality, including the starry pavilion with all its worlds and phenomenologies, is a mirage, illusion, bubble, hallucination, reflection, duality—created by mind itself.

Creation arises from a primordial ground luminosity, a pure essence beyond concept or form. A hermit sits for days, months, or years in a cave in order to view this luminosity from a mortal body. A greater sun eventually rises within rather than across reality, illuminating it with the glow of existence, what it means for anything to be.

This meditation corresponds loosely to tarot trump nine of the Greater Arcana. The Hermit is a seeker guided by *rigpa*, the union of clarity and emptiness and the light of his or her own unconscious, which is borne in a lantern (or latency) and reflected in distant lone stars of a black, indigo, purple, or blue sky (depending on the tarot). The Hermit along with the Hierophant, Wheel, Tower, and Star are gateway cards. As other oracle decks are being drawn these days faster than spring clover, Fox, Clouds, a tetrahedron, a jovial breeze, archangel Michael, a dragon of deliverance, an iridium moon, an elephant spirit, and a sea priestess are among their gatekeepers.

I entitled a previous (1986) book of mine *Embryogenesis*, meaning how creatures enter this cosmos—nesting in cellulomolecular cocoons, then layering whirling-dervish-like in an egg, before incarnating as a sentient being. From an epistemological standpoint, embryogenesis is cosmogenesis, a roost in which spirit molts and re-forms, taking on carnal contour for Earth tenure. Universes manifest coordinately as mindedness, as quasi-material dynamic fields, and as views. Each is induced by each other into the truth mystery itself.

My premise is that reality is a manifestation, one of many. That doesn't demote the material universe to a mere illusion or hallucination with no solidity—for there are only insubstantial manifestations: a transdimensional tower of worlds and realms, stacked in tiers of frequencies or planes, through which karmically impelled souls transit. Mind is senior to matter. Mind is what makes matter into matter.

Realities are also not circumstantial. Even if manifestations, they are pearls on the same string, interrelated, earned, sequential. I side here with Native American spirit, Hindu maya, and the Australian Aboriginal alcheringa or Dreamtime. By including the latter in my title, I am acknowledging an ancient, originary mode of clairsentient consciousness and tribal phenomenology. In the Dreamtime, the universe is magical, musical, and sung by all its entities together—we share a powerful, relevant, and active songline. Stuff going on anywhere affects stuff occurring everywhere and as anything.

Whatever arises in a physical universe is in shape-shifting verisimilitude with all other evolving universes across All That Is. This should cue you to the fact that the universe of science and its technocracy, while heralded as the cat's lone meow and singular hope of humanity, is a rinky-dink machine-shop cosmos driven by a card counter's algorithms. Moguls like J. Bezos, E. Musk, V. Putin, and B. Gates are temporarily beating the casino on its own terms, but the casino sits on a karmically arising grassland under an extension of uncertainty states, fractals, and strings of fine threads and rough cordage igniting one another transdimensionally. These guys won't win indefinitely.

Baseline phenomena (stars, stones, seas, and weather) are transpositions of conditions elsewhere. Like states of the human psyche (self, anima, hero, trickster), they originate in what psychologist Carl Jung called archetypes. Archetypes are motifs that span bardos. We cannot say what their primal forms are, for we know them only by aspects they display on any one planet in any one epoch in any one observable cosmos.

On latter-day Earth, physics, chemistry, astronomy, psychology, anthropology, mathematics, and thermodynamics are spatiotemporal sciences, but they are also subsets of archetypal or traditional sciences like alchemy, astrology, shamanism, numerology, and magic. Each traditional science represents an organizing principle

that exists in Creation at large, outside the Big Bang, in every latent and manifest universe.

The ultimate universal laws are unknowable in any one nervous system or by any single type of ganglion and mind. In this regard, a human philosopher is no savvier than a grasshopper or wren.

From their local expressions, we can interpolate the domains of archetypal sciences. Alchemy explores transitions between phases of manifestation. In a thermodynamic alembic, these regulate transmutations of mind and matter. Terrestrial alchemists work toward conjunctions of elemental substances, seeking crossover states and their phenomenologies. Alchemy also encompasses tiers of causal energy that give rise regionally to tables, periodicities, octaves, and isotopes.

The line between psyche and substance fluctuates, for both were a thoughtform in the solar cloud. There, mind and matter were inseparable and indistinguishable. All consciousness was telekinetic; all mass-and-motion mind-driven. Thoughtforms continue to arise in cooler, slower space-time: a lamp, a cabin, or a train's caboose is a thoughtform, a thought turned into a form as well as a shift-potential shape.

Modern chemists and physicists, by contrast, confine their tracking to molecular properties emergent on Earth and, from spectrographic analyses, on exotic planets and stars.

Astrology is the concomitant cosmography and psychology of All That Is. In the "birth" chart of every animate and inanimate being as well as each occasion, destinies are individualized—individuated—against all contingencies and states of singularity. Because each multiverse forms against the backdrop of all multiverses—All That Is—their meanings are organized by coincidings and synchronicities. That's why zodiacal charts "work" even multi-centrally. There are no wrong divinations or contexts, only different ways of telling the same story or fortune.

The stars that we see index another star-field within yet another, and another, each with multiple centricities and frames of reference. This enfolded para-celestial

background holds universes in place. Because each universe forms against the backdrop of all universes, their sigils are bound to superior (interior) fields. Each zodiac dowses that hyperspatial whirlpool while each astronomy sets its near levers, gears, cycles, and screens. That is why there is finally an orbiting planet, centaur, or asteroid to dot every "i" and cross every "t."

One could argue that thermodynamics and astrology are yoked to each other by gravity and synchronicity, which are expressions of one energy at different frequencies. Psychologist Carl Jung and physicist Wolfgang Pauli tried to cut that Gordian knot together with marginal success; see *Atom and Archetype: The Pauli-Jung Letters, 1932-1958*.

The driver behind all this is karma, though not "karma" as we bandy the word in pop parlance. Karma is gravity and mass working, in concert with psyche and being. It is how everything, conscious and unconscious, enacts cosmoses together. Bardos hatch because they have to. Our physical domain, what we call "nature" (from the Greek *gnascari*—"to be born" plus the future participle *urus*) is not only a transfigured gnosis but a continuous nativity. All worlds work together to complete—complete is not the word—a grand experiment of interim clarities. Creation models the athanors of Renaissance alchemists more than the centrifuges of successor chemists, for the periodic table is confined to one range of collisions and their outcomes, whereas *All That Is* is exploring mixed media.

There are finally no real things, only thoughtforms: modules flowing through minded states into manifestations. Soul driven, evolving, generating entire universes, they answer the eternal question "Which came first?"—by "Neither." There is no distinction between mind and matter, thought and form, goose and egg. The physics and biology of the universe—the laws of *gnature*—are a thoughtform seeking its own basis and discovering what it is by expressing it.

Dreamtimes and Thoughtforms begins by addressing our landed universe and its dioceses, particularly the origin and destiny of sentient beings on Planet Earth as well as, presumably, elsewhere in the cosmos. My life-long inquiry into this topic began with

riffs in my early twenties in the mid-1960s that led to *Solar Journal: Oecological Sections*, and proceeded through works like *Spaces Wild and Tame*; *Book of the Earth and Sky*; *The Long Body of the Dream*; and *The Slag of Creation*. In 1975, I changed genres from experimental prose to expository narrative; e.g., from pure dowsing to topic-driven matrices like this one.

Dreamtimes and Thoughtforms directly follows my book *Bottoming Out the Universe: Why There Is Something Rather Than Nothing*, which itself advances themes from a three-volume work I called *Dark Pool of Light: Reality and Consciousness*, the first on the neuroscience and ontology of consciousness, the second on consciousness in psychic and psychospiritual ranges, the third on the crisis and future of consciousness. Those four books—2010 to 2020—rest on my previous (1977 to 2003) series: *Planet Medicine (Origins and Modalities volumes)*; *The Night Sky: Soul and Cosmos*; *Embryogenesis: Species, Gender, and Identity*; and *Embryos, Galaxies, and Sentient Beings: How the Universe Makes Life*. From 2003 to 2010, I wrote a companion trilogy: *On the Integration of Nature* (2005), *The Bardo of Waking Life* (2008), and *2013: Raising the Earth to the Next Vibration* (2010).

I am a literary writer—sorry, "science only" readers. My explorations in physics, biology, parapsysics, and mysticism came after my teen meetings with John Keats, Herman Melville, and William Faulkner.

I am also an occult writer. I read tarot cards at sixteen and presently help shepherd a psychic group on Zoom (per my dedication) *These meet (the literary and occult)*. For me the occult is occulted (and revealed) by phonetics as well as semantics. That is, content isn't its own only source of meaning. Form is an extension of content.

After reading a late draft of *Dreamtimes and Thoughtforms*, one rad scientist interested in "microtubular signal transduction" and "deciphering the code of the morphogenetic field" (as I am) wrote back that my writing was "as always, verbose and unduly self-enamored and self-impressed." That startled and stung. I am enamored of voices and, if I am impressed, it is by them, their strangeness and variety, not by any choreography of my own.

Some minds work best by assault and dialectic, so I appreciate his ding. It was helpful like a Zen slap or windshield ticket. Whether it is accurate isn't up to me. I write as I write, and the alternative is not to write as someone else writes (or asks me to write) but not to write at all. I am glad that the microtubular guy also warned me about what he called my "endless alliteration of everything." I agree. Where it occurs, it is stupefying, almost bizarre.

I am not a traditional alliterator or lister; in fact, I have scrupulously avoided Longfellow-like lyricisms and meters. I consider alliteration a cheap trick, a crossword-puzzle-like game best for pop librettos where it is carried by melody. Yet the more I wrote this book, the more it alliterated and the more it also felt channeled. By that, I don't mean that I heard an alien voice or spoke in tongues, but I also don't not mean those. I began to hear sounds of sentences ahead of or along with their meanings and, after a while, I began to listen and record. I agree that it can sound like self-enamorment, but I believe it is something else: an older, not entirely contemporary English voice speaking along with me, a bit Elizabethan, a bit mock-academic, not undue but ornate and dense as if a Sirian narrator were talking Gaian. Sorry, rad scientist. I heard it that way.

Here's what I think: when one flips into an interdimensional message, its language reflects its source of transmission. Words that list toward etymology and onomatopoeia expedite a "transduction" (microtubular yes, necessarily) of sound into meaning. I decided to encourage instead of fighting it once I realized that long tallies and alliterations are signatures of a meta-language or information set (like multi-spirt Seth's Sumari). Singsong though it is, glossolalia accompanies us out of the Great Void.

I initially composed Dreamtimes and Thoughtforms within a larger text. I have tentatively named its more secular part The Return of the Tower of Babel: QAnon, COVID, and Chaos Magic. Together, the titles make a twin tablet of cosmological and political auguries that began in a source folio, Reading Gateway Cards: Opening the 2020 Portal.

"Gateway Cards" intimates that Earth is passing through a portal in space-time. Overdue oracles are hatching: 1987's harmonic convergence, the Common Era's Y2K, 2012's end to the Mayan calendar and our solar system's convergence with the galactic center, and the zodiacal Age of Aquarius scintillate together now like the tail of a rattlesnake. It has become hard to tell a nation from a barony, a world power from a failed state.

Even with meticulously managed clocks and data clouds, time no longer sticks to gears, ticks, or cesium atoms; it has become distended, longer and thicker, even stalling out, in some precincts, while whipping by like a solar wind in others. Distance has warped too, from the farthest nebulae to getting crosstown. Urban zones and their malls and eateries have distended like Salvador Dali clocks, while individuals—in Hong Kong, Cape Town, Buenos Aires, and Boise—sat together in Zoom cafes.

Meanwhile, a hollow has been growing at the core of civilization, beyond context or meaning. While the modern world is churning out trillion-fold algorithms, bitcoins, and bling, it is untethered to a tribe or soul.

Astrologers and clairvoyants sensed something huge out there but didn't know what it was. Like a planet-killing comet or system-perturbing "Planet X," it kept getting vaster and emptier, camouflaged by the digital dazzle of the Kuiper belt. Texture and life were being drained from the world and replaced by an artificially sweetened, deficit-funded substitute. The Inuit spoke of a shift in the Earth's orbit: "The sun is in a different place now," their elders said. "Everything is tilting northward. The winds are fitful, weather unpredictable." They checked with other elders; they agreed, something big is happening.

In 2017, a cigar-shaped object of anomalous trajectory whipped through our System, changing speed and albedo in ways that Newtonian comets can't. It was gone before astronomers realized they had a black swan, an unpiloted foo. They failed to resolve its signature and decode its nature. Too late! The elongated rod was on its way toward Pegasus.

The misidentified comet, dubbed 'Oumuamua after Hawaiian for "scout" because it was first observed at twenty-one million miles (or 0.22 AU: Gaia-Sun units) from the Haleakala Observatory in Maui, broke the plane of the Solar System on September 6 from the direction of Vega twenty-five light years away, reached perihelion on September 9, and was out of range a month later.

When Harvard astronomer Avi Loeb proposed that the interstellar object might not have been another surplus rock but the first technosignature from away—debris from one of the many civilizations in the universe, perhaps a light-driven sail several kilometers long and only a few millimeters thick, perhaps a camera probe—he was all but excommunicated from the guild.

Where was NASA's asteroid watch? It was busy charting Apophis in 2029.

Evolutionary astrologer and ayahuasquero Laura Matsue declared, "2020 is like the world is in an ayahuasca ceremony together—and most people have neither prepared for it nor do they even know they're in it and there's no shaman. The shaman is meant to create some containment around the energy of the ceremony, and there's definitely none of that going on."

Instead, we have the shaman of no-shaman. <>

THOMAS AQUINAS ON THE METAPHYSICS OF THE HUMAN ACT by Can Laurens Löwe [Cambridge University Press, 9781108833646]

This book offers a novel account of Aquinas's theory of the human act. It argues that Aquinas takes a human act to be a composite of two power-exercises, where one relates to the other as form to matter. The formal component is an act of the will, and the material component is a power-exercise caused by the will, which Aquinas refers to as the 'commanded act.' The book also argues that Aquinas conceptualizes the act of free choice as a hylomorphic composite: it is, materially, an act of the will, but it inherits a form from reason. As the book aims to show, the core idea of Aquinas's hylomorphic action theory is that the exercise of one power can structure the exercise of another power, and this provides a helpful way to think of the presence of cognition in conation and of intention in bodily movement.

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Human beings are beings capable of agency. Some of our actions are mundane doings, such as setting an alarm clock or buying a train ticket. Others are deeds that have a significant impact on our lives, such as joining a political resistance movement. On a now common view, it is essential to an action that it be something done intentionally (at least under some description)! This means that we take an action to be something that we can explain and justify by appeal to reasons, that is, by appeal to considerations that speak in favor of it. An agent can explain why she bought a train ticket, for instance, by saying that she wanted to get from A to B, and she can justify her joining a resistance movement by appealing to her conviction that one ought to fight a totalitarian regime.

Although we all know that we perform actions and that we provide reasons to explain them, it is not an easy matter to determine what actions are and how they are explained. Consider a simple example, the action of raising one's arm. What makes this an action? Is it, as many philosophers from Aristotle onward have held, the presence of a mental act explaining the movement of the arm's going up? If this is the case, then what is the relevant mental act — a choice, an intention, or perhaps a belief—desire pair? And how does the mental act explain the movement of the arm's going up? Is the explanation causal or non-causal? Furthermore, what exactly is the action here? Is it the overt bodily movement of the arm's going up accounted for by the mental act or is it rather the mental act accounting for the movement? Or is it perhaps the whole process comprising the mental act plus the bodily movement as its

components? If so, what is the nature of this composition? And suppose that we have satisfactory answers to these questions regarding bodily actions, such as raising one's arm, can we extend these to mental actions, such as trying to recall a piece of information?

In contemporary philosophy, it is generally taken to be the task of the philosophy of action or action theory, as it is also called, to answer these sorts of questions. These questions are metaphysical in nature.¹ They concern the ontology and aetiology of action. That is, they ask what kind of entity an action is and how it is explained. These are distinct from ethical questions pertaining to action, such as, 'Is one morally obligated to fight a totalitarian regime?' or metaethical questions, such as, 'Does the goodness of an action derive from its intention or its outcome?' Ethical and metaethical questions concern action in relation to a normative standard, asking, respectively, whether a certain action, such as fighting a totalitarian regime, fits a given normative standard and what the nature of this normative standard is. Action theory, in contrast, is an inquiry into action irrespective of its relation to such a normative standard. It is, as we might say, an inquiry into action from a descriptive point of view.

This book investigates Thomas Aquinas's (1225?-74) action theory in this descriptive sense. Aquinas developed a sophisticated theory of this kind. Its subject matter is what Aquinas calls the "human act" (*actus humanus/actio humana/operatio humane*), this being, roughly, how he refers to what we would today call an "intentional action." (I say 'roughly' because, as we will see in Chapter I, for Aquinas, a human act is not just an intentional action, but rather an intentional action that is free.) Aquinas's theory discusses the ontology of the human act, examines its aetiology, and investigates the peculiarities of bodily as well as mental acts that we perform at

Unlike philosophers of action today, Aquinas does not refer to his account of the human act as "action theory," and it is likely that he would have found this term problematic. The reason is that the term 'action theory' refers to its subject of study, that is, intentional doings, simply as 'actions' relying on the now widespread view that actions are intentional doings (under some description). Aquinas does not share this view of action, as we will see in Chapter I. He thinks that the terms 'action' (*actin*) and 'act' (*actus*) extend well beyond the realm of intentional agency. On his view, the term 'action' denotes the exercise of an active as opposed to a passive power, and to refer to the exercise of the latter type of power he uses the term 'passion' (*passio*). And 'act' denotes, very generally, the exercise of any kind of power, whether active or passive. For Aquinas, power-exercises, whether active or passive, are found throughout nature, even among inanimate beings. Human acts are but one kind of act among many.

To facilitate the presentation of Aquinas's theory, I follow his terminological conventions and henceforth speak of 'human act' where contemporary philosophers would speak of 'action,' and I will use 'act' and 'action' in Aquinas's sense to refer, respectively, to a power-exercise in general and an active power-exercise more specifically. I will only use 'action' in the contemporary sense of 'intentional doing' when employing now standard terms such as 'course of action,' 'action theory,' and 'action aetiology.' Thus, when I speak of 'Aquinas's action theory,' I thereby intend his theory of the human act, not his theory of active power-exercises.

If Aquinas does not call his descriptive study of the human act "action theory," then how does he refer to it instead, assuming he has a term at all? He does in fact have a term. He says that the investigation of

the human act pertains to "moral philosophy" (*philosophia moralis*). This notion has a much broader meaning in Aquinas than it does today, however. Aquinas writes that the subject matter of moral philosophy is, very generally, the "human act ordered to the end." For Aquinas, this study includes ethics, which, on his view, investigates whether a given human act is good by virtue of being conducive to human happiness, this being our ultimate end. Furthermore, it includes a series of metaethical reflections on the nature of normativity, in particular on whether claims about what ends we ought to pursue are grounded in facts about what kinds of beings we are. But it also contains a descriptive account of the human act, in particular of its ontology and aetiology, and this descriptive consideration, Aquinas thinks, is an indispensable prolegomenon to his ethics and metaethics. To see what human acts lead to happiness and why, he holds, we must first gain clarity on what the human act is and how it is explained.'

For this reason, Aquinas provides in a number of texts that belong to his moral philosophy detailed discussions of metaphysical issues related to the human act. His most detailed discussion of this sort can be found in the first fifth of his longest work on moral philosophy, the *Prima secundae* of the *Summa theologiae*, in particular in *quaestiones* 6-17 (1271). There, Aquinas investigates the powers of practical reason and will, their exercises, and the aetiology of the human act. Moreover, he offers an ontology of the human act. Only in a next step does he consider the features of "goodness and badness" (*bonitas et malitia*) (qq. 18-21), that is, the act's normative dimension. Thus, Aquinas has a systematic action theory in the above-defined descriptive sense, but he considers it a part of his moral philosophy.

The present study is not the first to deal with Aquinas's descriptive action theory. A number of scholars have investigated Aquinas's sophisticated action aetiology as laid out in the *Prima secundae*, qq. 6-17.

Furthermore, some commentators have also considered Aquinas's ontology of the human act.' However, this book differs from previous work in three important ways.

First, there is a difference in focus. Aquinas's action aetiology, as developed in the *Prima secundae*, is rich, involving such diverse explanatory antecedents as "simple volition" (*simplex velle*), "intention" (*intentio*), "consent" (*consensus*), and "choice" (*electio*) (see Chapter 1). Studies dedicated to Aquinas's aetiology have offered detailed accounts of the various antecedents leading up to choice. In contrast, the phase leading from choice to the actual performance of the human act, which, in addition to choice, comprises the elements of "command" (*imperium*), "use" (*usus*), and the "commanded act" (*actus imperatus*), has received comparatively little attention. It is this latter phase that the present study will focus on.

This phase is of critical importance for Aquinas's action theory both from an ontological and an aetiological point of view. It is ontologically important on account of command, use, and the commanded act. For Aquinas specifies what the human act is by appeal to these three acts, arguing that a human act is a kind of composite of use and the commanded act, with use being informed by command (see Chapter 6).

The phase is aetiologically important on account of the act of choice. Among all of the aetiological antecedents that he countenances, Aquinas singles out choice as the key explanatory factor of the human act, as we will see in Chapter 1. It is because a human act proceeds from choice that it is a

characteristically human act, on his view. Thus, to understand what makes something a human act, we must examine how the composite of use and the commanded act relates not only to command but also to choice.

The focus on the neglected phase leading from choice to the human act is one respect that sets my study apart from others. But it is not the only one. My study also differs from others in terms of its interpretive approach. I examine Aquinas's ontology of the human act as well as his choice-based aetiology in light of a certain metaphysical commitment of his, namely, his hylomorphism. Generally speaking, hylomorphism is a view about material objects, according to which every material object has a material and a formal component, where the formal component makes the material object the kind of object it is by inhering in its matter. As we will see, Aquinas thinks that a human act is also structured like a hylomorphic whole. The formal and material components are, respectively, use, which is an act of the will or volition, as I shall call it," and the commanded act. This view of Aquinas's, which I shall henceforth refer to as Act Hylomorphism, has for the most part gone unnoticed in the scholarly literature, and the available interpretations of the ontology of the human act in Aquinas are non-hylomorphic. In this book, I aim to offer a detailed account of Aquinas's Act Hylomorphism and show why the alternative, non-hylomorphic interpretations are mistaken.

For Aquinas, not only the human act has a hylomorphic structure. On his view, the act of choice, which explains the human act, is likewise a kind of hylomorphic composite. It is a volition, materially speaking, and its formal component is, as I argue in Chapters 4-5, the volition's characteristic free intentional directedness to one pursuit rather than another, where this free directedness is inherited from a preceding judgment of reason that Aquinas refers to as "free judgment" (*liberum iudicium*). I call this doctrine of Aquinas's Choice Hylomorphism.

Aquinas's Choice Hylomorphism has received some attention in the literature! However, its details remain poorly understood because we lack as yet a clear account of what kinds of mental acts free judgment and choice are, and we also lack a proper understanding of the way in which choice depends on judgment. In this study, I aim to fill this gap by considering free judgment and choice in light of Aquinas's general account of practical judgment and volition. I should note, however, that I do not take a stand in the dispute as to whether Aquinas's theory of choice is compatibilist or libertarian. In my view, answering this question would require another book, but I do not think that I have to settle this dispute here because my interpretation of choice is compatible with either reading.

There is also a third and final respect in which my book differs from previous work on Aquinas's philosophy of action. In addition to laying out Aquinas's action theory with a view to his Act and Choice Hylomorphism, this book also assesses the philosophical merit of Aquinas's Act Hylomorphism by bringing it into dialogue with some representative contemporary theories of action. The attempt to connect Aquinas's action theory with contemporary theorizing about human agency is not without precedent. However, this project has not yet been undertaken in light of a hylomorphic interpretation of the human act.

The book is in three parts. The first part (Chapter 1) introduces the general framework of Aquinas's action-theoretical project. As indicated, this theory revolves around the notion of the 'human act' (*actus*

humanus), and in Chapter 1 I aim to explain this term. I argue that Aquinas understands by a 'human act' an intentional act that is free and that his theory of this act crucially relies on his Act and Choice Hylomorphism.

The second part (Chapters 2-5) examines Aquinas's Choice Hylomorphism. I first discuss free judgment (Chapters 2-3), which explains the characteristic form of the hylomorphically structured act of choice. In particular, I discuss what makes this judgment free, as this allows us to see on account of what the volitional act of choice is free. To explain what makes this judgment free, we need to first see what makes it practical, and this is the task of Chapter 2. I argue that a judgment is practical on account of the means—end relating nature of its propositional content. In Chapter 3, I then turn to an examination of free judgment more specifically, which is one kind of practical judgment, and I argue that its free character derives from the specific types of means—end relations that it is concerned with.

Once the free character of judgment has been specified, the task of Chapters 4-5 is to consider choice itself and how it derives its characteristic freedom from the preceding judgment. In Chapter 4, I first examine Aquinas's general theory of volition and the relation of dependence obtaining between volition and judgment. I argue that, on his view, judgments are both the formal and final causes of volitions and that this means that a volition derives its directedness to a certain means as ordered to an end from judgment. I also argue that the will possesses no freedom of its own and that volitional freedom is entirely derived from free judgment. In Chapter 5, I then spell out what the derivative directedness of volition is, and I argue that the core idea of Aquinas's Choice Hylomorphism is that choice's free or preferential character is an intentional directedness derived from the preceding free judgment.

Having so laid out Aquinas's Choice Hylomorphism and its basis in free judgment, I turn in the third part of this book to Aquinas's Act Hylomorphism (Chapters 6-9). In Chapter 6, I lay out the general framework of Aquinas's Act Hylomorphism. I argue, against non-hylomorphic interpretations, that the act of use and the commanded act together compose the hylomorphically organized human act, for Aquinas, and I discuss this doctrine in some detail. I also discuss how choice explains this composite, thereby bringing Aquinas's Act and Choice Hylomorphism together.

Chapters 7 and 8 then flesh out Aquinas's Act Hylomorphism by considering the two general types of human acts that Aquinas countenances, namely, bodily ones, such as taking a walk (Chapter 7), and mental ones (Chapter 8), such as trying to recall a piece of information. I flesh out the hylomorphic structure of these two general types of human acts by considering the temporal and causal features of use and the commanded act in both cases. As we will see, bodily and mental human acts have certain key features in common, for Aquinas, but they also differ from one another in important respects.

Chapter 9, finally, compares Aquinas's Act Hylomorphism to contemporary theories of the human act and concludes that Aquinas's view has some attractive features and advantages over contemporary theories, though, unfortunately, it also has a considerable downside. <>

THE DRAMATIZING OF THEOLOGY: HUMANITY'S PARTICIPATION IN GOD'S DRAMA by Matthew S. Farlow, Foreword by Paul Louis Metzger [Wipf and Stock, 9781532603877]

Matthew Farlow traces the thoughts of Balthasar and Barth so as to enter into theological truth of God's Being-in-Act. This exploration embarks on a journey into the reality of our Triune God who has engaged his creation so as to elicit fellow actors. God seeking out humanity is God with us, a truth that not only informs our theological endeavors, but invites us into the dramatic performance of reconciliation. As Farlow illumines, God is an acting God who seeks fellow participants in his ongoing drama of salvation. Through the dramatizing of theology, the church and her theologians come to realize God's threefold movement--revelation, invitation and reconciliation. It is a unified act that startles humanity, and thus theology, out of its "spectator's seat," so as to drag it onto the world's stage. As Farlow discusses, it is through the dramatizing of theology that we find ourselves best equipped to participate faithfully in the role of a lifetime. "This is a serious theological reflection . . . Farlow uses the thought of Barth and Balthasar to draw us into the divine drama so that we are personally encountered by Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and invited into our lifetime roles. It was Shakespeare who told us that 'all the world is a stage'; Farlow reminds us that we are all invited to become actors in the divine play of life. When we engage and encounter the living Christ, we enter into the divine narrative most fully as persons who surrender in obedience to the call of the Master. You will not simply read this book; you will experience it and be the better for the journey. Read it like I did and discover your part in the story of life!" --John Jackson, President, William Jessup University; public speaker; author of books on leadership and spiritual formation Matthew Farlow is a lecturer of Theology and Christian Praxis at William Jessup University in Rocklin, CA, while also the Book Review Editor for Cultural Encounters: A Journal for the Theology of Culture.

Review

"This is a serious theological reflection . . . Farlow uses the thought of Barth and Balthasar to draw us into the divine drama so that we are personally encountered by Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and invited into our lifetime roles. It was Shakespeare who told us that 'all the world is a stage'; Farlow reminds us that we are all invited to become actors in the divine play of life. When we engage and encounter the living Christ, we enter into the divine narrative most fully as persons who surrender in obedience to the call of the Master. You will not simply read this book; you will experience it and be the better for the journey. Read it like I did and discover your part in the story of life!" --John Jackson, President, William Jessup University; public speaker; author of books on leadership and spiritual formation.

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“Act well your part; there all the honour lies.” Alexander Pope penned these famous lines in his celebrated “An Essay on Man.” Kant admired the piece. Early on in his career, Voltaire loved it. However, he later denounced Pope’s essay for what he took to be a false optimism and passivity on humanity’s part.

Regardless of what one makes of Pope’s work, Matthew Farlow plays his part well in *The Dramatizing of Theology*. Farlow rehearses and performs with skill his lines for God’s dramatic presentation on the world’s stage. He does so without projecting a false sense of optimism or passivity. Rather, Farlow accounts for the tragicomedy of salvation, which includes all humanity in dynamic and interactive terms, including theologians!

Farlow calls on the theological actors’ guild to do more than argue logical points or narrate stories, however important. If, as he argues, salvation is God’s drama in which we participate, theologians

should call on their fellow humans not simply to reflect upon or contemplate salvation, but to share or participate in what Hans Urs von Balthasar refers to as the Theo-drama.

Farlow makes explicit this implicit feature in Karl Barth's work, showing how participation is a key embedded feature in the Church Dogmatics. The *Dramatizing of Theology* highlights especially Balthasar's explicit treatment of the divine drama in his multi-volume masterpiece titled *TheoDrama*. While reenacting the various movements, Farlow goes further, making explicit its implications for daily life and cultural engagement in every sector of society. He understands that the best dramatists and playwrights, such as Shakespeare, involve every sector of society in their plays; moreover, they capture the imaginations not simply of the high and lofty in the box seats or front rows, but also the masses in the back of the auditorium, and in a cathartic way. After all, it is not enough for some to witness the drama; we must all experience and live it. This is even more true of the Theo-drama, which Christian Scripture reenacts. The church's theologians should follow suit.

The theologian who responds to Balthasar's call shines the stage light on God's revelation, invitation, and reconciliation. Farlow highlights the importance of living into the ideal reality, which is our identity in the God-Man, Jesus Christ. as we respond in obedience, the ideal becomes real, or realized in our lives, through the outpouring of God's Spirit. The triune God includes our stories and weaves them into the drama of salvation. Humans do not simply observe as spectators or serve as pawns or props on the stage of God's dramatic production. Rather, we are vital participants, who can improvise in response to God's revelation, invitation, and reconciling activity in history.

in no way does the Theo-drama intrude or overpower us or deny the tragedy of our existence by offering us a false sense of hope as hype. However, there is no hysteria either. The theologian is called to engage life openly and honestly, not unlike Jacob who wrestled with God and won.

The reader might find interesting that Dr. Farlow wrestled in college, where he also majored in Shakespearean literature. Wrestling does not allow for bystanders, whether innocent or not. One cannot sit back and allow others to struggle on one's behalf. So, too, with Shakespeare; it is not enough to read his works; they call for performance. Even in his theological studies and now in his work as a pastoral theologian, Farlow models and makes explicit what the Theo-drama entails: enacting the reality of the ideal in seeking to respond well to God's invitation.

Farlow's *Dramatizing of Theology* will unsettle those dramatists who would make theology subservient to theater; if the whole creation is the theater of redemption, we must all come to terms with the reality that God is the ultimate playwright. For Farlow, the emphasis is rightly on "Theo" in Theo-drama, while still applauding and proclaiming the singular importance of the dramatic presentation.

Not only will some dramatists find this work unsettling, but also it will make the armchair as well as limelight theologian uneasy. If one reads this work well, one will rise from one's seat and perform, both as a theologian, and as a fellow human, with the rest of the characters gathered for the production. One will seek to tear down invisible and visible walls: walls that separate the stage from the rest of the theater, as well as the podium, platform, and pulpit from the rest of the classroom and sanctuary; walls that separate the academy and church from the surrounding world, as well as glass ceilings that separate the various sectors of society. No one is a spectator; we must all participate; we must all wrestle and struggle to play our parts well together as one liberated and cathartic community in the tragicomedy of life.

Revelation, invitation and reconciliation account for God's divine in-breaking, where God steps off the stage into our lives. In Jesus' incarnation and our inclusion through the Spirit, God invites us into his ongoing divine work of reconciliation. We do not simply imitate, repeat, or go so far as to replace God's activity; rather, we share in it, even unto death. But there is more.

As with Shakespeare, there are tragedies that end with death, and comedies that end with marriage. In the Theo-drama, there is no division. Once again, the wall comes down. Christ's death gives rise to resurrection and the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. As Farlow shares, life is the ultimate tragicomedy, as the triune God transforms profound suffering and incorporates our history into the drama of redemption. The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" Ultimately, our wrestling match with death will give way to the sacred dance of eternal life, as we share in the Eucharistic marriage feast whose encore is the Eschaton.

For theology is not adjunct to the drama itself: if it understands itself correctly, it is an aspect of it and thus has an inner participation in the nature of the drama (where content and form are inseparable). [Balthasar, *Theo-Drama*, vol. II, 151. Hereafter cited as TD followed by volume and page number.]

The Drama of the Day

Life is inherently dramatic, and as Hans Urs von Balthasar maintains, "God does not want to be just "contemplated" and "perceived" by us, like a solitary actor by his public; no, from the beginning he has provided for a play in which we must all share." This project takes seriously the need for theology to share in God's play, a play that is rooted in the being of God, and according to both Karl Barth and Balthasar God is Being-in-act. Through revelation, God confronts humanity and this confrontation, it will be argued, is dramatic. According to Balthasar, God's revelatory action "can only appear in its full stature—if it is presented as being dramatic at its very core." Throughout this book we will investigate

the claim that awareness of this dramatic reality is illumined most effectively through the dramatizing of theology. God has revealed to humanity His desire for its participation in His drama. As Balthasar writes:

Theology has at its disposal various degrees of intensity of such participation as well as various literary themes and patterns, enabling it to represent revelation's dramatic character, and each of these embraces one aspect of the unique, archetypal and inexhaustible drama. of course, this presupposes that theology understands itself to be involved in and committed to the drama which—according to the Bible—is taking place.

If life is indeed inherently dramatic, then it would be advantageous to understand how, as Balthasar notes, “all the elements of the drama can be rendered fruitful for theology.” For as Balthasar continues, “God’s revelation is not an object to be looked at: it is his action in and upon the world, and the world can only respond, and hence “understand,” through action on its part.” Drama’s fruitfulness for theology stems from the elements present in both the theatrical drama as well as the world drama whereby comparisons are made and insights can be obtained through the interplay of this relationship so as to further illumine God’s action.

as a whole, the focus of this project is the return to theology’s core, which as argued throughout this project, is dramatic. “it is not a question of recasting theology into a new shape previously foreign to it,” but, the recognition that, as Balthasar continues, “Theology itself must call for this shape; it must be something implicit within it, manifested explicitly too in many places. For theology could never be anything other than an explication of the revelation of the Old and New Covenants, their presuppositions (the created world) and purposes (its infusion with divine life). This revelation, however, in its total shape, in large-scale and in small-scale matters, is dramatic.” i am arguing that theology’s return to its foundation moves beyond any simple “enrichment of language” so as to bring to light the drama intrinsic to the revelatory invitation extended by God through Christ’s reconciliatory performance. God’s drama is understood in part through biblical hermeneutics, exegesis and the like, yet the claim of this project is that the central action, the locus of authority, and thus, the foundation of the Theo-drama is Christ through the Spirit, rather than other model’s such as the one employed by Kevin Vanhoozer when he states that Scripture is the “authorized version of the theo-drama . . . and the locus of authority.” This project’s intention is for theology not simply to acknowledge a “turn” towards the dramatic, which quite often results in a “mere quarrying of drama to enrich the language of theology,” but instead, to embrace and enact a faithful return to the core action and foundation of its object—God.

This project is situated in the recent movement of our theological endeavors that recognize the profundity of the dramatic and its ability to illuminate God’s action and call to action from theology, the Church and society. Moving forward from the seminal work of Balthasar, and set forth in the

context of the theologies of Balthasar and Barth, this project argues that it is through the dramatizing of theology that theology is best equipped to illumine God's desire for humanity's participation in His Theo-drama. As Balthasar writes, "if there is such a thing as theo-drama and if it is fundamentally the event of God becoming man and his action on the world's behalf, there must be dramatic ways (legitimately so) of presenting it . . . And such forms of presentation, to which we now turn our attention, must yield conclusions with regard to the nature of this same theo-drama."

The primary focus of the Theo-drama is the action of God that then illumines the secondary focus, His interaction with His creation. As Balthasar argues, Christ "is the living framework within which every human destiny is acted out; every human destiny is judged by his perfection and saved by his redeeming meaning." Thus, continues Balthasar, by grace each of our roles on stage can be "recognized as a dramatic action within the dramatic action of Christ, in which case the actor becomes 'fellow actor,' a 'fellow worker' with God (1 Cor 3:15)." Tracing the thoughts of Balthasar and combined with Barth's argument that, "Revelation is reconciliation, as certainly as it is God Himself: God with us; God beside us, and chiefly and decisively, God for us," i will argue that God's revelation, invitation and reconciliation, which i call His threefold movement, is a unified act that reveals to humanity His role and performance on the world's stage. This performance startles humanity, and thus, theology, out of their "spectator's seat," being dragged onto the stage." And as Balthasar writes, "the distinction between the stage and auditorium becomes fluid, to say the least."

Parameters of the Stage

Throughout the book the terms theology, participation, performance, theatre and drama will be used and furthered unpacked. The sense in which these terms are being employed does indeed overlap while retaining distinction between each of the terms. This is to say that many of the terms intersect and interact with another, but in so doing, do not lose their distinct and particular appeal. This is exactly the case for theology and theatre, which are intimately related through a third, and prior element called drama. Both theology and the theatre mediate in action. For theology, this action is revealed through the action of God, that is, His revelation, invitation and reconciliation, and for the theatre, the intertwining action of all involved—producers, directors, actors, stage crew, audience and the like. This relationship illumines the thoughts put forth by Peter Brook that, "anyone interested in processes in the natural world would be greatly rewarded by a study of theatre conditions.' Theatre does indeed offer a tremendous wealth of possibility for theology. Commenting on the relationship between theology and theatre, Balthasar writes:

through the theatre, man acquires the habit of looking for meaning at a higher and less obvious level. And at the same time it dispels the disheartening notion that this higher level is no longer dramatic but a static level where nothing happens and which relativizes all events beneath and

external to it . . . To that extent the theatre is making its own contribution to fundamental theology.

The interplay of relationship between theology and theatre continues to offer ways in which a person can see himself in the other, or as Balthasar writes, “portrayed by another; in this ‘mask’ the ‘person’ both loses and finds himself.’ Balthasar concludes the thought by writing that if revelation is “the ultimate precondition on the basis of which existence (and its reflected image, drama) can experience tragedy—and not a tragedy which dissolves in meaninglessness—the path is clear for us to get a view of the dramatic elements inherent in revelation.’ if theatre, then, through its dramatic elements, can and does promote a glimpse of the world’s existence in the realm of the divine might it be advantageous for theology to intentionally and explicitly employ the instrumentation of the theatre? As Balthasar remarks, “thus arises our task, which is to draw an instrumentarium, a range of resources, from the drama of existence which can then be of service to a Christian theory of theo-drama in which the ‘natural’ drama of existence (between the Absolute and the relative) is consummated in the ‘supernatural’ drama between the God of Jesus Christ and mankind.’ Following the model of theology laid out by Balthasar, I argue that it is through the aid of the theatre that theology entertains the possibility of furthering its path towards obedience and returning to its core, both of which are illumined and enacted through its (theology’s) action which is best expressed and apprehended through the dramatizing of theology. The dramatizing of theology is theology’s movement from the “reading” and “exegesis” of the Bible to its performance. Christian performance is the application and implementation of God’s Word in action.

Parameters of the Concepts Relating to the Stage

The terms given in this section, and employed throughout the project are indeed complex. Thus, this section is more of an outlining of the parameters of the given terms. of course, each of the listed terms will be further developed throughout the project.

Theology

in the context of this project the understanding of theology is close to that of Barth and Balthasar. it is true that Barth and Balthasar sit on opposite sides of the Church pews, so to speak; however, even while there remains some disagreement between the Protestant and Catholic understandings of nature and grace, this did not create a chasm large enough to dissuade compatibility between the Barth and Balthasar. The answer for compatibility rests within an intense Christological perspective and analogy. Concerning the latter, the analogy of being (properly rescued from neo-Thomism and stripped of the concept of “pure nature”) and Barth’s “analogy of faith” (that is, a relation between God and creation grounded and sustained solely in the event of saving grace) are “two ways of understanding the one revelation of God.” Thus, Balthasar concludes, “we are . . . permitted to unite and harmonize the inalienable demands of the Church as promulgated above all by Vatican i with the

essential insights of Karl Barth without artificial or forced syncretism” by affirming both “the absolute priority of grace and revelation and the relative priority of nature and its faculties.”

Both men have an intense Christological perspective that permeates throughout the whole of their respective work. at one point Barth wrote of Balthasar that in Balthasar’s writing, i have “found an understanding of the concentration on Jesus Christ attempted in the Church Dogmatics, and the implied Christian concept of reality, which is incomparably more powerful than that of most of the books (on my theology) which have clustered around me.” With regards to Christology, both weighted their theology in the reality of the covenantal relation of God and humanity as revealed most concretely in Jesus. as John Webster notes, “what drew their differing accounts into proximity was a conjunction of instincts about the structure of Christianity. Both considered that the central theme of Christian truth is the covenantal relation of God and humankind; both insisted that the metaphysics of that relation must be thoroughly informed by salvation-historical considerations.” Because of the explicit covenantal relation of God and humanity, both Balthasar and Barth believed that theology is a question and response of obedience to the action of God in Christ through the Holy Spirit.

Theology is an activity that we participate in, it is “an activity proper to the very essence of faith, and one in which faith engages naturally and inevitably, therefore wherever it is to be found.” Theology is the action of faith that confronts each of the participants on the world’s stage. it is important to realize, claims Balthasar, that the understanding that faith seeks (the *intellectus fidei*) will be false if it “claims to be the last word or fails to take into account the encounter between creature and God and the obedience this encounter calls for.” The encounter between God and humanity is the essence of faith; it is the reality of grace. Thus, with this in mind, theology is, writes Barth, concerned with “the encounter between man and the Word of God.”

Theology, then, taken from the dramatic understanding from Balthasar and the revelatory foundation set forth by Barth, is based upon the relational revelation of God to His creature; a revelatory invitation that seeks a participatory response from the creature. Our response is the inquiry into what it means to be human. Because of our creation in the image of God, each one of us is involved with God, humanity and life. From a Christian standpoint, then, through our theological foundation and essence we participate in God’s drama in a number of different ways and at a number of different levels of interaction, and while the ways of participation occur through a multitude of avenues, the point to be emphasized is that we all theologically participate as actors upon the world’s stage. This type of interaction and participation could be considered to be theology with a small “t.” as Hart notes, “while we may not all be formally trained as theologians, we are all nonetheless engaged in “theology” to the extent that Christian faith for us forms an integral part of that picture.” For instance, if as is claimed in this project, humanity is created in the image of God, then at some level, all upon

the world's stage engage with God (the Other) and with their neighbor (the other). This engagement/interaction is emphasized and investigated throughout the book. However, in chapter five I take a more concrete look into the ways in which our lives, or better yet, our performances, intersect. Such intersection on the stage, as is argued, highlights that all upon this stage are at some level “theologians” who each have their particular parts to perform.

With this said though, the project as a whole concerns itself primarily with those who practice theology within the contexts of the academy and Church leadership all the while recognizing that the profundity of this drama is realized when each of us comes to embrace our own faithful performances. Thus, one might call the theology practiced by the “trained” or “professional” theologians as being (T)heology with a capital T or theology proper. Faithful theology is carried out by the theologians of the academy and Church who through the Spirit's movement are obedient to the call to make known the possibility and profundity revealed through the encounter between humanity and the Word of God.

It is argued in this project that a crucial and historical need for theologians in Church leadership and the academy has always been to illumine how through the act of God, as Barth notes, “the Word of God thus becomes the word of man. It is not an insignificant word. Indeed, it is a supremely significant word. Yet it is still the word of man.” Theology is founded in God's revelatory event that continues to illumine the primary fact that the truth of revelation points to a personal rather than a propositional foundation. This is significant because it is through the dramatic that this foundation is best presented; created in the imago Trinitatis, humanity is beckoned to respond relationally to God's threefold movement.

Participation

Christianity is a “praxis,” writes Balthasar. It tells us “How we should act” and our theology must “drag Christianity out of the scholar's study” so as to set it “on the world stage where it is to act.” It is true that some parts of theology's overall work are and must be done in the “scholar's study,” but there is more, and must be more in our theological praxis. What is being argued is that theology should seek to elevate the call towards action; action that finds the fullness of its performance through its participation in Christ's eternal action. Participation is, writes Balthasar, the recognition that “the creature is meant ultimately to live, not over against God, but in him. Scripture promises us even in this life a participation—albeit hidden under the veil of faith—in the internal life of God: we are to be born in and of God, and we are to possess his Holy Spirit.” One of the purposes of the Holy Spirit's indwelling, continues Balthasar, is “to enable men to participate in the relations between the Divine Persons; and relations are precisely what these Persons are, wholly and entirely.” Human participation is its involvement in and following of God's actions of faith, hope and love so as to encourage and

enliven the on-going drama of reconciliation and redemption on the world's stage. Participation, then, as used throughout this manuscript is humanity's involvement with God in His drama; an involvement that is brought to light through the event of God's revelatory act in Christ through the Spirit. Through God's threefold movement, humanity is enabled to participate in the theatre of God's glory.

Performance

Marvin Carlson writes that everyone at some time or another is, "conscious of 'playing a role' socially, and recent sociological theorists have paid a good deal of attention to this sort of social performance." The general question, then, is: what is performance? What exactly is meant when we call a vehicle high performance or speak of someone making a performance out of a situation, or criticize the slow performance of the computer, or call ourselves performers, or congratulate one another for a fine performance?

The term performance has a "long history and wide range of meanings in everyday English usage," writes Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett. These usages, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett continues, range from "high performance in technology and performance measures in management and finance to the legally defined performance requirements of contracts. Only recently has the word performance entered other languages, almost exclusively to designate performance art." And while the word performance has only recently entered into use by other disciplines, its terminology is said to be rooted in ancient uses. Hart notes that the roots of performance have been linked to "par fournir (to accomplish entirely, achieve, complete)." Thus, the complexity of this term rests in its generalized and particular uses today combined with its ambiguous past understanding.

While for many, performance directly relates to the specific action of a character on stage, many analysts of society, write Simon Shepherd and Mick Wallis, "argue that within the everyday there is a constant interplay of personal and social bodies (performances)." Performance is understood to be our engagement with reality on a daily basis, and in this sense, the study of performance has become a means of examining and assessing the profundity of the day's actions. The actions of the day have been identified by Schechner as the "performances in everyday life," actions such as daily greetings, professional roles, family life, theatre, dance, athletics and the like. Performance is, writes Schechner, "a broad spectrum of activities including at the very least the performing arts, rituals, healing, sports, popular entertainments, and performance in everyday life." Performance insists on being recognized not simply as an act or action, but as a self-conscious action undertaken by the performer that as stated before, so often becomes accomplished and performed subconsciously or as second nature.

Stanley Wells maintains that, “it is in performance that the plays lived and had their being. Performance is the end to which they were created.” Performance is, according to Schechner, “the whole constellation of events, most of them passing unnoticed, that take place in/among both performers and audience from the time the first spectator enters the field of performance—the precinct where the theatre takes place—to the time the last spectator leaves.” Performance then, in this context is an inclusive term referring to the entirety of the “theatre experience” on the occasion of a particular presentation of a particular play, and, it should also be noted that performance, in its inclusiveness, also includes the writing of the play, the development of the play, its rehearsal, and the like. The term’s importance, maintains Bial, can be attributed to the fact that “the idea of the world as performance has become increasingly relevant throughout the last century.”

Theologically, the term performance has come into use, writes Hart, “as theology has sought models to help it understand better aspects of Christian faith’s own peculiar situation with respect to a text, a text which must be “brought to completion” through forms of embodied action in which it is ‘interpreted’ faithfully for a world (and not just a world) which looks on as it does so.”³⁶ The bringing to completion of the text follows the foundation of faith which is manifested through our living out the Biblical principles. That is, as Max Harris writes, “the transformation of text into performance is found at the very heart of the Christian faith. The proclamation that ‘the Word became flesh’ (John 1:14) suggests that speech became spectacle, that God, if you will, dropped himself incarnate into the atmosphere of the world, no longer hidden within the ‘shell’ of what he had said or spoken into being, but seen in the flesh in his full life and color.” Theologically, performance elevates the action of the script ultimately through the interaction between God and us, as well as our interaction with one another.

The phenomenon of performance-based talk within the realms of theology is arguably a “new” phenomenon occurring within the past twenty years or so. as Hart notes,

the metaphor was proposed first by writers concerned with the nature of biblical interpretation, a discipline that had become somewhat hide-bound by the dominance of historical-critical models which, by their emphasis on the antiquity and essential “strangeness” of the biblical text, tended to exalt (or relegate) it to the status of a valuable artefact, but thereby easily lost sight of its role as a living Word to the Church. Interestingly, it was not New Testament scholars proper who first advocated the model, but systematic theologians and patristic scholars, whose own work was necessarily concerned with Scripture as possessed of contemporary as well as historical significance, and with the ways in which, over the centuries, it has been “played out” variously within the living traditions of the Church.

The immediacy of performance in correlation to theology is evidenced by the fact that the Biblical text calls for more than observation, analysis or interpretation. “If Christian faith is from start to finish a performance,” notes Stanley Hauerwas, “it is so only because Christians worship a God who is pure

act, an eternally performing God.” Even amidst the complexities concerning the term performance, though, what will be argued throughout the book is that we as humans are social beings, and as we negotiate life—at all times, but not always consciously or overtly—we perform. For the sake of this project, and in light of the aforementioned uses of performance, it is important to set the parameters in which this project employs and unpacks the term throughout these pages.

First, it is understood that performance is “an activity done by an individual or group in the presence of and for another individual or group.” Furthermore, the particular aspect of performance for this thesis is that of our action, primarily with God, and our interaction with Him; and secondarily, our interaction with one another. Thus, while it is being argued that our conscious actions are what constitute the foundation of our performances, as stated before, this does not deny the fact that daily performances, which at one time might have required a completely conscious engagement, can and do often occur after time subconsciously, even becoming ritualistic or habitual. Needless to say though, Christian performances are rooted in a conscious determination and decision to respond to Christ’s invitation so as to perform alongside and with Him.

Secondly, performance is understood to be a deliberate or intentional undertaking in life. That is, as Schechner writes, “performance is . . . more consciously ‘chosen’.” What is claimed, then, from a Christian perspective is that this conscious choice is our response to God’s invitation to deliberately act with Him. God desires and expects a consciously chosen decision by His creation in response to His invitation. Thus, the performative actions primarily investigated throughout this project are those with regard to the Christian identity.

Finally, our performances are to be understood and measured against the ideal performance of God in Christ through the Spirit. As Carlson highlights, “all performance involves a consciousness of doubleness, through which the actual execution of an action is placed in mental comparison with a potential, an ideal, or a remembered original model of that action.” Theologically, this ideal, as is argued throughout this project, is Christ’s performance as He represents what a perfected performance looks like, what the human is meant to be. Christ’s performance is the ideal as it is based upon His undeniable obedience to the will of the Godhead, and thus, He (Christ) remains the ideal of our human performances. According to Carlson, “performance is always a performance for someone, some audience that recognizes and validates it as performance even when, as is occasionally the case, that audience is the self.”

Theatre and Drama

Through the interplay of theology, drama and theatre, we gain the possibility of coming to understand better the interplay of relationships between ourselves and God, as well as ourselves and one another.

Historically though, the wealth of assistance offered through the theatre has, as Balthasar remarks, been “hardly noticed by theology up to now—which can be used to portray God’s action.” in the next two sub-sections, i will attempt to provide a few definitions of each term (theatre and drama), before presenting the way in which each term is employed and unpacked throughout the book. Let us now turn to the parameters employed to the given terms of theatre and drama.

THEATRE

The theatre, Balthasar points out, will always survive precisely because, “life manifests a fundamental urge to observe itself as an action exhibiting both meaning and mystery.” This only emphasizes the natural relationship between theology and the theatre, as theology seeks to understand our interaction with God and our neighbor, while the theatre enables us to attain an understanding of ourselves, through its (theatre) ability to exhibit and/ or present life. as Brook notes, “there is no doubt that the theatre can be a very special place. it is like a magnifying glass, and also like a reducing lens.” Recognizing the theological need for the theatre, this project draws upon the overarching theatrical interactive experience and its connections that draw upon the human need for community and interaction. However, though Brook might view the theatre as a lens into society, Richard Southern remarks that while “drama may be the thing done, theatre is doing. Theatre is act.” as opposed to drama being the action that fills the theatre, Southern makes the theatre the act itself claiming that it is the results that make the theatre act as opposed to the embodiment of an action. While it is agreed that because the theatre includes the drama and de facto contains an intrinsic element of act, for the sake of the book, the theatre is recognized more along the lines of understanding that acknowledges the theatre as the place of interaction between all its participants.

The theatre, throughout my argument, is understood as encompassing both performance and production as it is the place in which the drama is enacted. Johnson and Savidge write, “theatre derives from the Greek theatron, which is literally ‘seeing place.’ Theatre generally refers to the place of performance or production aspects of the art.”⁴⁸ The theatre presupposes the presence of actors, an audience and a stage, as it is through their interaction that the essence of the drama is presented. The theatre, while being a place in the world, is not the world, but the place in which the action—the drama—of the world takes place.

my use of the term, theatre, fundamentally recognizes that the theatre is to the world what theology is to the Church. That is, the theatre presents life to the world so that they—the audience—might critically examine it. J.I. Styan writes of the theatre, that it is “designed expressly to touch and involve an audience, a segment of society, that audience and that society must in part control the kind of activity found in the theatre.” The partial control of the audience upon the theatre is directly due to interrelationship of the theatre and society and is the reason why the theatre engages life most

meaningfully in presenting to humanity what it means to play on the world-stage, instructing the soul, writes Khovacs, “with so plain an exposition of truth that “it stares at you in the face.” With this said, the theatre is the place of action, it is where the interaction of actor, director, writer, audience, stagehand, etc. plays out and thus, theologically it refers to realm of creation—heaven and earth. [In 1 Cor 4:9 “spectacle” is literally, “theatrical spectacle,” a spectacle in which the world above and below is the theatre, and angels and men the spectators. The fBD, Fausset Bible Dictionary circa. 1888, further comments that “the theatre was anciently in the open air; semicircular; the seats in tiers above one another the stage on a level with the lowest seats. Besides the performance of dramas, public meetings were often in the theatre, as being large enough almost to receive “the whole city” (Acts 19:29); so at Ephesus the theatre was the scene of the tumultuous meeting excited by Demetrius. The remains of this theatre still attest its vast size and convenient position” (see entry 3549.01 under the “theatre” heading of no. 3549).]

DRAMA

As with theatre, so too with drama; a definition is intertwined in a complexity of meaning. Schechner writes that drama “can be taken from place or time to time independent of the person or people who carry it. These people may be just “messengers,” even unable to read the drama, no less comprehend or enact it.” According to Schechner, drama represents the enactment of “a written text, score, scenario, instruction, plan or map.” The emphasis of action in drama is due to its Greek root of drao: to do, to act, to make. Needless-to-say, as R.A. Banks concludes, drama includes some or all of the following elements: written words; presentation or representation of life; interpretation for an audience; impact; enhancement and intensification of emotion and language; thought; spectacle; plot; and performance. For the sake of this project, drama is meant to evoke the idea of action, specifically interaction between God and His creature and creature with creature. Furthermore, while drama might typically begin with the words on the page, the primary perspective employed is drama’s emphasis of the dialogue and enactment of a script, plan or teaching. Drama, writes Banks, “moves off the page, through the imaginations of those who “realize” the words in performance and those who share the dramatic experience as audience and participants, into a new creation.”

The enactment of the words, or the script, further emphasizes the action of God through His event of revelation that invites us into this eternal performance through our own responsive action. The dramatizing of theology is the result of an intentional desire, and act, to participate in God’s drama. Through the dramatic reality of God, who is Being-in-act, theology is called to participate in this action by continually guiding the Church back to her source. Scripture comes to life through our action on the world’s stage. And while in this project i specifically focus on the performance of Scripture, I do recognize that God’s drama is realized when our endeavors focus not only the

enactment of Scripture, that is, the written texts, but also, through the performance of the Church historically. Looking through the history of the Church “how can we not think of the Theo-drama in light of the mediaeval Passion-and-Resurrection plays that made salvation visible in a drama (and the plays of the Antichrist and Judgment that showed forth its eschatological dimension); the centering of drama on the Mass in the endings of the plays for Corpus Christi.” Through the likes of liturgy and the “martyr plays,” participants throughout the Church’s history have engaged God and one another. As Nichols notes, Balthasar is able to point to the “overflow of the Liturgy in the mystery plays of the Western Middle Ages; the deployment of mythological themes as pointers to the drama of Christ in the Spanish theatre of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the ‘martyr plays’ of the classical French stage.” God’s drama also comes to fruition through the performances of the Church’s tradition, creeds, and the like. The action or better yet, “performance” of the Church throughout history is an action that is simply the passing on of past performances, not always contained in the script, from one generation to another, but held to be essential to the drama as a whole. This is to say, that our theological endeavors should seek to account for the entirety of the action, dialogue and movement of God with humanity throughout the span of time.

God’s involvement and participation with humanity, through the event of revelation, is best expressed through the language of the dramatic, yet, as Aidan Nichols notes, the church has “sometimes used drama to express the action-filled content of revelation, but her theologians have not in any all-embracing way (till Balthasar!) presented revelation as itself divine theatre.” Bearing this in mind, then, in conjunction with God’s threefold movement of revelation, invitation and reconciliation, I will argue that it is important as the Church’s theologians to realize our own threefold movement: first, to acknowledge God’s revelatory act; second, moving out from this action and call, to recognize and accept our role upon God’s stage; and third, to perform faithfully this role through the most efficient and effective means available. This, as will be argued, is aided and facilitated through the dramatizing of theology.

Introduction to the Parameters of Dramatic

The use of both the theatre and drama occurs through the chosen dramatist and their respective methods. However, it seems pertinent to offer a brief word concerning modern drama, which has, according to David Brown, had somewhat of a crisis of identity brought on through the invention of film. The new medium writes Brown, “appeared better able to achieve what at the time was considered one of the main aims of the theatre, perhaps its primary aim, realistic portrayal.”⁶⁰ Brown goes on to discuss the reaction to this “crisis” through his discussion of four types of theoretical analysis that were “generated in reaction to this crisis,” and, as Brown concludes, “the four theories discussed here have usually been treated as rivals rather than as complementary, but there is no

reason why insights should not be drawn from them all . . . It is precisely through performance pulling us now in one interpretative direction, now in another, that the possibilities old and new can be most easily accessed and developed. That way significant encounter is most likely to occur.” [Brown discusses two theories that are concerned with identification, looking specifically at K. S. Stanislavski and Max Reinhardt, and dislocation, looking specifically at Bertolt Brecht and Antonin Artaud (176–84)]

While the dramatists and their methods referenced within this project do represent each of the four modern responses highlighted in Brown’s writing: method acting (Stanislavski), drama as community experience (Reinhardt), estrangement or alienation, (Brecht) and a psychological dislocation (Artaud); the underlining unity and complimentary aspect throughout the manuscript, as presented through the dramatist, are the ideas of identity and existence. That is, within the context and argument of this project, two common themes run throughout each of the dramatists and the given examples from their works: identification and existence, specifically human existence. The dramatists referenced are those who intentionally examine the human condition of life; our identity and existence which as Esslin writes, is where the theatre illuminates “the human condition of man . . . confronted with basic choices, the basic situation of his existence.” And while Brecht and Stanislavski seem to be on the complete opposite ends on the acting theories scale, their similarities warrant their use together within this project. That is, neither Stanislavski nor Brecht see life or art as sanguine or perfect, they both respected the different sides of human nature that motivate actors, plots, and real life. Brecht wanted just as much realism as Stanislavski did, the key difference being that Stanislavski wanted it from his actors whereas Brecht wanted it from his gritty, unyielding plays.

The dramatist and their methods acknowledged within this project are chosen because they leave their audiences no hiding space. As Artaud writes, “the action of the theatre is beneficial, for, impelling men to see themselves as they are, it causes the mask to fall . . . it invites them to take, in the face of destiny, a superior and heroic attitude they would never have assumed without it.” Each of the dramatists recognized expresses a belief that the authenticity and impact of a performance stems from its embodiment of truth. The actors of the stage cannot simply appear to be playing their parts, doing nothing more than re-presenting the characteristics of life. Just as God desires an authentic response to His authentic invitation, so too does the stage. The actors of the stage, in order to be faithful to their performance, must recognize, writes Stanislavski, the difference between “the two words seem and be.” it is through the quest of life’s truth that the stage illumines the profundity of life, when the actors know, continues Stanislavski, that they (and the stage) must “have real truth” rather than being “satisfied with its appearance.”

Parameters of Being and Becoming: Our Theological Performance

Throughout the centuries discussions of the correspondence between theology and the world quite often move along the trajectory of being—that is, what it is to be a human being, or better yet, who am I? This question is, argues Balthasar, answered only through theology for without the grounding of being in Absolute Being, the human subject is left in an abyss. As Balthasar writes, “i must will myself, but it is impossible for me to reach myself directly, for blocking the way is an unbridgeable abyss.” Who am I is the question we must all wrestle with so as to move closer and closer to the essence not of being in general, but what it means to be me. Balthasar maintains that it is when alone with his fate, that Oedipus must ask himself this very question. “All must ask this question, but each person can only ask it as a solitary individual.” Balthasar then draws from the thoughts of Plato who wrote that “no one who does not wonder about himself can be considered to lead a human life.” And then building from the work of Charles Dickens, Balthasar quotes a passage from chapter 3 that highlights the questioning nature of the human:

A wonderful fact to reflect upon, that every human creature is constituted to be that profound secret and mystery to every other. A solemn consideration, when I enter a great city by night, that every one of those darkly clustered houses encloses its own secret . . . that every beating heart in the hundreds and thousands of breasts, there, is, in some of its imaginings, a secret to the hearer nearest it! . . . in any burial places of this city through which I pass, is there a sleeper more inscrutable than its busy inhabitants are, in their innermost personality, to me, or than I am to them?

What these discussions elevate is the continued quest to understand being, it is in light of this that Balthasar emphasizes the reality of personhood (being) as that which cannot be apprehended apart from our being in Christ. The person (being) in Christ (Absolute Being) thus becomes who they are meant to be thereby recognizing God’s idea of their being, it is, writes Balthasar, in Christ that “once and for all, the duality of ‘being’ and ‘seeming’ . . . is absolutely overcome.”

Humanity’s performative reality hinges upon action as only the action itself, writes Balthasar, “will reveal who each individual is; and it will not reveal, through successive unveilings, primarily who the individual always was, but rather who he is to become through the action, through his encounter with others and through the decisions he makes.” The becoming of being illumines the dramatic foundation of life, and if theology is to remain true to its calling, it needs to be faithful to its object, Jesus Christ. In being faithful, theology is able to perform one of its essential roles, which, as Barth writes, is to refer the message of the Church back to its source, that is, its object, all of which is done in Christ through the Spirit. [One of theology’s critical tasks is to refer the message of the Church back to its source. Thus, Barth writes, “I believe the Church as the proclaimer and the hearer of the divine Word . . . the Church could not ever be exempt from seeking after the Word and asking for the Holy Spirit which alone leads it to all truth” (Theology and Church, 285, 295).] The Theodrama provides the

means for theology to perform this mission, which is accomplished through the continued participation, of the academy and Church's theologians, with both the Church and society as well. [Again, as stated earlier, though the primary focus of this thesis is on theologians of the academy and Church and their respective roles in the Theo-drama, the belief remains that all of creation is involved at some level in God's drama.] Through the action of theology, each human participant on the world's stage stands the possibility of coming to a deeper notion of who they are (being), and more importantly, who they are meant to be (becoming). The reality of our becoming is, as Balthasar points out, because "by its very essence, being is always richer than what we see and apprehend of it."

Through its role of referring the Church back to Christ, theology is able, then, to participate with the Church, in magnifying the profundity of life found in Christ rather than a life found simply looking at Christ and examining Him. Life in Christ is revealed through a continual becoming, and thus, just as life unfolds through its becoming, so too does this book. Concerning our becoming or rehearsal of life, Balthasar writes, that "if a man truly recollected his past, he would be open to his future, he would be on the way to the free, limitless life of eternity, where God makes it easy for the one who strives to step over the threshold. This step is not only something to which God invites us, but also something we rehearse through our whole life in the world." it is understood, then, that the becoming of theology is recognized through its continual action. The call for the dramatizing of theology today is explicitly due to the reality that Christian theology is rooted in Christ through the Spirit—such is the nature of a reality that is "action, not theory." if then, God is act, today's theology must respond in kind through its own action. That is, I am arguing that theology should be act if it is to be faithful to God who is act.

Erich Auerbach writes of the profound difference between the drama of the Bible contra "narrated reality," when he states, "far from seeking like Homer, merely to make us forget our own reality for a few hours, it (the Bible) seeks to overcome our reality: we are to fit our own life into its world, feel ourselves to be elements in its structure of universal history." The world of the Bible is illumined and enacted on the stage of creation, and if the reality of God's drama is truly that which transforms our reality, then the path forged by Balthasar in his Theo-Drama is one good specific instance of the general way in which the theological academy and Church need to move so as to enter into the profound performance of the Father, Son and Spirit.

Humanity is created in the image of a Trinitarian God who is act, and as Barth writes, "He is who He is in His works," that is, continues Barth, "God is who He is in the act of His revelation . . . God's Godhead consists in the fact that it is an event—not any event, not events in general, but the event of His action, in which we have a share in God's revelation." I will argue that Christian performance is the application and implementation of God's Word in action. The point to be made is that the foundation of theology's dramatization is an action that recognizes the nucleus of God's action, for the Church

and theology, is that which frees our endeavors from the dilemma of trying to create a theological system. The movement of theology deeper into the action of God represents the proper response to His invitation for participation. Regarding Balthasar's Trinitarian theology, which makes theology's movement possible, Nichols writes, "the doctrine of the Trinity is not the result of reason working through the materials of general experience. it has been disclosed to us only in and by the Word made flesh . . . Only if God, eternally, from everlasting, and internally, in his own interior life, is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, can we get the hang of the drama played out in the life of Jesus." Recognizing God's disclosure and action allows theology to remain faithful to the ongoing enactment of the drama, drawing on and continuing the drama, as witnessed in the Biblical script, through an intentional engagement with the Church and the world, so as to participate in Christ's transfiguring of history.

According to Balthasar, because of the encompassing performance of God, "human life, both personally and socially, will also be shaped by it." in light of this, it is first recognized that this is a theological project; it is not a study of drama from a theological perspective, but an attempt to acknowledge the intersection and interaction between theology, and drama, so as to recognize, and make known, some of the profound ways in which this relationship lends to the advancement of our theological deeds.

The project builds upon a theological foundation seeking to show that theology, like life, is inherently dramatic. Drama can assist theology in our endeavors that examine not only the question of what it means to be a participant in God's drama, but also, to guide our understanding and engagement in God's action on the world's stage. From drama, theology is given further ways to explore life, for as Antonin Artaud notes, drama is, "not confined to a fixed language and form, not only destroys false shadows but prepares the way for a new generation of shadows, around which assembles the true spectacle of life." Through the interplay of relations between theology, drama and theatre, this project seeks to help theology, once again, recognize its own dramatic foundation, so as to witness the becoming of its faithful performance.

The Becoming of the Project

In chapter 1 I reckon with Barth's account of revelation, which as he writes, "it is not a state, but an event." This act of God is significant as it is what roots all of our theological efforts. Thus, if God's involvement is itself an event, happening and constantly active, it is important, as I argue that theology consciously determines to participate in this event. The understanding of being is found in Absolute Being and through the event of revelation God distinctly and profoundly, writes Barth, "reveals Himself. He reveals Himself through Himself. He reveals Himself." The obvious importance, then, of theology seeking to understand God through His Being-in-act is that through such knowledge,

we come closer to understanding the essence of being thereby moving towards the realization of our faithful performances.

Chapter 2, then, takes God's revelatory event and seeks to realize the proper orientation of how best theology can participate in God's Being-in-act. Chapter two highlights two common models of theology: narrative and dramatic. The hope is to establish an effective way for theology to illumine God's interaction with us, and our participation in this event. According to Balthasar, the "mobility" (Bewegtheit) of the inner-Trinitarian life requires from theology, the "language of event for its evocation, and that the "eventfulness" of the triune God founds the possibility of the becoming that typifies the world." The discussion is furthered through the action and becoming of the narrative which ultimately illumines the becoming of the human, that is, our movement towards what it means to be human. What the chapter intends to show is that theology should be appropriate to its matter; and if both Barth and Balthasar's assessments are correct: that God is Being-in-act (Barth), and that there must be a dramatic way of presenting God's revelation (Balthasar), then, the movement of the narrative to the drama seems the natural progression.

Chapter 3 moves deeper into Balthasar's belief that the profundity of the drama is realized in the drama of Christ, to the extent that humanity is, Balthasar maintains, "prepared to cooperate in being inserted into the normative drama of Christ's life, death and Resurrection." Investigating the implications of this idea, the chapter argues that it is through the dramatizing of theology that theology returns to its core, which is dramatic. Theology should continue to push towards the fullness of its participation in Christ by the Spirit, so as to perform faithfully its mission as exemplified by the incarnational performance of Christ. Through, then, the narrative becoming the drama, we are further exposed to the potentialities of our performance in Christ through the Spirit.

Chapter 4 explores the idea raised by both Barth and Balthasar that we are who we are through our becoming. According to Barth, the Christian in Christ not only finds being, but in and of themselves "they are always in the process of becoming." And as Balthasar maintains, "we can say that everything that is in process of becoming . . . attains its definitive shape, ultimately in full participation in the life of the Trinity." if this is indeed the case, how then, does this becoming affect our theological practices? The chapter continues the movement of the book through its illumination of humanity's becoming. in other words, through an allowance and better understanding of the imaginative essence of our being, we can realize the profundity of our particular performances in Christ through the Spirit. That is, as Balthasar, notes since "in God we shall see how man was intended to be, and in man we shall see how God reveals himself to him."

Chapter 5 argues for the continued theological need of its interaction with the Church and the world, so as to illumine that the core of Christian theology falters, if it rests upon the essence of “God with us” as being only a statement, teaching, or proposition. In fact, “God with us” is the expression of the dramatic act of God Himself—an act that invades humanity so as to bring about reconciliation. Theology realizes its faithful performance first, through the revelation of God, second through His invitation to participate in His act, which theologically, is best expressed to the Church dramatically, and third, through the willingness to imagine the real of the human, in light of the ideal of Christ’s reconciliatory performance. In Christ’s incarnational performance, God actively participates in “our being, life, and activity and therefore obviously our participation in His.” The chapter argues that such interaction plays out through the multiple scenes—intersecting narratives—of the characters on the world’s stage, thereby allowing the realization not only of what our performances are, but what they are becoming. The becoming of our performances is the realization of our being; it is the realization of our faithful performances. <>

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PIERCED BY LOVE: DIVINE READING WITH THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION by Hans Boersma is a gem of a book that presents 9 chapters ways to approach holy reading of holy scripture. It is a pleasantly concise introduction to the *lectio divina* that I think will help in understanding scripture as prayer and contemplation. Because it is so concise it is a handy resource for any devout reading of scripture as sacrament. Highly recommended.

Christians read Scripture to encounter Christ and be conformed to his image. Jesus is the point of reading the Bible. But Scripture is no mere human text; it is God's living word. So *how* should we read it?

For Christians throughout the centuries, the answer has been *lectio divina*—“divine reading.” *Lectio divina* is a sacramental reading. It aims to take us more deeply into the life of God. Through practicing the four movements of *lectio divina*—attentive reading, extended meditation, prayerful reflection, and

silent resting—we focus on Christ, listen to the Spirit, and rest in God's love. We no longer simply read the words of Scripture; instead, we read the face of God in the eternal Word.

Review

This book is many things. It is a guide to biblical reading, meditation, and prayer. It reintroduces the truth that Scripture's sole purpose is to lead us to the living God in Jesus Christ. It lovingly opens up the riches of monastic and scholastic theology. But above all, this book is a work of spiritual instruction by one of the true spiritual masters of our time. Never has the Church more sorely needed theologians who are masters of the spiritual life, and, in our spiritually arid day, God has raised up Hans to direct our minds and hearts toward union with Christ. —**Matthew Levering**, James N. Jr. and Mary D. Perry Chair of Theology, Mundelein Seminary

Love for Christ flies off every page. With gentle profundity, Hans Boersma guides his reader through the healing process of *lectio divina* with the skill of a master, a master wounded by the arrow of the Master of all. —**Alexis Torrance**, associate professor and Archbishop Demetrios College Chair of Byzantine Theology, University of Notre Dame

Though the Protestant and evangelical churches have begun to recover elements of the Christian tradition, especially patristic sources, the rich history and theology of the Middle Ages remains to be explored in its fullness. Hans Boersma's **PIERCED BY LOVE: DIVINE READING WITH THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION** is an excellent introduction to and exposition of early and medieval writings on sacred reading. The book's deep examination of medieval authors illuminates the Bible-centeredness of medieval theology and the text's many diagrams further reveals the richness of medieval reading and reflection on the Bible. One does not need to be an expert in medieval theology to benefit greatly from Boersma's analysis and his incisive treatment will change the way you read the Bible. Take up and read! —**Greg Peters**, Biola University and Nashotah House Theological Seminary



For a contemporary church that has worn away the point of divine love, Hans Boersma sharpens it again with the flint of tradition. In **PIERCED BY LOVE: DIVINE READING WITH THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION**, the title is more than metaphor; it indicates how we should experience *lectio divina*. The early and medieval church knew that reading the Bible meant being entered into as much as entering the text. Boersma reacquaints us with the dangers and costs as well as the fruits of divine reading. —**Jessica Hooten Wilson**, visiting scholar at Pepperdine University; author, *The Scandal of Holiness*

Boersma calls Christians back to the ancient and medieval practice of a spiritual immersion into Scripture as the path to deeper union with Christ. By moving through the four steps of *lectio, meditatio, oratio, and contemplatio*, he shows how formation and encounter flow together as the reader finds Christ in the depths of Scripture's spiritual meanings. Scripture becomes sacrament—the place where we ascend to contemplative vision of Christ as we find him and are formed into him through its pages. Recognizing the need for sure guides in this journey, Boersma moves through ancient and medieval writers to build up a thick account of how *lectio divina* unfolds. The result is like moving through a medieval garden of delights in which the voices of Christian tradition swirl together to form a holistic vision of the Scriptures. This is theology in the best sense—historically rooted, spiritually alive, and oriented toward Christ as the telos of life. —**Dale Coulter**, professor, Pentecostal Theological Seminary

The monk in me skips with delight on delving into this comprehensive exploration of *lectio divina* by Hans Boersma. The book is exceedingly modest, conversational in tone, and yet impressively profound. It is obviously the rich fruit of both long study in the Christian (especially monastic) tradition and long personal practice of *lectio*. Boersma refuses to dichotomize between exegesis and mysticism, and he rightly loses interest in any approach to the revealed text that is not ultimately headed toward union with God. Desire for God, thirst for the living Christ, is Boersma's key to biblical anthropology, and this vision everywhere informs his interpretation and application of the divine words. —**Simeon Leiva-Merikakis**, OCSO, St. Joseph's Abbey

The transformative power of *lectio divina*, the ancient practice of religious reading, is masterfully presented in Hans Boersma's **PIERCED BY LOVE**. By drawing testimony from Christian spiritual writers across the centuries, he gives readers a vivid sense of what can happen to us as we read, meditate, pray, and contemplate a sacred text. This is a practice not for the faint-hearted for divine reading pierces to the core of our hearts, impels us to face truths about ourselves and embrace a cruciform existence. But as Boersma reminds us, the divine word is an arrow that wounds us with God's love. His book suggests how *lectio* opens us to the hidden reality around us and delivers us from a world that has lost a sense of the transcendent. Both long-time practitioners of *lectio* and those who have just begun the practice will appreciate the rich perspective on *lectio* presented in this work. —**Raymond Studzinski**, OSB, author, *Reading to Live: The Evolving Practice of Lectio Divina*

About the Author

Hans Boersma is the Saint Benedict Servants of Christ Chair in Ascetical Theology at Nashotah House in Wisconsin, a priest in the Anglican Church in North America, and the author of numerous books including **SEEING GOD, HEAVENLY PARTICIPATION**, and **FIVE THINGS THEOLOGIANS WISH BIBLICAL SCHOLARS KNEW**.

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Divine Reading of Divine Scripture

Lectio divina is nothing out of the ordinary. It is what happens naturally when Christians wrestle with the biblical text. The Latin term *divina* may intimidate us into thinking it is something different from what we typically do in reading the Bible. But *divina* does not mean "esoteric"; it is more akin to our term *holy*. The Scriptures are *holy*—set aside for a unique purpose. Scripture is *divine* in the sense that it has a special place within the church. *Lectio divina* simply means reading the Bible the way it's supposed to be read—as *divine Scripture*.

Just as Scripture is *divine*, so our reading must be *divine*. Our reading must do justice to the purpose for which Scripture has been set aside. Origen makes this point in a letter he probably wrote to Gregory Thaumaturgus around the year 235:

Devote yourself (*proseche*) first and foremost to reading the holy Scriptures (*theion graphon*); but devote yourself (*proseche*). For when we read holy things (*theia*) we need much attentiveness (*prosoches*), lest we say or think something hasty about them. And when you are devoting yourself (*prosechon*) to reading the sacred texts (*theion*) with faith and an attitude pleasing to God, knock on its closed doors, and it will be opened to you [Matt 7:7] by the gatekeeper of whom Jesus spoke: "The gatekeeper opens to him" [John 10:3]. And when you devote yourself (*prosechon*) to the *divine reading* (*theia*), uprightly and with a faith fixed firmly on God seek the meaning of the *divine* (*theion*) words which is hidden from most people. Do not stop at knocking and seeking, for the most necessary element is praying to understand the *divine words* (*theia*).

Two Greek words stand out in this brief excerpt from Origen's letter. First is the term *theios*, which literally translated would yield the English "divine." But the translator rightly uses the terms "holy" and "divine" interchangeably. Origen's point is that holy books call for holy reading; *divine* books require *divine* reading.

The second term is *prosoche*, or "attention." Origen advises Gregory to read the biblical text with attention. Here, I'm somewhat less happy with the translator's equation of attention with devotion. Devotion often carries the connotation of piety. Now, attention does include a pious attitude. But Origen probably had more in mind than

just what we today call devotion. When monastic authors of the third and fourth centuries spoke of attention (*prosoche*), they had in mind vigilance, watchfulness, and self-awareness. The monk would watch his thoughts, making sure they were focused on God rather than on anything extraneous. Attention was the opposite, therefore, of distraction.

Origen wants Gregory to be attentive when he engages in divine reading. The Scriptures require his utmost attention. He cannot rush the reading, hurrying to quickly finish. No, divine reading requires his single-minded focus on the biblical text, for only such attention will allow him to find its hidden meaning.

Finding this hidden meaning is the purpose of reading the divine Scriptures. Again, we need not think of anything esoteric here. Origen simply has in mind the New Testament realities of Christ and the church. When we knock and seek, we look for the sacramental or real presence of Christ. Raymond Studzinski, a Benedictine monk from St. Meinrad Archabbey in Indiana, puts it this way: "For Origen everything in the Scriptures has meaning for Christian believers because of their life in Christ. Christ is the source, the content, and the meaning of the Scriptures." To read the Scriptures sacramentally is to look for Christ as the content of the biblical text.

What is fascinating in Origen's letter is that he makes absolutely no distinction between *lectio divina* and regular Bible reading. They are one and the same thing. Origen was hardly alone in this. When we discuss the twelfth-century Carthusian prior Guigo II in chapter 2, we will see that he links the four steps of *lectio divina* to the four traditional levels of biblical interpretation. For Origen and Guigo—and this holds true for the premodern Christian tradition more broadly—*lectio divina* is the ordinary, standard way of reading the Scriptures. Proper biblical interpretation requires a divine or spiritual mode of treating the holy text.

It is important, therefore, to appreciate that *lectio divina* is nothing out of the ordinary. When we do *lectio divina*, we read Scripture in line with its divine character—as we always should. To be sure, this claim has a polemical edge. It implies that we do not find the meaning of Scripture simply by asking what the human author intended with

the text. We do not find the meaning of Scripture simply by sticking with a proper method, whether of a grammatical or a historical-critical nature. In short, we do not find the meaning of Scripture when we think of ourselves first and foremost as historians. We find meanings—note the plural!—of Scripture primarily by looking forward (to its divine purpose) rather than by looking backward (to its human origins).

Of course, we can use Scripture for other purposes. Origen himself famously constructed a critical edition of the Old Testament, the Hexapla, in which he placed the Hebrew text alongside a variety of Greek translations in six columns, which allowed for a careful comparison of the various texts. Although this endeavor was quite technical, Origen never lost sight of the primary purpose of searching for Christ as the hidden meaning of the text.

Origen's work on the Hexapla was perfectly legitimate, as are historical and archaeological investigations that focus less immediately on the spiritual aim of contemplation. In fact, both Origen's textual analysis and our own historical investigation can serve divine reading. But the point is that we shouldn't lose sight of this divine purpose in Bible reading. The search for meaning (that is to say, exegesis) is a search for God, not an attempt at historical reconstruction. And if exegesis is a knocking and searching for God himself, then *lectio divina* is simply what we do when we rightly handle the word of truth (2 Tim 2:15).

Reading This Book

This book is not a how-to guide for *lectio divina*. Instead, we'll look at what happens spiritually in our lives when we embark on divine reading. To be sure, I hope this discussion will be helpful also for

people who wonder about what to do in *lectio divina*. That's just not my primary aim. Besides, I'm skeptical of how-to guides, and *lectio divina* is not the result of a method. The modern preoccupation with method is alien to a sacramental exploration of the divine Scriptures. Method assumes that empirical analysis of the text produces the one (and only) meaning of the text. Such is not the goal of *lectio divina*.

Still, it's possible to give advice for good reading strategies. Reading ought never to be a purely subjective enterprise, arbitrarily letting the feelings wash over you. Good reading invariably involves an encounter, with meaning occurring within the encounter. *Lectio divina*, too, aims at encounter. To read the Scriptures without asking how they call us to Christ is to ignore their fundamental purpose. This book will hopefully be a helpful antidote to seeing *lectio* as an excuse to leave behind our critical faculties and embark on a sentimental psychologizing of the gospel, for this is not at all what earlier generations of spiritual writers had in mind. They thought of it as a robust—indeed, often piercing and painful—process that demands a careful and deliberate reading of Scripture.

If reading means encounter, then the imagination is perhaps the key faculty that allows the encounter to happen. Words, when properly used, stir the imagination. Words make pictures. Words leave a visual imprint (an image) on the mind, which unites us with the external referent. This is why storytelling is indispensable in faith formation. Throughout this book, we will see theologians such as Anselm of Canterbury, Aelred of Rievaulx, and Bernard of Clairvaux using the insight that words make pictures. They recognized that through the imagination we are united with Christ as the one revealed to us in biblical words.

Pictures or images are often counterproductive because they are overly prescriptive. When we depict the scene of an event, we force the reader's imagination down a particular path. Without the illustration, the reader has the freedom to imagine the scene as he wishes. But once the picture is there, this freedom is gone: the only way of imagining the scene is the one the illustration provides. That's why movies based on novels can be such a letdown. They deprive us of the freedom to imagine the narrative for ourselves. Pictures tend to constrain rather than open up the imagination.

This book does include images, but they are not illustrations depicting particular biblical events. They do not, therefore, narrow or prescribe our imaginative faculty. Instead, the images in this book—taken from medieval authors—function in support of the words. That is to say, the images serve as repositories of particular truths or

teachings. They are often fairly abstract, and they help us recall the content of Scripture. To give but one example, the image of Noah's ark devised by Hugh of Saint Victor in the twelfth century (and discussed in chapter 4) is more a diagram of salvation history than a visual representation of the historical ark at the time of the flood. Hugh's mural painting, therefore, did not narrow the imagination but opened it up. I have purposely included images (as well as other figures and diagrams) throughout this book because they give a clear impression of how it is that the imagination functions in *lectio divina*, in part through the judicious use of images.

The four traditional steps of *lectio* (reading), *meditatio* (meditation), *oratio* (prayer), and *contemplatio* (contemplation) form the frame of the practice. Repetitious reading, thoughtful and extended reflection on individual words or phrases, prayerful reflection on our own lives

in the light of our meditation, and finally silent resting in the love of God are the four basic elements. If you are looking for a practical way into *lectio divina*, the first recommendation I'd give is to read Guigo II's *The Ladder of Monks*, which I discuss in some detail in chapter 2. Meanwhile, here are a few simple guidelines to keep in mind:

- ❖ Find a quiet place and begin with a short period of silence to properly focus your attention.
- ❖ Read the passage repeatedly—perhaps about four times, interspersed with periods of silence.
- ❖ Meditate on a word or phrase that strikes you as significant. Ask yourself how it functions within its immediate context and within the Scriptures as a whole. Look for the revelation of Christ within this word or phrase. And ask what all of this has to do with your own situation and circumstances.
- ❖ As you pray, God will confront your life with the fruit of meditation. This may cause the pain of repentance. Or it may flood your heart with gratitude. In prayer, we bring our lives before God in response to the reading of the text.

- ❖ Take time throughout the process to pause and rest in silence before God. Keep Origen's advice in mind not to be hasty. It is when words and silence alternate that meaning can occur.

The structure of this book follows the four-stage movement of *lectio divina*. The first two chapters are introductory. I begin in chapter 1 by asking how *lectio* takes us from sacrament (*sacramentum*) to reality (*res*). The process transfixes or pierces us, and in so doing it transfigures us. Chapter 2 offers a detailed discussion of the four steps of *lectio divina* by looking at the ladder metaphor in dialogue with Guigo II's *The Ladder of Monks*.

In chapter 3, we turn to the first step, that of reading (*lectio*). I explore how *lectio divina* offers an antidote to the vice of *acedia* or sloth, drawing on Augustine's understanding of words as means to overcome *acedia* and to center our hope on the eternity of God. Chapters 4 through 6 deal with meditation (*meditatio*). We first turn to the link between memory and meditation in chapter 4, looking especially at how Hugh of Saint Victor used Noah's ark to impress biblical truth onto his students' hearts and minds. Medieval theologians often compared reading to eating, so in chapter 5 we consider how they employed various alimentary tropes to make the point that we meditate on Scripture in the hope of tasting the sweetness of the Lord. We next turn to the imagery of the tree of life, which medieval writers such as Bonaventure loved to use in meditating on the cross. We will see in chapter 6 that *lectio divina* serves to unite us with the suffering of Christ on the cross.

With chapter 7, we turn from meditation to prayer (*oratio*). The piercing grief over sin, which we encounter throughout the tradition—in Augustine, John Cassian, Bernard of Clairvaux, Anselm of Canterbury, and Aelred of Rievaulx—calls us back to a more introspective form of Christianity. Chapter 8 turns to the final step of *lectio divina* by raising the perennial question of the relation between action (*Martha*) and contemplation (*Mary*). Though both are indispensable, we will see in this chapter why, throughout the tradition, Christians have seen contemplation as the final, ultimate step not only of *lectio divina* but also of the Christian pilgrimage itself. This contemplation

takes us to the ineffable mystery of God; the last chapter, therefore, shows that our silence anticipates the Great Silence of God's love in Christ.

This book is somewhat difficult to classify. It has an obvious spiritual component: we will retrieve the practice of *lectio divina* by going through each of the four steps. But you will also notice a marked historical component, for I will present many illustrations from and discussions of patristic and (especially) medieval tradition. Further, throughout the book, I will be discussing the theology that underlies *lectio divina*. And in doing all this, I will often appeal to the biblical witness—as did all previous generations of *lectio divina* practitioners. In short, biblical, historical, theological, and spiritual categories overlap and intertwine. I do so purposely, in the conviction that we need all four, in unison, as we try to read the divine book in a divine manner.

Finally, a comment on the Bible translation used in this book. For the most part, I follow the Douay-Rheims Bible from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The reason is that it translates the Latin Vulgate, and the spiritual writers I quote mostly followed the Vulgate. The Douay-Rheims Bible thus keeps us closest to the biblical text as these theologians would have known it. I do, however, make an adjustment for the numbering of the Psalms (and a few other passages). To accommodate current practices, I follow the numbering of most contemporary translations. Therefore, if you search the Douay-Rheims Bible (or the Vulgate or the Septuagint) for a psalm that I quote in this book, you will in many cases have to look for the one prior to the one mentioned in the text. (For example, Psalm 45 in this book is Psalm 44 in the Douay-Rheims Bible.)

Eight Theses on Lectio Divina

Lectio divina is a means of grace. God uses our prayerful meditation upon the Scriptures to draw us into his divine life. Below, I highlight key elements in the process, those that I think we should take special note of. You may find these theses helpful, therefore, as you try to get a sense of my approach to *lectio divina* in this book. I purposely offer eight theses. Saints throughout the tradition have spoken of the

eschaton as the Eighth Day. The final step of lectio divina—contemplation—gives us a foretaste of the Eighth Day.

1. Christian spirituality is biblical spirituality.
2. Lectio divina is nothing out of the ordinary.
3. Lectio divina and spiritual interpretation are two sides of the same coin.
4. Sermon preparation is an extended type of lectio divina.
5. Lectio divina is not a purely subjective enterprise.
6. If you want lectio divina, be prepared for suffering.
7. Introspection is of the essence of the Christian faith.
8. Lectio divina reminds us that God is our ultimate aim.

Eight Theses on Lectio Divina Explained

I. Christian Spirituality is Biblical Spirituality.

The most obvious things are often the most overlooked. The most obvious presupposition behind divine reading is that it is biblically centered. The Scriptures are central to the Christian life. They must shape our belief and our spirituality, for they are our indispensable guide into eternal life. Lectio divina is an ancient practice, which has shaped many centuries of Christian devotion, both in East and West, both before and after the sixteenth-century Reformation. Sadly, biblical illiteracy is a threat both in East and West, both in Catholic and in Protestant circles. Lectio divina—with its emphasis on chewing and ruminating on biblical words, so they may shape us—reminds us that you cannot have Christianity without repetitive biblical reading and deep meditation upon the words of the divine Scriptures.

2. Lectio Divina Is Nothing Out of The Ordinary.

My book talks a lot about meditative practices of church fathers and medieval monks. That approach comes with a risk: my readers may get the impression that lectio divina is not for them; it's something from centuries past, and only for monks. Nothing could be further from the truth. What animates me in this book is the conviction that—for the most part, at least—biblical reading should be meditative, prayerful, and aimed at the contemplation of God himself. The Scriptures are a means of grace. God intends to use them to bring us to him. This is not to deny the value of all kinds of subordinate goals. But we should

resist the modern preoccupation with a purely rational grasp of the one true meaning of the text. The words of the divine Scriptures cannot be mastered; they want to master us. God's purpose with them—that which sets them apart as holy or divine—is that they would change or transfigure us. Divine things aim to divinize.

3. Lectio Divina and Spiritual Interpretation Are Two Sides of The Same Coin.

If spiritual reading is what the Bible is for, then our exegesis of the Bible should be in sync with spiritual reading. Put somewhat more sharply, once you take lectio divina seriously, you cannot but treat exegesis as a spiritual discipline. The past few decades have witnessed a revival of theological exegesis—which I take to mean a type of exegesis that takes in account (rather than brackets off) theological presuppositions. I'm a great fan of theological exegesis. But my preferred term for it is spiritual interpretation. The reason is the word spiritual reminds us that in exegesis we move from the letter (or the flesh) to the spirit. We read the Bible in order to find there Christ himself, revealed to us through the Spirit. Meditative reading digs into

the words of Scripture so as to find in them the treasure of Christ himself (Matt 13:44). The digging is a Spirit-guided process—spiritual exegesis. So closely linked are lectio divina and spiritual interpretation that the twelfth-century Carthusian monk Guigo II mapped the four steps of lectio (reading, meditation, prayer, and contemplation) onto the four meanings sought in interpretation (literal, allegorical, moral, and eschatological). Much like lectio divina, exegesis aims at the contemplation of God.

4. Sermon Preparation Is an Extended Type of Lectio Divina.

A sermon is the product of the preacher's own meditative reading. A sermon is not a doctrinal treatise; neither does it offer an inductive study of the biblical text per se. A sermon is the outcome of an encounter. The preacher has met with God in and through the biblical text. After reading the biblical text numerous times, after meditating deeply upon its words, and after a prayerful and often painful encounter with the God of the Scriptures, the preacher shares his meditation with the congregation. And by sharing the fruit of meditation, the preacher invites the congregation in turn to meditate upon the biblical text. Many of the writings that I look at in this book function in exactly this way. Anselm, Aelred, Bonaventure, and many others offered their readers the fruit of their own meditation. Their purpose was to draw their readers into a similar prayerful encounter with God. The purpose of the sermon is the same as that of Scripture: it invites listeners to attend to human words so that they may encounter the eternal Word himself.

5. Lectio Divina Is Not a Purely Subjective Enterprise.

One of the most common misconceptions about spiritual reading is that it is driven by emotion, so that it gives us license to impose our own preconceived notions upon the biblical text. This understanding of lectio

divina commonly determines people's evaluation of it: some applaud, while others decry the subjectivism and emotionalism of spiritual reading. I have gone out of my way in this book to debunk the notion that lectio divina is a purely subjective enterprise.

Sure, experience is a big thing in divine reading. There is no escaping this, and the title *Pierced by Love* speaks to the significance of human experience in lectio divina. The reason is obvious: meaning is not a static object that is ours to figure out; rather, meaning occurs within an encounter. And encounters are inherently subjective and experiential. But the experience that we bring to the biblical text is one that is always shaped by the church's prior reading of it throughout the centuries. And it is the church that, through the centuries, has safeguarded the truth of the biblical witness to the living God. The human subject, therefore, is not autonomous in relation to the Scriptures but will—or, at least, should—approach them with humility, always willing to be corrected and transformed by them. Nor is lectio divina a free-for-all, as if genre, grammar, context, and the like were irrelevant. Lectio divina does not preclude the use of word studies, commentaries, and the like. In short, we dare not use lectio divina to excuse our laziness.

6. If You Want Lectio Divina, Be Prepared for Suffering.

Lectio divina aims at God himself. There is no greater joy or happiness than God. We therefore connect spiritual reading with the sweetness of meditating on God's words. And we are right to do so. God's words are "sweeter than honey and the honeycomb" (Ps 19:10). But we should guard against the trap of sentimentalism, reading the Scriptures with the aim of arriving at a certain feeling and avoiding whatever may get in the way of the

warm fuzzies that we pursue. The Scriptures, however, do not aim at warm fuzzies or feelings for their own sake. God wants to transfigure us. To be pierced by love is a painful process. Perhaps no one knew this better than Bonaventure. When he meditated on the Gospel accounts of Jesus's suffering, he read them in the light of Galatians 2:20: *Christo confixus sum cruci*—"I have been pierced through with Christ." To be pierced through by God's love is a painful thing, for to identify with Christ in his suffering is to undergo the excruciating process of transformation. Does meditation offer sweetness? Does divine reading aim at happiness? Most definitely. But the love of God is like a piercing arrow that renders us cruciform, for we recognize the authenticity of resurrection life in the stigmata that crucifixion has brought about in us.

7. Introspection is of The Essence of The Christian Faith.

With this thesis I look at one chapter in particular: chapter 7, "Bread of Tears." I want to draw special attention to it because it is countercultural and yet central to the Christian faith. North Americans are outgoing, even brash perhaps; other cultures generally do not mistake us for inward-looking (introspective) people. Nor do we want to be considered introspective. We believe that what matters is engagement with the external, material world. This Baconian outlook has also affected the way we treat Scripture: salvation history and scientific exegesis have taken center stage. As a result, we feel ill at ease when we read earlier theologians: they focused upon the state of their soul before God and saw their inward struggles reflected in the biblical text. From a modern perspective, we cannot but denounce this "introspective conscience of the West," to use New Testament scholar

Krister Stendahl's expression (though I try to show in chapter 7 that it is not just the West, but the entire Christian tradition that used to be introspective). I won't here make a case for introspection, except to say this: it is only by scraping the rust of sinful accretions from our souls that their beauty begins to shine somewhat like the transfigured Lord Christ himself. It is this transfiguration, I believe, that is central to the Christian pilgrimage and that forms the aim of divine reading.

8. *Lectio Divina* Reminds Us That God Is Our Ultimate Aim.

The final step of *lectio divina* is contemplation. Introspection and contemplation typically go hand in hand, and so it is hardly surprising that along with introspection, also contemplation has taken a back seat in contemporary theological reflection. The very thought that in the hereafter we would eternally contemplate God—typically referred to as the beatific vision—makes us uneasy. Our discomfort has a variety of causes, but I think it is idolatry that is the root cause. Adam and Eve ate of the tree because they saw it was "good to eat, and fair to the eyes, and delightful to behold" (Gen. 3:6). Their idolizing of created objects of the external world made them hide from God when they heard him "walking in paradise at the afternoon air" (3:8). They sensed—rightly, I think—the incompatibility between the worship of things and the worship of God, and they were ashamed of having abandoned the contemplation of God. The modern discomfort with contemplation results necessarily from our myopic, idolatrous focus on this-worldly things. *Lectio divina* trains our longing for God, for he wants us to find our ultimate joy and happiness only in him. <>

THE SHAPE OF THE SOUL: WHAT MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE TELLS US ABOUT OURSELVES AND REALITY by Paul Marshall [Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, ISBN 9781538124772]

"An essential read for any true seeker."—Eben Alexander, MD, Neurosurgeon, author of *Proof of Heaven* and *Living in a Mindful Universe*

When Paul Marshall began to pay attention to his dreams, he could not have anticipated the transformative experience that would follow. A tremendous expansion of consciousness exposed the insignificance of his everyday self but also revealed unsuspected depths of mind and hinted at a deeper self that holds the universe within.

In **THE SHAPE OF THE SOUL**, Marshall—now a mysticism scholar—draws on personal experiences, along with a wealth of religious, philosophical, and scientific ideas, to explore this deeper self, sometimes experienced in mystical and near-death states as spherical in form. Drawing inspiration from the philosophers Plotinus and Leibniz, Marshall takes mind to be more fundamental than matter and views the basic units of nature as perceptual beings. We ourselves are such beings, striving for fulfillment in a long evolutionary journey of soul-making.

Bringing together mysticism, philosophy, biology, and even some physics, *The Shape of the Soul* offers a deeply integrated vision of the self and the universe. Addressing the mind–body problem, the origin of the world, evolution, reincarnation, suffering, and the nature of God, Marshall delivers what will surely prove an intellectual classic.

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For he who knows himself
will perceive first of all that
he possesses something divine.
—Cicero

There are moments of self-discovery in which consciousness of the world is radically transformed by unity, knowledge, light, and love. Quite a few years ago, when I was a young man, I had such an experience, and it seemed to me in that all-too-brief interlude of clarity that I was both much less and much more than I had previously imagined. It was now plain that a good deal of what I had taken myself to be was relatively unimportant and insubstantial, dependent on something far more alive and profound. That "much more" was of the nature of mind, intensely perceptual and knowing, holding the universe in its compass, and disposed toward the most inclusive love. Yet it was not other than myself, and if true of me then true of each and every one of us.

No doubt many will put the experience down to a neuropsychological quirk or an overexcited imagination, but I am inclined to think that it was genuinely revelatory. For one thing, the sheer clarity and the depth of knowing and feeling it brought are hard for me to brush aside. I have been sufficiently impressed by the experience to approach it at face value as an authentic self-revelation, a glimpse into the deeper nature of things. In the present book, I describe the experience as best I can and draw on a variety of sources, religious, philosophical, and scientific, to inquire into its possible significance and the greater dimension of self it appeared to reveal. Inquiry into the self, a central undertaking of the present study, is of course a very old preoccupation, traditionally framed as the pursuit of self-knowledge—the endeavor to "know thyself." It has also been the quest for the soul, the immortal "pearl" concealed in perishable flesh, and in these pages we shall indeed come across sightings of that elusive essence that was believed to survive bodily death. While talk of "soul" is largely out of fashion within intellectual circles, and so too belief in postmortem survival, there is a case for

preserving the term, especially if it can be rescued from its customary vagueness, as I hope to do here.

In modern, secular contexts, "mind" is now the preferred term for the perceiving, thinking, feeling, willing part of the human constitution, and it is appropriate too for the superhuman dimension of self I seemed to encounter in my experience, for it was perceptual and knowing, although in a way that far exceeded ordinary mentality. In this work, I try to understand how mind could have such unsuspected depths, and in so doing I sketch the outlines of a philosophy for which mind is fundamental. I edged my way toward this understanding in the wake of the experience, but it turns out to have a distinguished history: "idealist" thinkers have long argued that mind is more basic than matter, that it is not only integral to the universe but constitutes its very nature and is the source from which all things derive, including our human minds and brains. The common view in modern times has been essentially the opposite: it is usually assumed that experience, mind, and consciousness, far from being fundamental, are simply "emergent properties" of the material brain, arising only when evolution has yielded biological processes of sufficient complexity to generate them.

Undoubtedly mind and body are intimately related, but this is not to say that brain creates experience, for it is far from obvious how material structures and processes could do so if matter is defined as lacking basic experiential qualities, such as those of color and sound. In recent years, there has been much discussion of this "mind-body problem," with renewed interest in philosophies that give mind a more integral place in the scheme of things. These approaches, which are quite varied, include types of panpsychism, for which the basic units of matter do possess some degree of consciousness, if only very primitive.' They also include types of idealism of the kind intimated above, for which mind is more fundamental than matter. The outlook I develop here combines these two approaches, finding consciousness in the basic units of nature and taking mind to be primary. As such, it is a contribution to the consciousness-centered type of philosophy that is reasserting itself after the long dominance of materialism. It is also a contribution to the study of the soul, for the kind

of idealism I propose here furnishes a very specific understanding of soul, giving it more shape and substance than is ordinarily the case. Some contemporary thinkers have defended the concept of soul by upholding various kinds of dualism that distinguish soul from matter.' I aim for a more unified picture, favoring an idealism that absorbs the material world into the soul as the contents of its perceptions. There is no material world outside these perceptions.

The present book, however, is not a conventional work of philosophy, for it draws its inspiration from sources often passed over as unimportant or irrelevant, and its speculative ambition is not typical of much contemporary, mainstream philosophy. As already indicated, I take as my starting point a kind of experience that seems to reveal hidden depths of reality. These experiences, nowadays often called "mystical," occur in a variety of circumstances, including the beauty of nature, meditation, mental distress, and near-death crisis. While they have received some philosophical attention over the years, especially in connection with issues of knowledge, logic,

language, and ethics, their metaphysical claim to be revelatory of reality has not been of great interest to philosophers, in part because metaphysics itself had been rather unfashionable for a long time and also because it is no easy matter to navigate the difficulties that such inquiry faces. One of these challenges is the cross-cultural diversity of mystical teachings, that is, the lack of metaphysical consensus among spiritual traditions supposedly informed by mystical experience. Why should there be significant doctrinal differences if these traditions draw on mystical insights into the nature of reality? I have considered this and other challenges elsewhere, and shall not repeat my observations, other than to reiterate my conclusions that the difficulties are not insurmountable and that there is a place for inquiry into the claim of mystical experience to be revelatory of reality, if conducted circumspectly and directed in the first place not at mystical doctrines but at unadorned, descriptive accounts of mystical experiences.

Another somewhat unusual inspiration behind the present book is a philosophical system well known to scholars but viewed more often as a historical curiosity than a

serious constructive metaphysics for our times, namely the theory of monads or monadology formulated by philosopher and mathematician Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz around the beginning of the eighteenth century. According to Leibniz, the fundamental units of nature are the monads, perceptual beings who express the entire universe from their unique points of view as they shift from state to state, driven onward by an inherent striving or "appetition." In more developed form, these monads are souls and minds. Over the centuries, Leibniz's system has caught the imagination of several thinkers who have modified and updated it to suit their concerns. For example, in the early twentieth century, A. N. Whitehead, Bertrand Russell, and several British idealists were inspired by monadology. I am no exception here, taking up the philosophy and adapting it to address not only the mind-body problem but also some of the puzzles of mystical experience and modern science. I have not been alone in thinking that monadology may shed light on relativistic and quantum physics, and offer a framework in which a deeper understanding of evolution can be had, one that is true to our experience as conscious, purposive beings.

The book proceeds as follows. In CHAPTER 1, I introduce mystical experiences, specifically those that bring transformations of self-understanding through discovery of a profound connection with the natural world, a sense that one is not really separate from other human beings, animals, plants, inanimate objects, even the entire universe. These "unitive" or "nondual" states, distinguished from everyday, dualistic consciousness, have a claim to be the key to self-knowledge, an antidote to self-identifications that are misleading because they are too narrow and exclusive. I give a few examples of these unitive experiences and briefly set out their characteristics and the circumstances in which they take place, drawing on a more detailed overview in my earlier study *Mystical Encounters with the Natural World*,¹ but now advancing the discussion a little further. I offer a classification of mystical experiences according to whether they embrace the natural world, some other world, or no world at all, and I give more prominence to a distinction between mystical perceptions of the world that remain tied to the ordinary senses and those that seem to go beyond them. I also

discuss the structure of dualistic consciousness, and I introduce the mystical intuition that the entire universe can be found within, in the self or soul.

In order to take the discussion further, I find it necessary to describe my own experience of cosmic wholeness, mentioned in the opening paragraph. This took place one morning about thirty-five years ago, while I was asleep. I probably would not have been induced to publish an account of this personally meaningful experience were it not for a peculiar, potentially important detail to be noted shortly, one not often reported in contemporary mystical accounts. In CHAPTER 2, I describe the mystical experience and its background, and highlight several features, some of which receive detailed consideration in the chapters that follow. I also pay attention to the curious fact that when I awoke from sleep I was able to remember two dreams but not the core experience sandwiched between them. There are notable precedents to the forgetting and remembering of profound truths, going back to the ancient Platonic doctrine of anamnesis or "recollection" of forgotten knowledge, and illustrated by modern examples, particularly pronounced in anesthetic intoxication, which interestingly has brought idealist insights too.

It is noteworthy that my experience was similar to those associated with life-threatening physical traumas such as cardiac arrests and traffic-accident injuries, that is to say, the near-death experiences that have attracted much attention in recent decades. In my case there was, as far as I can tell, no such threat to life, for at the time I was fast asleep in bed and out of harm's way.

However, the experience was preceded by dream imagery suggestive of a journey into death, and the experience itself can be understood as a kind of death of the ordinary self, if only a partial and temporary one. Thus, in CHAPTER 3, I treat the mystical journey as an excursion into the realm of the dead, which paradoxically is the land of the truly living, a journey that brings threats to the ego, moments of self-judgment in the face of overwhelming love, and revelations of deeper identity. As we shall see, the idea that near-death and postmortem judgments are self-judgments, rather than those

of an external arbiter, should not be dismissed too quickly as a modern psychological reading, for it has significant historical precedents.

Self-knowledge as revelatory of an identity over and above the familiar one—or "the Human as Two" as scholar of religions Jeffrey J. Kripal has called it—becomes the focus of interest in CHAPTER 4. If there is a hidden dimension of self, how far does it extend toward the center of things, and what is its relation to the everyday sense of self? Is it, indeed, appropriate to apply "self" terminology to deeper facets of reality? Mystical experiences undoubtedly bring dramatic transformations of self-experience, but it is open to debate whether the deeper aspects of self they sometimes reveal are genuine, and I do not expect to reach any firm conclusions on this thorny issue. After all, it is notable that such experientially informed, philosophically astute religious traditions as Hinduism and Buddhism are often thought to have very different positions on the reality of the self.' Although the present book raises the possibility of hidden depths of self, it does not pretend to give a rigorous analysis of "self" and its metaphysical status.' Rather, the book is experience-oriented and speculative in approach, taking as a starting point mystical experience and proceeding to some tentative reflections. What the study lacks in detailed philosophical analysis is hopefully offset by some worthwhile lines of inquiry opened up by mystical experience, my own included.

My suspicion is that even if "self" terminology is not quite right for the very essence of reality (if that reality transcends all subject-object discrimination), it can still be applied in a meaningful way to the level of knowing and feeling that I accessed during my cosmic episode, for the experience had a social character, involving a community of beings. The expansive mind was not a solitary intellect but a vast, communing soul, one among many, cognizant of its distinctness from the others, yet aware that it was intimately related to them by virtue of shared identity with the whole. This realization stemmed from the peculiar detail I have not found commonly reported in present-day accounts of mystical experience, although it has parallels in mystical traditions. Within the cosmic mind I had discovered myself to be, I was able to discern other minds or "knowers" who were likewise cosmic in scope, yet they were very tiny things, and it was

puzzling to me that these little beings, circular in shape and capable of igniting the most powerful, all-inclusive love, also embraced the world in their comprehensions. In fact, this detail was so baffling that I pushed it to the back of my thoughts for several years and did not pay much attention to it. Yet it was perhaps one of the most important features of the experience, and the enigma it presented to me has been the inspiration behind *The Shape of the Soul*. Who were those beings? Why were they circular in shape? How could such diminutives hold the great universe within their comprehensions?

I begin to address these questions in CHAPTER 5 by taking a look at references to circular and spherical forms both in modern-day accounts of altered states of consciousness and in the older religious and philosophical literature. It turns out that sphericity has been attributed to the soul for a long time, figuratively or literally. One particularly rich example is to be found in Hildegard of Bingen's visionary writings, which describe fiery soul-globes. But it has been suggested that Hildegard suffered from migraine, and so the question arises whether her visions of globes can be put down to the visual auras that sometimes attend the medical condition. More generally, it can be asked whether "entoptic" light phenomena, believed to originate in the eyes and nervous system, and related to the migraine aura, are the source of some visionary contents. Entoptics can certainly be a feature of altered states of consciousness, but do they account for the details of my own experience?

I find the entoptics approach interesting but unsatisfactory, for the "rings" I experienced were not just visual forms: they were recognizable as all-encompassing, living beings equivalent to myself. Thus, in CHAPTER 6, I work toward an alternative understanding, drawing upon and adapting the philosophies of Plotinus and Leibniz. Both thinkers explained how it is possible for a mere part to contain within itself the entire whole. It turns out that the world may consist of a plurality of distinct, all-encompassing, self-evolving yet mutually representative experiences, so that it is in effect a communal enterprise and a "social construction" in the strongest sense of the term. The universe and its material constituents are then a social reality in their

organization and development, and consciousness at this level is truly a "knowing with others," a "knowing together."

Each of these all-inclusive wholes or monads has complete perceptions of the universe organized from its own point of view, representing within itself all the other cosmic perspectives in such a way that the representations form the basis of material structure. As a perception, each monad is an experiential continuum, an undivided whole, but it represents within itself all the other discrete wholes, and these representations are the fundamental units of matter. Leibniz's philosophy of monads shows how one can go about understanding the nature of matter in a universe that is experiential in nature, an achievement rarely emulated by other philosophies that regard mind, experience, or consciousness as primary and matter as derivative. Interpreted as an idealist solution to the mind-body problem, the monadology not only explains in general terms how mind and matter can be reconciled but also lays the foundation for a detailed understanding of matter. Furthermore, chon ches7 (e).4 (f)0.5 (m)4 (n)1.6d (,)6.4uge 7 ()]TJ@-

fail to reach the requisite depth can still hint at a world organized along monadological lines by bringing into view a "guardian of the threshold" who blocks the way to deeper realizations yet displays telltale signs of the reality it guards, such as luminosity, sphericity, and multiple but interconnected centers of perception.

Scientific support for a universe organized in monadological fashion takes center stage in CHAPTER 8. This is no less than the two great pillars of modern physics, the relativistic and quantum theories, both of which have stood up well to rigorous experimental testing over the years. Each of these theories on its own can be regarded as suggestive of a universe organized along monadological lines, but taken in combination the evidence they provide is even more compelling. Surely it is significant that each of these fundamental theories points in its own way to the same conclusion? It is even possible that their much anticipated union in a "theory of everything" may be achievable in a monadological framework, which effortlessly combines the seeming contraries of the continuous and the discrete. The former is a feature of general relativity, with its account of large-scale structure dominated by gravitation; the latter is a feature of quantum theory, with its discontinuities at small scales. Monadology naturally combines the continuous and discontinuous, and also the large and the small, by having the cosmically inclusive monads, which are discrete continua, represented in the microstructure of one another. The territory was explored in my first book, *The Living Mirror*, but now it receives a less physical, more philosophical treatment, drawing on Einstein's helpful distinction between "theories of principle" and "constructive theories" to suggest that physics is in need of a metaphysics and that monadology may fit the bill.

The study draws to a close with chapters on origins, destinations, and journeys: where do we come from, where are we going, and how do we get there? A world of harmonized perceptions points to a common source, one that generates, coordinates, and supports the cosmic multiplicity. But how do the Many come forth from this supernal One, the origin and essence of all things, the ultimate center of centers? If the universe truly consists of mutually representative cosmic perceptions, then it must

come into being through the generation of a multiplicity of subjects who take one another as their objects. Thus, in CHAPTER 9, the question of origins draws us back to the separation of subject and object with which the book opened, the apprehension of the other as distinct from oneself. It is possible that the separative discriminations that mark our everyday range of experiences are not just a peculiarity of creatures such as ourselves, with our highly developed conceptual-linguistic abilities and somewhat alienating ways of life, but are far more widespread. Indeed, they may stem from subject-object discriminations intrinsic to the process of world manifestation itself and so are woven into the fabric of things. According to some mystically informed schools of thought, including Plotinian philosophy and nondual Kashmir Shaivism, the world of multiplicity comes forth from its luminous source through the emergence of a subject who seeks an object and in so doing generates a world of subject-object perceptions that are subtly dualistic at a cosmic level and grossly dualistic at the sensory level. The assertion of a subject ("Ego") and associated want of an object ("Eros") set up a dynamic that drives all that follows, powering cycles of self-other differentiation and unification, dominated alternately by duality and unity, revolutions of luminous consciousness out of which manifest existence is spun.

With the journey now well underway, the role played by biological evolution comes into view. CHAPTER 10 begins with the old idea of a "ladder of nature:" Leibniz's monadology describes a hierarchy of organisms with increasingly sophisticated bodies, perceptions, and mental functioning. This ladder stretches from the most basic organisms through plants, animals, humans, and superhumans toward God, but it is not really possible to climb up it, even though Leibniz's system of nature works toward the achievement of greater perfection. A comparable ladder of nature in the ancient Indian religion of Jainism is traversable because transmigration of souls across species is recognized there. It is possible to scale the ladder through rebirths into more favorable bodies and environments. Leibniz did not accept transmigration as such, but it can be a natural extension of his system, and already in Leibniz's time monads and reincarnation had been brought together in a limited fashion by Leibniz's friend

Francis Mercury van Helmont. But it was only after the rise of biological evolutionism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that the integration could come of age. Evolutionary theory added a new idea to the mix: it turns out that the static ladder of nature is actually an escalator, or better, a growing, branching "tree of life." Evolution makes available new kinds of bodies and mental capacities through which monads can pursue their developmental journeys.

No doubt the path is long and difficult, bringing much pain and suffering on the way, and the question arises whether the journey and goal are worthwhile. Attention therefore turns in CHAPTER 11 to the problem of evil, including John Hick's "soul-making" approach to suffering, a Christian theodicy that takes on board biological evolutionism and which meshes well with monadology. In fact Hick's approach would benefit from relocation into a framework of evolutionary monadology, for some difficulties it faces are eased there. The concept of God also receives attention, since the evils of the world raise formidable difficulties for a God conceived along traditional lines. This is an appropriate topic on which to conclude since the concept of God has a bearing on the puzzle that runs through the book, the question of self-identity—who we are and what we may be. The outcome of these final reflections is a concept of God-in-the-making who contains the world but also transcends it, a divinity who we all are at heart.

Finally, I would like to highlight in advance where I believe the present book makes some distinctive and innovative contributions:

1. Unusually for a contemporary study, the claim of mystical experience to be revelatory of deeper realities is taken seriously. I am therefore willing to draw on mystical testimonies as a resource for exploring questions about self, mind, time, suffering, and other enigmas.
2. Although I take the reality claim of mystical experience seriously, I do so cautiously, mindful of alternative explanations. Previously, in *Mystical Encounters*, I discussed several competing theories of mystical experience,

including neuropsychological and social-psychological ones, and now I give the migraine theory special attention, since luminous phenomena feature prominently in the current study.

3. I draw on a wide range of mystical sources, traditional and modern, and offer novel perspectives on several mystics, including Thomas Traherne and Hildegard of Bingen, and on visionary glimpses of circular and spherical forms. I use my own experience as a starting point, and, if the present study does nothing else, it adds a detailed account of my experience to the mystical literature,
4. I develop an idealist metaphysics based on Leibniz's philosophy of monads, refashioned in the light of mystical experience and the philosophy of Plotinus. Unlike many reformers of monadology I leave intact the cosmic completeness of monads, and in a radical move I make their cosmic perceptions fully distinct, like those of Plotinian intellects.
5. My adoption of monadology allows me to give more substance to the concept of the soul. Moreover, my upgrading of monads to fully fledged cosmic minds means that the idea of a higher level of soul can be supported, for each monad in its totality now constitutes such a higher level, indeed, a communal level of soul, a social self, a "One-Many." Thus, the soul is at least twofold, comprising the everyday self and the monadic mind of which this limited, everyday self is just a small part.
6. The proposed metaphysics incorporates a traditional dualist theory of perception but makes it idealist: the "external world" represented in our sense perceptions is now understood to be internal to our monadic minds. Thus, two basic kinds of perception are distinguished, one sensory and limited, the other monadic and all-inclusive.
7. These philosophical innovations are, I think, significant in their own right, but they are even more interesting if monadological thought provides a framework

in which relativistic physics and quantum physics become more comprehensible, as I suggest it does.

8. Leibniz has little to say about the origin of monads, and so I turn again to Plotinus for inspiration and trace the origin and striving of monads to the productive, reflexive activity of their source. There is, I think, justification for this move, since my reconstructed monads are somewhat like Plotinian intellects (although significantly different too, as I shall explain).
9. Taking the idea further, I describe cycles of cognition and feeling that swing between subject-object duality and unity, powered by an egoic pull toward differentiation and an erosic pull toward unification. In this way, dualistic and nondual consciousness are partnered in creative interplay. My speculations here provide a new angle on earlier concepts of two dynamic principles at work in the human psyche and the world at large, such as the Chinese yang and yin, and the Jungian Logos and Eros.
10. Leibniz's monadology predates the emergence of evolutionary science, but its developmental vision, which has monads striving to actualize their potential, is readily modified to incorporate biological evolutionism. I draw attention to this evolutionary form of monadology, which brings together scientific and spiritual concepts of evolution, uncover some of its history, and endeavor to retrieve it from esoteric expositions that were inventive but overly fanciful.
11. I suggest that soul-making theodicy, which attempts to reconcile the world's ills with the existence of a benign creator God, has a natural home in evolutionary monadology. Logical arguments, however, only go so far in addressing the problem of evil, for raw experiences of suffering can make theoretical attempts to grapple with the problem look very hollow indeed. While the experiential problem of evil remains as challenging as ever, I draw attention to experiences that bear witness to meaning in suffering and so give some ground for faith in

the basic goodness of the world process, despite many indications to the contrary.

12. The problem of evil has led some thinkers to reconsider the nature of God, and I too look for an alternative understanding, one more deeply integrated with the evolutionary monadology I describe. I suggest that divine consciousness evolves through the cosmic odyssey of monads yet is available fully developed at each step of the journey if all of time is present in each moment. <>

PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: CREATIVE EXPERIMENTS FOR ALTERNATIVE FUTURES edited by Ananta Kumar Giri [Palgrave / Macmillan, ISBN 9789811336867]

This book explores varieties of spiritual movements and alternative experiments for the generation of beauty, dignity and dialogue in a world where the rise of the religious in politics and the public sphere is often accompanied by violence. It examines how spirituality can contribute to human development, social transformations and planetary realizations, urging us to treat each other, and our planet, with evolutionary care and respect. Trans-disciplinary and trans-paradigmatic to its very core, this text opens new pathways of practical spirituality and humanistic action for both scholarship and discourse and offers an invaluable companion for scholars across religious studies, cultural studies and development studies.

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Practical Spirituality, Human Development and Creative Experiments for Alternative Futures: An Introduction and an Invitation by Ananta Kumar Giri

Spirituality is an unceasing experiment with self, culture, society and the world for fuller and greater realization of beauty, dignity and dialogues in self, culture, society and the world. This calls for an experimental self and society which has the courage of Wondering and wandering and engages itself with creative and transformative action and meditation. In this volume which is a sequel to our first volume, "Practical Spirituality and Human Development: Transformations in Religions and Societies," we discuss several experiments in practical spirituality and human development for alternative futures where future itself is freed from an apriori closure and bondage which in turn liberates both past and present as well (Giri 2018). We discuss movements which bring service, struggle for justice and movements for alternative futures together.'

Our journey begins with Part I entitled "New Visions and Cultivation of Practical Spirituality and Human Development" with Carolyn Swift Jones' essay, "On the Holy Ground: Practical Spirituality and Practical Moral Courage," in which Jones tells us how practical spirituality is characterized by practical moral courage which embodies the healing power of love. In their subsequent essay, "Multidimensional Mysticism," Shivjot Gill and John Clammer discuss how mystical engagement can give rise to creative practical spirituality and human development and lead to a struggle for justice and dignity. They discuss the vision and practice of multidimensional mysticism in self, culture, religion, society, art and the sports and tell us how it can help us in having access to deeper sources of knowledge and insight such as intuition and a new epistemology, ontology and politics. Practical mysticism in their view can lead to the transformation of politics where we are not concerned only with the acquisition of power but a new relationship with power, empowerment and world transformations. In their subsequent essay, "Practical Spirituality: The Art and Science of Conscious Living," Karminder Ghuman, Michael A. Wride and Phillip Franses present practical spirituality as an art and science of conscious living which leads to spiritual

empowerment. As they write, "Through this transformative and unifying meaning, spirituality helps us discern the route that connects us to a creative space (a generative order to use Bohm's terminology), which is both transcendent and immanent, idealistic and practical." This is followed by Marta Botta's essay, "The New Spiritual Paradigm as Facilitator of Social Change" in which Botta talks about new mythologies and spirituality as pathways of cultural transformation. Botta also tells us about intentional communities as incubators of new forms of spirituality. In this context, she presents us the work of Damanhur intentional community in North Italy. As Botta tells us, "In the spirit of practical spirituality, Damanhurians provide service to others, get involved in local politics, and are volunteering in the Italian Red Cross and the local Fire Brigade."

The subsequent essays in Part I present us different reflections on visions and experiments with practical spirituality. In his essay, "Expressions of Self in Market, Society and Self: Toward Spiritual Praxis for Human Development," Subash Sharma helps us understand the way practical spirituality helps us rethink self, society and market. In their following essay, "Cultivating Practical Spirituality: Soil, Soul and Sarvodaya," Alexander Scheiffer and Ronald Lessem present us the way practical spirituality brings together soil and soul in movements such as Sarvodaya Sramadana in Sri Lanka. This mediation with soul and soil is accompanied by Ananta Kumar Giri's exploration of new circles of gender liberation which embodies beauty, dignity and dialogue. In his subsequent essay, "Practical Spirituality and Human Development: Circles of Gender Liberation and the Calling of Lokasamgraha," Giri argues how practical spirituality needs to cultivate new circles and movements of gender relations which goes beyond dualism and help us uphold our world which is called Lokasamgraha in Indic traditions.

With these essays we come to Part II of our book, "Creative Experiments in Practical Spirituality and Human Development." This begins with Christoph and Nisha Woiwode's essay, "Practical Spirituality and the Contemporary City: Awakening the Transformative Power for Sustainable Living," in which Woiwode and Woiwode present us the way practical spirituality is emerging in contemporary city planning and

architectural dynamics. They present us the work of movements such as Heilhaus movement in Kassel, Germany which tries to recreate urban community with a touch of practical spirituality. As they write:

Community life, mutual support, taking part at social and cultural activities, creating community and spiritual practice are an integral part of everyday life. Through the presence and activities of the Heilhaus,' the adjacent urban neighborhood is changing as well. The area where it is located is an old industrial estate ridden by unemployment, poverty and social issues. By harboring many children and adolescents and a multi-ethnic population, it is a lively neighborhood with a great development potential. The 'Heilhaus' movement has a commitment to play an active part in this, following its guiding qualities of hope, compassion and community life.

This essay on practical spirituality and the contemporary city is followed also by another experiment in creative service delivery in an urban space. In her essay, "Practical Spirituality: Dabbawala Case," Mala Kapadia presents us the case of Dabbawala from Mumbai who deliver healthy and cheap lunches to many people in Mumbai as an aspect of their practical spirituality. This is followed by Thomas Kaufmann's essay, "Practical Spirituality and Developmental Challenges amongst Tibetan Communities in India," in which Kauffman presents us different development initiatives among Tibetan communities in India as expressions of practical spirituality. In her following chapter, "Practical Spirituality of Meher Baba and Human Development," Rachel Diamond then describes the work of Meher Baba from India and his vision and practice of practical spirituality as well as that of his many followers at the roots of which lies a creative silence as well as meaningful work with others and society.

This is then followed by Sabith Khan's essay, "Pluralism, New Forms of American Muslim Giving and Practical Spirituality," in which Khan tells us about Islamic philanthropy initiatives in the contemporary USA as an aspect of practical spirituality.

The subsequent three essays in Part II present us different aspects of creative and critical practical spirituality at work in different parts of the world. In her essay,

"Community and Practical Spirituality: Perspectives on L'Arche as an Arena for Contemplative Transformation," Anne Escrader presents us the dynamics of practical spirituality at work in the vision and practice of Jean Vanier and the L'Arche movement which works with differently and specially abled children. In the following essay, "Assertive Sprout from Wounded Psyche: Glimpses into Dalit Spirituality," A. Maria Arul Raja, SJ presents us the force of critical spirituality of rage and reconstruction in Dalit Spirituality. In his subsequent essay, "The Politics of Spirituality: Dissident Spiritual Practice of Poykail Appachan and the Shared Legacy of Kerala Renaissance," Ajay S. Sekher presents us the work of Poykail Appachan or Sri Kumara Gurudevan (1879-1939) who challenged both Christian missionary modes and caste dominance in Kerala. This is followed by a similar experiment with another critical and creative experiment with spirituality in the vision and works of Kundrakudi Adigalar, "a Sannyasin social visionary, a spiritual revolutionary and a humanist." As Ponniah writes in his essay, "Transforming Life-worlds: In Praise of Kundrakudi Adigalar's Practical Spirituality," "Adigalar placed religion and spirituality, science and technology at the heart of human development. He made religion serve humanity by redefining and reconstructing its various aspects and related institutions. He was not only a visionary but a catalyst who drastically altered the very portrait of a Hindu Sannyasi. He was a true proponent of practical religion as he worked relentlessly for the transformation of lives of ordinary human beings in the rural areas by revisiting, revisioning and reinterpreting the age-old domains of religion and spirituality."

The last three essays in this Part present us work of practical spirituality in Islam. In his essay, "Subud: A Practical Mystical Path for the Twenty-First Century," Reynold Ruslan Feldman tells us his experience with the Subud movement which is a dogma-free movement of inner generation from Islam. In his subsequent contribution, "Islam, Political Culture and Practical Spirituality in Kedah, a State in Northwestern Malaysia," Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid tells us about the role played by practical Sufis in Kedah. As he writes:

In Kedah, Sayyids and other Arabs assimilated themselves with the local populace through inter-marriages with Malays, competence in Malay language and socio-political activism. Carrying with them the tag of defenders of Islam, they displayed admirable diplomatic skills, negotiated dexterously with foreign powers, provided advisories to ruling elites and led anticolonial movements. As practical sufis who synergised individual piety with socio-political activism, these emigrant Muslims unhesitatingly adopted indigenous norms and mores as their own, becoming Malay-Muslims in their own right in the space of a few generations. These indigenised Muslims later played a major role in injecting their originally native coreligionists with religio-political zeal in defending their motherland against the onslaught of invading powers from the West and Siam. Helping their ascendancy in the local political terrain was the good impression the Arab migrants enjoyed among Malays as 'people of good character', buoyed by an emigrant spirit, a work culture which stressed diligence and a religious understanding that perceived economic activity as a sublime deed [...]

Hamid's essay is followed by Smita Tewari Jassal and Sobnam Koser Akcapar's essay, "Ziyaret and Practical Spirituality: Women Shrine Visits in Anatolia," in which they tell us about women shrine visit in Turkey especially to shrines such as in Ziyaret and their experience of practical spirituality in such journey and engagement.

These contributions bring us to Part III entitled "Transformation of the Material and the Spiritual and Practical Spirituality as New Movements of Awakening" which presents us glimpses of further experiments with practical spirituality. It begins with John Clammer's essay, "The Material and the Spiritual: The Provisionality of Matter and the Politics of Miracles in Japanese New Religions," in which Clammer tells us about the intertwining of the material and the spiritual in the politics of miracles in Japanese new religions. Clammer has studied Japanese new religious movements such as Mahikiri where objects are not only material but also spiritual and they are animated by the performance of miracles. As Clammer tells us: "The religious language of objects and their spiritualization expressed in movements such as Mahikari speaks both to the inhabitants of this particular and almost hegemonic language game, and simultaneously subverts it. If the material is spiritual one may speak freely in the idiom of things while knowing that this is but a metaphor for their true nature. Acceptance of

the body, sexuality and participation in at least some aspects of the wider consumer society is thus made possible without undue cognitive stress." For Clammer,

The very word "spiritual" implies, at least in English, that which is set over against, transcends or imbues the material. In most religious traditions, with the major exception of Judaism, the material (including the body) is rarely seen as in itself spiritual and a major source of theological creativity (and controversy), especially in Christianity, has been the attempt to think the material and the spiritual into some kind of satisfactory relationship to one another ("religion and science" arguments, many contemporary feminist and ecological theologies, and recent theologies of the body being prominent examples). But for Mahikari this is not a problem: the universe is essentially spiritual, and, as with other Japanese New Religions, there is absolutely no moral issue about enjoying the material world and its fruits, and indeed praying for their increase. Philosophically, within the idealist monism of the New Religions, there is no reason why there should be. But the New Religions, while innovators in many points of detail, are not in themselves the source of such a world view: this lies deeper, primarily in Japanese folk religion and its great taproot, the collection of practices and conceptions now known generically as Shinto, modified and enriched by the various strands of Mahayana Buddhism that have entered Japan over the centuries from Korea and China. But what they certainly have in common is the challenging of the implicit Cartesianism of so many Western philosophical and religious assumptions, not least as they apply to the place of the material within a total cosmology.

The subsequent essays in our volume present us different dimensions of new horizons of practical spirituality unfolding in our lives. In her essay, "The Spiritual Politics of Bio-Cultural Regeneration," Frederic Apffel-Marglin tells us about processes of bio-cultural regeneration in Latin America. Apffel-Marglin discusses movements such as Fair Trade in Latin America which give security and dignity to many subsistent farmers and also work of shamans who still preserve and nurture a different life world beyond anthropocentrism where people and plants have the capacity to heal and regenerate. This is followed by Cheng Feng-Chu's essay, "Human Consciousness and Its Discontents: An Ecological Reading of the Awakening of Faith," which presents us an ecological reading of the text, *The Faith of Awakening in Mahayana*. Feng-Chu also urges us to realize how the cultivation of ecological consciousness urges us to go beyond modern consumerist consciousness. Su-Chen Wu in her subsequent essay,

"Ecological Holism: Arne Naess's Gestalt Ontology and Merleau-Ponty's Bodily-Flesh Phenomenology" presents us the insights of Arne Ness and Maurice Merleau-Ponty in the way they challenge us to live a life of ecological holism. Both these essays tell us how living ecologically is a pre-eminent work of practical spirituality. In her following essay, "Light Development in an Age of Climate Change," Louke van Wensveen tells us about the vision and practice of light development in the age of climate change which has a deep spiritual touch and resonance. Spirituality here acts as a bridge and this is the spirit of the subsequent contribution of Sudha Sreenivasa Reddy in her essay, "A Holistic Approach to Social Development and Dignity." This challenges us to climb the peaks in our self, culture, society and ecology and the last essay in our book, "Practical Spirituality of the Sacred Mountains," Maria Constanza Ceruti invites us to realize the link between climbing mountains and spirituality. Ceruti presents her own experience as a high-altitude archaeologist and climber as well as that of other climbers and tells us how climbing mountains helps in realizing practical spirituality. In her words:

[...] mountain climbing is not about glorifying the climber's ego, breaking records, gambling with Death or competing with other climbers. It is about stepping into the unknown, answering a call, reaching out for wholeness and bringing peace to our restless hearts. After all, mountain climbing is a quest and every mountaineer is a seeker, in his or her own particular way.

As a high altitude archaeologist I have ascended mountains for the explicit scientific purpose of studying the summit shrines of the Inca civilization. Nevertheless, that was not the only reason: there has always been a visceral spell that the mountains have casted upon my heart. In the beginning I tried to ignore it, because it seemed inappropriate to have those feelings towards the "object of research", according to the positivistic and materialistic views prevailing in Argentinean anthropology. Nonetheless, after my first ascents to peaks above 5000 meters I could no longer hide the transformative impact that the climbs brought at a personal level. The passion that I felt for the mountains would lift me to their summits and keep me "at their feet", all at once.

The above narration of Ceruti where one is climbing the peak which transforms one's mode of being with one's feet on the ground is an important experience and theme to provisionally conclude the description of our adventure and humble strivings in the

fields of practical spirituality and human development. Practical spirituality is a ceaseless sadhana and struggles to reach the summits and depths in our lives and relationships as it seeks for an ever-evolving and transformative integration between vertical and horizontal planes of our lives—self, society, culture and consciousness. This is a theme which is also reiterated in his inspiring Afterword to our volume by Paul Schwartzentruber who tells us: "Practical spirituality shows itself primarily in the concern to retrieve, revive and re-embody the transformative aspect of religion and by that very effort it becomes creative, that is to say: fluid in conception; dialogic in nature; and fundamentally immanent in form."

The present volume invites our readers to join us in the journey of adventure and pilgrimage of practical spirituality. Resonating with the theme of spirituality, climbing and adventure of consciousness, I offer my following poem about peak and feet of Buddha which had also emerged out of a much smaller experience with climbing the flying rock in Lijian temple, Hangzhou, China in August 2009:

Peak and Buddhapada

I

I am a Peak
You came to my lap
My kisses on your feet and head
Body and Soul
Your feet are Buddhapada
Feet of the Buddha
Feet of the Heart and Lotus of the Peak
In this lotus feet
You draw paintings
Of Bridges and Ladders
Bridge Between the Ground and the Sky
Heaven and Earth
Lake and the Mountain

II

Oh the painter of bridges
In this moment of our meeting
You realize me
In many new ways
I am a Peak

But I am not only a peak
I am also a plane
A Plane of Embrace
I am not only a cliff
Nor only a point
I am a circle
Of one and many
III
You come to this circle
Oh Buddhapada
Be a Tapasyi
In this forest
And in all knotted hairs of relationships
Go on painting a new existence
A new realization
Experience of the Peak
Is not confined only to the peak
Realize peak in all planes of life
All circles of relationships
I am a peak
I exist as an aspiration in your feet
As a prayer in our moments of opening <>

WHEN SHADOW MEETS THE BODHISATTVA: THE CHALLENGING TRANSFORMATION OF A MODERN GURU by Andrew Cohen with Hans Plasqui [Inner Traditions, ISBN 9781644115909]

Insights from a renowned spiritual teacher's intense soul-searching after the dramatic collapse of his spiritual community

Explores the rise and fall of the author's organization EnlightenNext, including his own responsibility for its failure, and the lessons he learned, such as the need to deal thoroughly with one's shadow for continued spiritual growth

Presents wisdom from the author's discussions with spiritual leaders, including Ken Wilber, Diane Musho Hamilton Roshi, Steve McIntosh, Terry Patten, Doshin Roshi, Sally Kempton, Philip Goldberg, Jeffrey Kripal, and Patricia Alberé

Shares a new vision for the spirituality of tomorrow

After his very public fall from grace in 2013, renowned spiritual teacher Andrew Cohen vanished from view and underwent a dark night of the soul. After years of intense introspection and soul-searching, Cohen shares his insights into the failure of his organization EnlightenNext, including his own responsibility for its downfall, as well as a new vision for modern spirituality based on the wisdom of the lessons he learned.

The author details his spiritual initiation, his rapid rise to guruhood, the explosive growth of his spiritual community worldwide, and then--right at the height of its spiritual and creative emergence--its dramatic collapse, which left his students lost, bitter, angry, and confused. He shares his gripping spiritual odyssey from the heights of illumination, down into the existential ashes of failed aspirations, to the underworld of inner darkness, and back again into the light.

Building upon the lessons he learned, including the need to deal thoroughly with one's own shadow, Cohen explains the necessity of the guru in spiritual practice, while also exposing the dysfunctions of the traditional guru-disciple model. He shares insights from his discussions with spiritual leaders, including Ken Wilber, Diane Musho Hamilton Roshi, Doshin Roshi, Jeffrey Kripal, and Patricia Albere, revealing how the issues he faced are profoundly relevant to the spiritual community as a whole. He also shares how his teachings have evolved and sheds light on the art of communicating beyond ego and unleashing the co-creative power of our shared collective intelligence--the key to initiating enlightened change in a world in crisis.

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My Fall from Grace

A dark despair has enveloped my soul. I am in a state of shock. The grim forces of destruction have shattered my world. The devastation feels surreal. Everything is lost. The agony is unbearable . . .

For almost three decades I have been a teacher of enlightenment. I have taught thousands of people worldwide how to access their own true nature: the Buddha mind of pure silence, found in deep meditation. Now my own inner state has been reduced to turmoil. My gift was my ability to awaken others to the living, evolutionary current of creative unfolding that animates the kosmos* and drives it toward ever greater complexity. But all I see right now is a desolate universe, devoid of interiority, no longer lit up by the exhilarating spirit of creative emergence. I have inspired so many people to live a dedicated spiritual life, full of purpose, depth, and meaning. Yet now nothing makes sense any longer. I am staring straight into the gaping abyss of the darkest kind of nihilism ...

It is midsummer 2013. I am wandering through the deserted grounds of our community center, Foxhollow, in Lenox, Massachusetts, the headquarters of our worldwide organization EnlightenNext. What had been a thriving community of inspired spiritual practitioners not so long ago now looks like a ghost town. Everybody has left. As I am walking around here, alone and bewildered, reality hits me hard. I have lost my entire community! Our shared utopian experiment that took us all many years of unwavering commitment to build has violently collapsed in a mere few months. I was known for showing leadership and managing crises, but I have lost all my power to do so. However hard I've tried, I can no longer find my clarity or my strength. I am a mere shadow of my former self.

I have been a visionary for most of my life, always looking just over the horizon. I could constantly sense the imminence of exciting future potential right around the corner. My students were intelligent, sincere, well-educated people who had devoted their lives to the evolution of consciousness and culture. We were a close-knit group. We all cared

passionately about what appeared to be humanity's next step at the leading edge. Over the years, we made great sacrifices and took many risks so that we could break new ground. And we did.

We had been known and loved for the depth we brought to critical questions about the emergence of a new consciousness and culture in the twenty-first century. We had brought together leading-edge minds to grapple with the greatest challenges of our time, and published their often innovative dialogues in the pages of our award-winning quarterly magazine *What Is Enlightenment?*

From this sustained in-depth inquiry as well as our intense commitment to actually live by our discoveries, our groundbreaking teachings, which we called "Evolutionary Enlightenment," emerged. These teachings were our attempt to integrate the modern-day understanding of evolution with the classical notion of enlightenment, that state of being immersed in the eternal rest of timeless, formless consciousness. Contrary to this ancient understanding, *Evolutionary Enlightenment*

not only calls us to awaken to the bliss of the timeless Ground of Being, as it is called in Buddhism, but also to the ecstatic urgency of *Evolutionary Becoming*, where that which is permanent is Being and that which is changing is Becoming. As such, enlightenment is no longer merely the end of evolution, but rather it is itself evolving. And we had so up an actual culture of practice to live by this principle.

But perhaps our most valuable contribution was that we pioneered the phenomenon of collective enlightenment. We discovered that when committed people who have gone beyond ego come together, the enlightened mind emerges between them. Whenever this occurs, every one present enters a field in which the very ground of human relationship is prior unity. Whatever is being expressed and shared, then, no longer comes from accumulated knowledge; it bubbles up from that ever-fresh source. As such, new creative capacities are unleashed, allowing original insights to emerge and new connections to come alive. We called this innovative practice the art of enlightened communication, a still of great value in a complex, globalized world in

crisis. And I had always insisted that if enlightenment is to have any real impact on the evolution of culture, cultivating this ability is essential.

Because of all these contributions, our work had been an inspiration o the wider spiritual world. But now, everything we worked so hard fir has crashed and burned. I can't wrap my head around the enormity what has happened, and with feverish intensity I keep asking myself, Why did this terrible destruction have to happen? How could something so precious collapse so completely? But try as I might, right now it doesn't get any clearer . . .

I knew all along that our work together was risky—I was calling for a real spiritual revolution! We strived to move beyond the old ways to create new structures in consciousness and culture. I believed that such new structures could only emerge in a focused environment and as a result o' creative friction. So, I pushed everybody relentlessly, again and again, always building the tension between people's enlightened intentions to change and their egoic resistance to actually do so. I set up a hard school for radical transformation, a spiritually charged environment for those who were courageous enough to tread new pathways and were ready and willing to go all the way. Everybody who had committed themselves to our work knew they could expect nothing less than a fierce and demanding ego-transcending ordeal. We lived on the edge of the possible—and the stakes were high.

I was always aware of the demanding nature of our bold experiment. I also knew that in my relentless passion to force evolutionary breakthroughs, I had made some serious errors of judgment as a teacher. Yet I genuinely believed that regardless of my mistakes, it was all going to work out in the end because we loved one another and had made the lifetime commitment to go all the way. I was wrong. Now I have to own up to the unbearable truth that despite my good intentions, I actually caused this mayhem to happen.

Throughout my teaching years I was known for critiquing fallen gurus. I had looked at every new scandal emerging from the spiritual world with deepening concern. I was

keenly aware that with every new story, people's trust in the benefits of spiritual life eroded further, and I wanted to stay clear of it all. But now my worst nightmare has become a reality. I too have become another failed exemplar, adding to the trail of cynicism surrounding gurus. I had always prided myself that those things that so often caused scandals in other spiritual communities were entirely absent around me. There had never been any sexual transgressions with students and our community was clear of drugs and alcohol abuse. My mistakes were of a different nature, though, and they have caused a different kind of backlash, and to my lasting shame I didn't see it coming. So now the chickens have come home to roost. I once inspired so many people to live by higher principles, but now I myself have become a source of disillusionment in those very principles, and this has carved a bleeding wound deep within my soul.

As I wander through the deserted buildings at Foxhollow, my thoughts flash back to the blessed moment when it all began. When I was thirty years old, I was bestowed a rare, extraordinary grace. I had been given the precious jewel of enlightenment by my guru, H. W. L. Poonja. Ever since that moment, all my suffering had been erased, and my personality thereafter remained rooted in the empty ground of timeless, formless being. From that point forward I enjoyed an easy, natural state of boundless freedom, oneness, clarity, profound joy, and a sense of light heartedness, and I was blessed with the ability to directly transmit that state to others.

But everything is different now. The shockwaves of the painful collapse of my work and community have shaken me to my core, so much so that I don't even know who I am anymore. I have lost myself in the drama of the story. My suffering has returned, and this time it has come back with a vengeance. I am living in a state of raw survival. As I am trying to come to grips with the gravity of what has occurred, all sorts of hellish feelings keep flaring up in me. I move through prolonged states of bottomless grief, abject terror, and sheer agony, over and over again. The torment never seems to cease. This is the fiercest emotional ordeal of my life. I feel as though I am trapped in the seventh ring of hell.

To my shock and horror I realize that the inconceivable has happened: my connection to that which is infinite has been severed. I have lost access to enlightenment and have fallen back into my small self. The ecstasy and urgency of the evolutionary drive I was once so deeply awake to all the time has vanished. I am no longer in touch with the spirit of my own teachings. All of a sudden it gets through to me: I have dropped the jewel my guru gave me! I feel deeply mortified ... I have fallen from grace!

In my darkest hour now, I am consumed by a single, nagging concern: the need to atone for all the wrongs and make them right. I must find a way to honor all that was real and true at the heart of what we stood for. This is all I truly care about. There is nothing else for me to do in this world, and I am committing the rest of my life to it. <>

SHECHINAH, BRING ME HOME! KABBALAH AND THE OMER IN REAL LIFE by Laura Duhan-Kaplan [Cascade Books, ISBN: 9781666741872]

Join author Laura Duhan-Kaplan in the Kabbalah practice of Sefirat ha'Omer, a forty-nine-day program of spiritual reflection. Rabbi Laura weaves Kabbalah, philosophy, psychology, and her own experiences of love and loss into a series of daily reflections. She invites readers to explore the meaning of love, boundaries, beauty, endurance, gratitude, grounding, and presence. With a mix of stories and ideas, she helps readers find Shechinah, a divine archetypal mother, in the intimacy of ordinary life

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Kabbalah That Counts Sefirat Ha'Omer and the Journey of Shechinah
This is and is not a timeless book.

Sure, I talk about some timeless ideas, like “wisdom,” “beauty,” “eternity,” and “cosmic mother.” I explore them using the Kabbalistic version of an old Jewish spiritual practice called Sefirat ha’Omer. This forty-nine-day meditation program helps us see how spiritual qualities move inside our own thoughts and feelings. So, it turns us towards big ideas but also towards the details of our lives. And those specific details of time and place are important, too. This book, in fact, is full of them.

I live on Sophia Street, in a trendy urban neighborhood. Here, small one-family homes crowd close together, separated only by old trees and thick hedges. Crows, ravens, woodpeckers, and songbirds fill the landscape. So do raccoons, skunks, squirrels, rats, and the occasional coyote. Nearby, there’s a Main Street lined with late-night bars and eateries.

Early one morning, I heard a neighbor yell. “F***ing moron. You f***ing moron. You’re a f***ing moron.”

But there was no argument. No fighting back. No second voice at all.

Maybe he was yelling at a badly parked car. Or at whoever left a pile of garbage on his lawn. Maybe he was even yelling at himself.

Later that day, I heard a teenage neighbor wail. “No, mom!” she cried. “It’s an animal.”

“We have to kill it,” said the mom. She was loud and firm. Matter-of-fact.

“No, mom! It’s still an animal.”

I couldn’t see them and they couldn’t see me. Still, I walked towards the hedge that separates our homes. “Whatever it is, throw it in our yard.”

At least, that’s what I planned to say. But before I could speak, the daughter howled, “No no no no no no nooooo!” And I knew it was over.

I have no idea what they killed. Maybe it was a poisonous spider or a snake. Or a rat, already dazed by their dog. But whatever it was, I still can’t get their voices out of my head.

Later that same night, I heard a young man shout. “Get out of the road, a**hole! What’s wrong with you!”

I stuck my head out the window. I saw two burly men in a car and one slender man standing on the curb. He seemed a bit tipsy; clearly he had just staggered across the road. Now he was typing on his phone, probably texting a friend to pick him up.

But the driver was still upset that he had nearly hit a pedestrian. He may have been tipsy himself, heading home from a Main Street bar. So he continued to berate the man on the curb—the one he had almost killed.

Then the driver got an idea. “Come here,” he called. The more drunken man stepped off the curb and approached the car. “Show me your wallet,” the driver said. So the drunk put his hand in his pocket.

“Come on, guys!” I yelled in my I-am-a-grandma-so-WTF-is-this voice.

Caught and shamed, the driver started his car and left. I looked around for the drunk, but he had fled, too.

Let’s face it: screaming at yourself, killing a harmless animal, and stealing from a drunk are not good things. They are clues that people are unraveling and our social fabric is fraying. And that the world is in need of tikkun, repair, as we say in the jargon of Kabbalah.

You know, I’m not really a grandmother. But I’ve raised my children and buried my parents, so these guys in the street looked pretty young to me. And, believe me, they recognized “the voice” when they heard it. Not my voice, but their own mother’s voice, inside them. But why should I be surprised? Kabbalah teaches that tikkun rests on finding our inner mother, and healing our relationship with her. In fact, Kabbalah calls that mother Shechinah, the indwelling presence of God. And it designates a specific season for this healing, the season of Sefirat ha’Omer.

In this book, I invite you to join me on one of my annual journeys towards Shechinah. But first, I’d like to take you on a quick tour of the history of Kabbalah. It will help you

to understand more deeply the ideas behind this deeply personal book. I'll talk about Kabbalah's philosophical foundations, its allegorical way of reading Torah, and its approach to Sefirat ha'Omer. And then, I'll tell you how those ideas will thread through the main part of this book.

Kabbalah: Philosophical Foundations

The word Kabbalah literally means “tradition.” In contemporary English, we call it a mystical tradition. Sometimes, we call it a philosophy, and that's not wrong.³ Kabbalah does borrow from the ideas of the ancient Greek philosopher Plato. If you studied philosophy, you may remember Plato's famous “allegory of the cave.” An allegory is a kind of parable. It tells a story that is just a little bit odd, in a way that points you to a deeper hidden meaning. Imagine, Plato says, prisoners chained to a bench in a dimly lit cave. They can look in only one direction, where they see shadows of artistic representations of reality. Suppose one prisoner breaks free, and leaves the cave. The sudden rush of sunlight blinds them.

Gradually, their sight returns, but nothing looks familiar. They have to learn a new way of perceiving and interpreting.

Do these prisoners really exist? Yes, says Plato, they do— we are the prisoners. We are trapped in a misleading version of reality. Our senses bring us constantly shifting information. Popular culture adds innuendo and rumor. So, our knowledge is unstable. But we cling to it anyway, because we are materialists. We chase wealth and fame, believing and repeating whatever it takes to get them. But perhaps we occasionally hear echoes of a deeper reality of ideas and ideals: goodness, justice, equality, and beauty. And then, we expand our consciousness to grasp the true forms the Creator had in mind.

The first-century Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria loved the dialogues of Plato, and he also loved the Torah of Moses. As Philo saw it, Plato and Moses were teachers on a single spiritual path. Philo believed that Moses wrote the Torah as an extended allegory, encoding his philosophy in stories and laws. Sometimes, Philo says, Moses

writes in a deliberately puzzling way, to remind us to read allegorically. For example, Moses tells us that God creates the heavens and the earth. But the earth God creates isn't earth as we know it; instead, it is chaotic and empty. God creates light. But it's not light as we know it, since God has not yet created the sun. All our confusion disappears, Philo says, when we understand Moses' point. God first created a "heaven," a spiritual realm of ideas, and then used those ideas to structure a chaotic world of matter. As the Torah continues, stories of ancestral heroes teach us how to live well in this material world.

Abraham's war against the four kings, for example, teaches us to not let our senses rule us.

Philosophy of the Sefirot

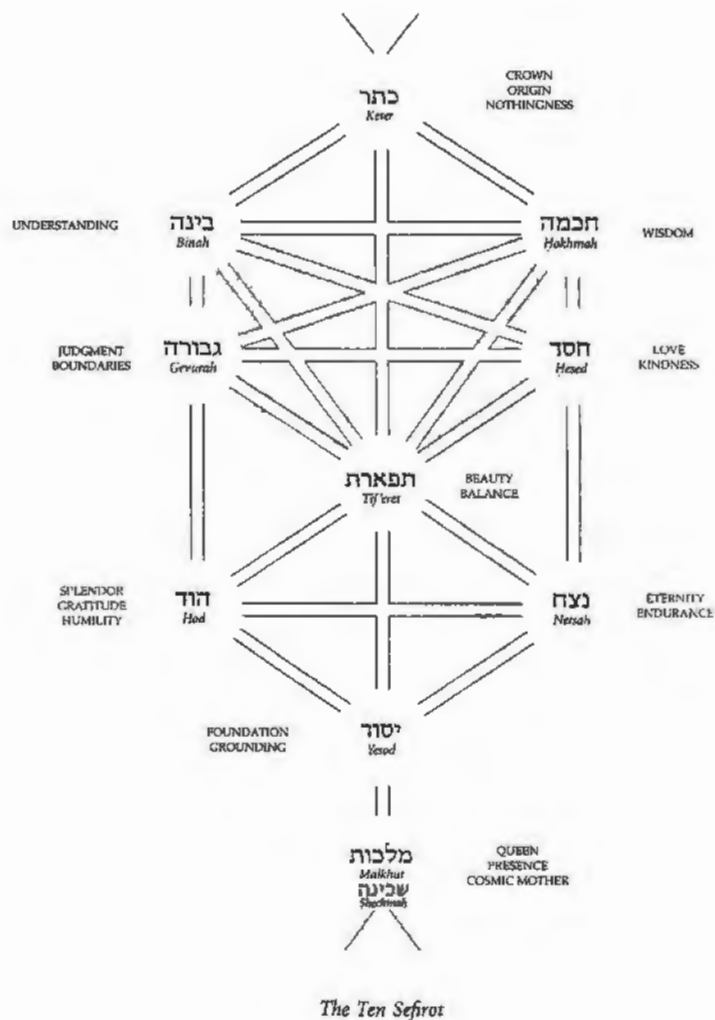
Philo's writing helps us understand the thirteenth-century Zohar, the classic anthology of Kabbalah. The Zohar is a kind of mystical novel about the adventures of second-century Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai and his students. They wander the countryside, teaching allegorical interpretations of the Torah. The stories and laws all point to a deep structure of ten metaphysical ideas. The life of these ideas begins within the Infinite God (Eyn Sof). Eyn Sof emanates energy, in the form of light. The energy shapes itself into a series—subtle, intellectual, emotional, dense/enduring—of forms that interact to weave a template for the world. The forms are called sefirot: sacred books, stories, and numbers rolled into one. The sefirot are more lively than Plato's or Philo's ideas; the sefirot sparkle with creative and procreative energy. Some, such as understanding (binah) and presence (Shechinah), are motherly; others, including wisdom (chochmah) and splendor (tiferet), are fatherly. They come together in the Great Parent of the universe: an infinite, dynamic integration of male and female qualities, that births and sustain everything.

Here is a traditional diagram of the sefirot. Look at it carefully. Take note of the names of the sefirot and their order. Notice, as well, the shape of the diagram. Some say it looks like a human body. And, in fact, the Zohar says that the spiritual body—soul, psyche, or mind—of the first human being is made of sefirot. Others say this image

looks like a tree, perhaps like the Tree of Life planted in Eden at the origin of the world. The fruit of the tree is the wisdom of Torah, correctly decoded with proper understanding of the sefirot.

Torah as Mystical Allegory

The Torah, says the Zohar, is full of information about the divine parent. But to find it, you have to read stories and laws allegorically. Let's start with the creation of humanity. God says, "Let us create a human in our image." But who is this "us"? Why, it is the ten sefirot, agreeing together to manifest in the human psyche. Let's continue with an ancestral story. When Jacob meets Rachel, he rolls a heavy stone off the village well. Thus, he opens a romantic relationship that births the Jewish people. But this is not just a human love story; it also tells us about the divine parent. When the masculine energy of tiferet allows the feminine energy of Shechinah to flow, the two together birth the world.



And let's look at a ritual practice, too. The Torah introduces a yearly calendar of festivals. The first holiday is Passover, a seven-day celebration of the exodus. There's also a special agricultural ritual for the second day of Passover. Every grain farmer brings a sheaf (omer) of new grain to a priest, who lifts it up "in the presence of God." The community then counts (sefar) seven weeks (shavuot). On the fiftieth day, farmers bring freshly baked breaks and celebrate the harvest. By the time the Zohar was written, the Shavuot festival was also a celebration of the revelation at Mt. Sinai—which, as Torah

says elsewhere, happened approximately seven weeks after the Red Sea crossing.

This seven-week ritual cycle, says the Zohar, tells a story about Shechinah. Even when the Israelites are enslaved, Shechinah is present with them as a kind of loving protector. When God liberates them, Shechinah, too, is liberated. And the Israelites, wowed by the miracle of the Red Sea parting, feel her close presence. But, during the first stressful weeks in the wilderness, the Israelites lose heart. Their spiritual level falls; they lose touch with Shechinah. Of course, she isn't far away; she is busy preparing to reconnect

with her partner tiferet. Seven weeks later, as the Israelites stand at Mt. Sinai, the two unite, overwhelming the people with their spiritual presence.

Sefirot in the Human Psyche

Kabbalists in the sixteenth century thought it important to stay in touch with the energy of the sefirot. They began to speak of their own spiritual potential in terms of the sefirot. A seeker might, for example, worry about their limited ability to love. But by drawing down the flow of divine chesed, they could correct their own weakness. And—because the sefirot in the human soul are part of the single infinite divine continuum—each seeker’s personal spiritual corrections (tikkun) could correct imbalances in divine energy itself. So, each year between Passover and Shavuot, they re-enacted the inner drama of reconnecting with the Shechinah. They continued to call it a season of Sefirat ha’Omer, counting the ripening grain. But instead of counting grain, they took account of the sefirot moving inside them. They prepared to relive the revelation, not only of the Torah, but also of the Shechinah.

Rabbi Isaac Luria, a sixteenth-century teacher of Kabbalah, designed a seven-week program for Sefirat ha’Omer. When we use his program—and it is popular right now—we focus on seven nuances within seven of the sefirot. We start with love and wind our way down to Shechinah. We take a week to observe each sefirah, noting each day how it interacts with one of the others. Luria taught his students to meditate on the sefirot as they mouthed familiar words of daily prayer. I prefer to borrow an approach from the eighteenth-century Hasidic teacher, the Baal Shem Tov, discerning the sefirot present in my everyday experiences. I also take inspiration from my fellow teachers of Jewish Renewal, a contemporary, socially progressive Kabbalistic movement. We seek to re-integrate Shechinah into the divine in our own way, learning from teachers of every gender, and amplifying positive feminine faces of God.

Feminine Faces of God

The Torah itself leaves room for diverse God-images. There’s a lot of story and very little doctrine. Readers see God through the eyes of multiple characters. For example, Pharaoh sees in God a powerful king; Moses sees the essence of love; Hannah sees a

compassionate manager of the world. So, it is really not surprising that Kabbalah explores multiple facets of divinity. In fact, the Zohar explicitly says that the divine appears to us differently in each generation. To some biblical generations, it seems, the divine appeared as a mother. Chochma, Wisdom (or Sophia, in Greek), star of a fourth-century section of the book of Proverbs, describes herself as God’s artisan. Ruach Elohim, the spirit of God, hovers over the waters of creation like a mother bird.

When an image keeps popping up in myths, images, and ideas, it is tempting to call it an “archetypal” image. Literally, “archetype” means “ancient symbol.” Depth psychologists have a theory about why these ancient symbols persist. Archetypes, they say, are part of the human psyche. Our species has a shared biological heritage, but we express it in culturally diverse ways. Birthing, for example, is a universal part of our species’ biology. But the social role of “mother” is culturally specific. Not that it’s easy to pin down a culture’s view of mothering—cultural traditions are complex and they are always in flux. North American culture, for example, constantly debates how much autonomy, economic support, and public voice mothers should have. And mothers themselves, particularly the most vulnerable among us, suffer. Practically speaking, our society needs to mend its relationship with mothers. Culturally speaking, it needs to heal its relationship with the archetypal mother, the Shechinah.

Sefirat Ha’Omer and Shechinah in This Book

Cultures change when many people learn together and act together. Spiritual self-reflection is only one small part of the work. It is, however, the focus of this book. Here, I explore my own relationship with Shechinah, the archetypal mother. I find that I have great expectations. Shechinah, I believe, loves unconditionally, and she loves forever. Time and space do not matter to her; she loves you in life and in death. I love her too; I place my life in her hands. But I also find that no real person meets those expectations. My own disappointment—in my mother, my Aunt Sylvia, and myself—is huge. And, if I’m not careful, the disappointment can easily turn into anger, directed at all three of us. So, as I explore the seven sefirot of the omer, I look to find helpful ways to draw strength from my ideals.

The book continues with fifty short sections. Forty-nine explore nuances of the sefirot. The fiftieth explores the revelation at Mt. Sinai, aka the Ten Commandments. Throughout, I explore the sefirot as I see them reflected in everyday events. Most of these events take place right in our Sophia Street neighborhood, because that is where I wrote this book in spring of 2021, under COVID pandemic restrictions. They're small events, but they evoke big emotions like love, grief, and yearning. Because they bring to life spiritual, philosophical, and ethical questions, I write explicitly about those big ideas, too.

Writing has been part of my spiritual practice for almost fifty years. But it became even more important under pandemic restrictions. Our local spiritual leaders—who reached out to communities with tangible support—also encouraged us to find opportunities in our isolation. “Use this time for reflection,” they said. “You have spiritual tools. Use them!” So, I did, and this book is one result.

Join me on this spiritual journey of Sefirat ha'Omer. Read slowly, using the sections as daily omer prompts. Or read them all at once, following the stories and ideas as they layer and link in deepening cycles. Both are good ways to read. And both are good ways to move towards a renewed relationship with the Shechinah. <>

JUS HUMANITATIS: THE RIGHT OF HUMANKIND AS FOUNDATION FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW by Valentin Tomberg Angelico Press, ISBN 9781621389323]

At the beginning of 1944, Valentin Tomberg (1900-1973), best-known at the time for his Christological works, moved to Cologne at the invitation of legal scholar Ernst von Hippel, and that same year was awarded the title of Doctor of Law for his dissertation, published by Angelico Press as *The Art of the Good: On the Regeneration of Fallen Justice*. Tomberg had come to regard the modern path away from a natural law founded upon religion and towards a legal positivism oriented towards power as a degeneration of the different levels of law, a "fall" he sought to reverse in the direction of regeneration. In his second jurisprudential work, here published as **JUS HUMANITATIS: THE RIGHT OF HUMANKIND AS FOUNDATION FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW**, Tomberg presents the history of international law more broadly in such a way that it can serve the peaceful coexistence of all nations on earth.

Invoking Thomistic terms, he presents the step-by-step dismantling of the edifice of law as the eclipse of the *lex divina* and *lex naturalis* in the so-called "law of nations" or international law-to the point that the higher vocation of international law came to be understood as nothing more than a legitimizing of absolute power, which then led to the modern totalitarian state. In this inspired text, Tomberg equips us to set about reversing this degradation and establishing the right or law of *humankind* as foundation for international law.

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Overview of Valentin Tomberg's Life

Valentin Tomberg was born in St. Petersburg on February 26, 1900. Baptized a Protestant, he entered the Orthodox church (which he never formally left) shortly before 1933, and, in 1945, became Roman Catholic. His father, Karl Arnold Tomberg, was the administrator of a high school in St. Petersburg, and worked from 1903 onwards as an official in the Russian Ministry of the Interior. After attending St. Peter's School, where he was given a classical education, with teaching conducted in both Russian and German, Valentin studied one semester at the Faculty of Law at the University of St. Petersburg; but the Russian Revolution of November 1917 prevented his further studies.

During his life, Tomberg learned to speak fluent Russian, German, French, English, Dutch, and Estonian, and had a good command of Spanish, Polish, Ukrainian, Latin, Greek, and Church Slavonic. In 1918 he fled with his family to Estonia. There his mother, Juliana Umbliia, was shot and killed, by the Bolsheviks, an event that left deep scars on Tomberg, and shaped his view of communist Russia for the rest of his life. In 1920 he moved to Tallinn, where, between 1928 and 1938, he worked as an interpreter in the postal service administration.

In 1925, Tomberg joined the Estonian Anthroposophical Society, becoming its vice-president in 1926 and its president in 1932. From the beginning of the 1930s he began to publish essays in anthroposophical journals. In 1933, he married Maria Belozvetova (1893-1973) in Tallinn, and in the same year his son Alexis (1933-1995) was born. Towards the end of that year there appeared the first of his twelve "Anthroposophical Meditations on the Old Testament"; twelve further such meditations on the New Testament followed between 1935 and 1937. Both sets of essays divided opinion in the Anthroposophical Society, since in them Tomberg developed his own spiritual inquiries, which in part went beyond Rudolf Steiner.

In 1938 Tomberg emigrated to the Netherlands and began actively to lecture on Christological topics.³ Until the Russian occupation of the Baltic states in 1940, he earned his living as a secretary in the Estonian Vice-Consulate in Amsterdam; thereafter, he was dependent on the support of friends. In the middle of July 1940, he began to teach a weekly course on the Lord's Prayer to this circle of friends. This course, which was organized as a series of meditative exercises affording deep insights into Christian esotericism, was broken off in 1943 because the threat posed by German occupying forces.

The longer the war went on, the more Tomberg sought to find an organization or community with a Christian basis that had not been corrupted or destroyed by National Socialism. He found it at last in the Catholic Church. Tomberg's trust in this institution rested, first, on its established hierarchy and its seven sacraments, and

second, on the fact that a series of Catholic men and women had offered resistance to the Nazis and paid the price by perishing in concentration camps.

At the beginning of 1944, Tomberg moved to Cologne at the invitation of the legal schola Ernst von Hippel (1895-1984), whose friend he had become. In the same year he was awarded the title of Doctor of Law for his dissertation on "The Degeneration and Regeneration of Jurisprudence." The second work on international law, here published in English for the first time in a readily accessible edition, followed at the beginning of 1945. Tomberg then worked on his Habilitationsschrift in the Faculty of Law of the University of Cologne, probably until 1948, which was intended as posed during and in the aftermath of the holocaust of the Second World War. At that time, in which all social and legal order was in a worsening state of collapse, Tomberg nonetheless single-mindedly pursued his legal studies at the University of Cologne, working with determination towards his doctorate. At first sight, it seems hardly credible that such a topic could be chosen and permitted at a university in a totalitarian state—in which, day in and day out, the greatest injustice was taking place, and in which Nazi control over the academy had long been a *fait accompli*. But the University of Cologne was an exception in this respect, and by July 1944, Tomberg was already being entrusted by the university's board of trustees with the tasks of an academic assistant in the Institute for International Law. Although work could not then take place at the university itself because of what was happening in the war, Tomberg continued to study at home in Bad Godesberg, close to Bonn.

It was during this time that Tomberg settled upon the theme of "The Degeneration and Regeneration of Jurisprudence" for his dissertation, which was written under unbelievably exacting circumstances. Although Bonn and Bad Godesberg had not previously figured as prime targets in the battle plans of the British and American air forces, all this changed in October, 1944. The Western allies wanted to test a more advanced version of their "radio bombing" system, for which three conditions were needed: a previously undamaged city center, a location on a river, and inclement weather at the time of the attack. The first and second conditions made Bonn an ideal

target. And when the third condition was met on October 18, 1944, the old town of Bonn was destroyed. Incredibly, it was immediately after this raid that Tomberg applied to take the oral examination for his doctorate before completing his dissertation. In addition to this, he had enlisted in the emergency services and been called into action on the Siegfried Line, where he contracted pyelitis and cholecystitis.

This dissertation—his first writing on jurisprudence—marks a major turning-point in Tomberg's life. Studies on spiritual-humanistic topics that he had presented during his thirties in anthroposophical terminology are here superseded by a strict orientation towards a Platonic model of knowledge and a medieval, so-called "realism of universals." With the assistance of Goethe's phenomenological method, and reference as well to Rudolf Steiner's approach to epistemology in the latter's seminal work, *Die Philosophie der Freiheit*, Tomberg aims to show that the spiritual or intellectual substance of law is a reality. He describes law as an organism consisting of several levels, each of which corresponds to a level of cognition: the ideal of law, the idea of law, and the concept of law (over which latter the two other levels preside). For Tomberg, a correct appreciation of the "positive law in force" (what is obligatory for the actual administration of justice) must rest on the concept of law (positive law, *lexpositiva*), itself derived from the idea of law (natural law, *lex naturalis*), which in turn originates in the ideal of law (divine law, *lex divina*).

Philosophical analyses and studies in the history of law convinced Tomberg that the modern path away from a natural law founded upon religion, and towards a legal "positivism" oriented towards power, had led to a dismantling of the different levels of law and the loss of both the idea and the ideal of law. This dismantling he describes as a process of degeneration. In Tomberg's dissertation, which reveals him as a Christian humanist thinker, he proposes reorganizing the academic study of law in such a way that access to the higher levels of law (the idea of law and the ideal of law) might be restored, that is, regenerated.

The subject of Tomberg's dissertation points as well to another turning-point in his life. Whereas he had mainly concentrated during his time in the Netherlands on

anthroposophical studies, his attention now turned to the situation of humankind as a whole. This extension of Tomberg's field of inquiry brought with it a shift in his orientation towards the "universal church," with its hundreds of millions of members—a church concerned likewise with the affairs of all humankind. Alongside the Orthodox church, Tomberg took the Roman Catholic church to be the most important representative of the "universal church." Indeed, in his dissertation he gave prominence to the Roman Catholic church (referencing its monarchical, aristocratic, and democratic elements) as an example of true community. It may even be argued that it was precisely this widening of Tomberg's field of inquiry that led him to questions of law in the first place, for in Tomberg's eyes the human catastrophe of the Second World War was a consequence of the overthrow of law by overbearing states intoxicated with their own power: above all, of course, by Bolshevist Russia and Nazi Germany.

This overthrow of law, so opportunistically tolerated by the mass of legal scholars and lawyers (if not actually justified by them!) was not, for Tomberg, something inexplicable appearing "out of the blue"; it was, rather, the inevitable consequence of the degeneration of jurisprudence and the "positive" law founded upon it—a degeneration that had begun in the Medieval controversy between Realism and Nominalism, had continued in the Renaissance and Early Modern period, had led to the European revolutions, and had now culminated in the modern totalitarian state. Moreover, as we have seen, Tomberg was at this stage himself operating in the maw of this degeneration day in and day out in a Cologne more and more devastated by each successive Allied fire-bombing attack. He wished to work against this onslaught in his jurisprudential studies as a means to contribute to a regeneration of jurisprudence, and thereby to restore and further the complete hierarchy of law.

In a central passage of his dissertation, Tomberg cited Leibniz's view regarding the connection between the several levels of law and the levels of human relationship. At the first level, men live and strive for the realization of true happiness through individual perfection; at the second level, they strive for shared perfection as a folk, nation, or state; at the third level, they live as the community of all humankind in

communion with God, that is, as a "universal church." What should be carefully noted is that Leibniz's fourth and final goal is not that the church (in this "universal" sense) should be absorbed into the state, but that the state should become a church. A "state church" would be the complete opposite of Leibniz's conception. While writing his dissertation, then, what hovered before Tomberg as the goal to be striven for was not the gradual absorption of the church into the state, but the absorption of the state (along with its economic and political special interests) into the church—which would be no other than the realization of St. Augustine's City of God.

This unification of different levels, which Tomberg vigorously presented in his dissertation as a feature lying at the core both of being and of knowledge, together with an analogical model of being and of knowledge laid out according to hierarchical levels, was soon to appear as the guiding theme in Tomberg's late work and magnum opus **MEDITATIONS ON THE TAROT: A JOURNEY INTO CHRISTIAN HERMETICISM**. Leibniz is referred to in that text also, supplemented by an Hermetic exposition of the divine name Yod-He-Vav-He, in which each of the four divine letters is assigned its own level of knowledge and particular sense-organ. The "jurisprudential phase" of Tomberg's life can therefore be seen as carrying the seeds of this latter work.

We turn now in more detail to Tomberg's second jurisprudential work (conceived and in part written at the turn of the year 1944-1945), here published as *Jus Humanitatis: The Right of Humankind as Foundation for International Law*. As in his dissertation, here again Tomberg develops his topic from a spiritually comprehensive worldview. In his dissertation, Tomberg had portrayed the gradual degeneration of jurisprudence against the background of what St. Thomas Aquinas described as the several essential levels of law. And here Tomberg again starts out from the idea of jurisprudence divided into levels--arguing in detail that, in consequence of a protracted process of degeneration (exacerbated by the course of modernity), the higher levels of law are no longer to be found in contemporary legal codes. He shows how the earlier, comprehensive conception of law as developed by Aquinas was gradually collapsed. For Aquinas, the summit of the edifice of law, and also its foundation, is the *lex aeterna*

or eternal law (law in union with God) that invisibly and irremovably underpins all law, thereby conferring actual legality upon every individual statute. This transcendent, eternal law is mirrored in the world as the *lex divina* or divine law. The divine law is mirrored in turn in the world as the *lex naturalis* or natural law (the feeling for law as native to human beings), which in turn establishes in them an orientation that carries through (or that ought to carry through) into a law generated by free human beings amid the actuality of life on earth as the *lex positiva* or "positive law in force."

According to Tomberg, however, this latter level in the hierarchy of law runs the risk of degenerating into an anti-legal "power principle," as manifested in totalitarian states.

It is in the context of this lowest level of law in the overall scheme of the hierarchy of law that Tomberg situates his views on the right of humankind as a whole. In Tomberg's religious-spiritual writings, this nadir in the "fall of law" may be seen as analogous to the nadir in the "fall of man" represented by the turning-point of the Passion of Jesus Christ. And it seems likely that just such a correspondence between a turn toward the raising or regeneration of law to the level of humankind, and the greater turn—through the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ—toward the regeneration or raising of humankind, is what Tomberg had in mind when he chose for the book's title the little-used German word *Menscheitsrecht*: "right of humankind" (or "law of humankind"). Although Tomberg did not specifically offer a Latin equivalent for this level of law, we have added to the book's title the Latin expression *jus humanitatis* as a way of situating this further step in the hierarchy of law within the traditional Latin framework of Aquinas, which in fact is still fundamental in jurisprudential teaching today.

In his fourth book on law, *Die Problemgeschichte der Völkerrechtswissenschaft*, Tomberg presents the history of international law in a broader overview, formulating his results in such a way that they are fruitful not only for the special case of the existing constitutional arrangements of a particular nation, but can in principle serve the peaceful coexistence of all nations on earth when governed by true reason, actual

justice, and lived humanity. Whereas in his earlier texts on jurisprudence Tomberg had demonstrated the collapse of the ideal of law and of the idea of law (the *lex divina* and the *lex naturalis*) into the positivism of the enforced law (the *lex positiva*) of the modern age, in this, final, jurisprudential work, he returns to subject of the step-by-step dismantling of the edifice of law. But he presents this now more particularly as the eclipse of the *lex divina* and of the *lex naturalis* in the so-called "law of nations" or international law—a process that, according to his analysis, began as a purely methodological exercise but in the end led to the *de facto* eclipse of the higher vocation of international law; indeed, so much so that this vocation came to be understood for all practical purposes (that is, positivistically) as nothing more than a legitimizing of absolute power, which then led further (as Tomberg was all too painfully aware) to the final degradation of international law from its true foundation in the right or law of humankind to the absolutely sovereign (i.e., totalitarian) modern state.

Going a step further, we may say that, with his four studies on jurisprudence (or, perhaps better said, on true justice) and international law, Tomberg built a sort of edifice laid out in a very particular order. Looked at in this way, his first book (his dissertation, *The Art of the Good: On the Regeneration of Fallen Justice*) served as a concise sketch of the path towards making contact with the integral essence of law as an ideal or archetype. It depicts the stages by which the edifice of the ideal essence of jurisprudence came to be demolished and forgotten during the course of the history of the West, while also highlighting the need for a turn toward a higher, humanly regenerated foundation of law. His second book (*Jus Humanitatis: The Right of Humankind as Foundation for International Law*) served as a guide to the realization of this higher, regenerated right or law of humankind that supersedes that of nations or states. It seems that his third book (the so-called *International Law II*, which is lost to us) was intended to have an actual effect in a particular historical situation, that of regenerating the substance of a German law that had degenerated and in the end been annihilated in the Nazi period. And finally, his fourth book in the series (*From*

International Law to World Peace) may be thought of as a philosophical summa of his jurisprudential research and insights.

What emerges for the first time from this arrangement is the fourfold structure (contact, realization, effect, philosophical summa) that Tomberg would later expound, in the first four "Letters" of his great work, *Meditations on the Tarot: A Journey into Christian Hermeticism*, as the themes of mysticism (contact), gnosis (realization), sacred magic (effect), and Hermetic philosophy (philosophical summa)—themes whose significance for "total" human knowing and being it was his mission to bring with regenerative clarity to a new generation, itself standing at a critical turning. <>

VALENTIN TOMBERG AND THE ECCLESIA UNIVERSALIS: A BIOGRAPHY: THE UNITY OF EXOTERIC & ESOTERIC CHRISTIANITY by Harrie Salman [Angelico Press, ISBN 9781621388722]

In his teens and twenties, Russian-born Valentin Tomberg (1900-1973) was already exploring not only the Orthodox influences in his home city of St. Petersburg, but also such currents as those of Theosophy, Anthroposophy, Kabbalism, and Hermeticism. In his thirties, he emerged as a leading anthroposophical researcher. As an emigré from revolutionary Russia, he went first to Estonia, then to Holland, where his work bore increasingly the imprint of the stream of Platonism. During the years 1940-1943, Tomberg worked with a small group unveiling ever deeper layers of the Our Father prayer. When the Nazi occupation brought this work to an end, he turned increasingly to the subjects of jurisprudence and the Hermetic tradition. During this period, he joined the Catholic Church. There followed his intense work on "Christian Hermeticism," displayed in his masterwork, **MEDITATIONS ON THE TAROT: A JOURNEY INTO CHRISTIAN HERMETICISM**. Tomberg's works raised controversies: in particular, fundamental questions regarding the relationship between Anthroposophy and the Catholic Church. This long overdue biography finally illuminates thematically and historically Tomberg's pivotal significance in a developing Christian culture—an *Ecclesia universalis*—in which he discerned the guiding impulses of the Archangel Michael and the Divine Sophia.

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The Writings of Valentin Tomberg

Russian-Born Valentin Tomberg (1900-1973) was first published in the 1930s as an outstanding anthroposophical researcher. After his life took an unexpected turn in 1943, his subsequent Hermetic studies on the symbolism of the Major Arcana of the Tarot led to his recognition as the most significant Christian Hermetic philosopher of the twentieth century. More generally, Tomberg's work can be seen as part of a spiritual movement that began at the outset of the twentieth century and was aimed at developing a new spiritual culture in which human thought might regain access to the world of spirit. According to Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), the founder of the Anthroposophical Movement, this was part of a long-prepared plan: for this purpose, individualities from the great currents that arose from the work of the Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle were to join, forces and collaborate. Steiner referred to these individuals, in a particular sense unique to his perspective, as "Platonists" and "Aristotelians."

According to Steiner, the intention of the plan within the cultural impulse of Anthroposophy was to reach a culmination at the end of the twentieth century—and we can say that, during the first period of his life, Tomberg participated in this task. More particularly, he can be counted among the "Platonists." Unfortunately, however, conflicts arose in the Anthroposophical Society after Steiner's death in 1925 which impeded the intended cooperation between the "Platonists" and "Aristotelians?" Compounding this was the chaos that lay so heavy over Europe after the First World War, for it delayed the anticipated advance in spiritual consciousness, which could only then resume making its way more deeply into the unfolding cultural context toward the end of the 1960s. Despite the conflicts that weakened its original thrust, however, Anthroposophy does still have its own role to play in this arena, alongside other spiritual currents.

In part for the reasons just given, Tomberg's work in the Anthroposophical Society did not lead to fruitful cooperation with other anthroposophists. From 1931 onwards he came under criticism by Marie Steiner, Rudolf Steiner's widow. Nonetheless, thanks especially to Elisabeth Vreede, a member of the Board of the Society until 1935, Tomberg was able to develop significant international activities from 1936 onwards, with the result that he moved from Estonia to the Netherlands. At the outbreak of the Second World War in May 1940, however (owing to issues with Willem Zeylmans, the leader of the Dutch Anthroposophical Society), he withdrew from official Anthroposophy. From 1944, Tomberg committed himself as a legal scholar to the regeneration of law in Germany. Then, from 1958 to 1967, he devoted himself to the renewal and Christianizing of the Hermetic tradition. In this way he made his own unique contribution to joining intellectuality with spirituality. To his mind, oriented as it was toward a more religious view, this connection was also a matter of meditation and prayer.

Seen from a larger perspective, Tomberg's life was dedicated to the unity of exoteric and esoteric Christianity within the spiritual space of the *Ecclesia universalis*, the universal Church that is the mystical body of Christ. It unites the Christian Churches,

which belong to the Church of the apostle Peter, and the esoteric forms of Christianity, constituting the Church of the apostle John, within which Tomberg worked as an anthroposophist and an Hermeticist. In his exoteric life, Tomberg was baptized in the Lutheran Church. Around 1930 he became a member of the Greek Orthodox Church, and in 1945 he joined the Catholic Church—without leaving the Orthodox Church, in which he was still allowed to receive communion. In this way he became an ecumenical, supra-confessional Christian, as he said, connected with the spirit of the early Church, which was both exoteric and esoteric. For Tomberg, the esoteric aspect of the Church represents the "dimension of depth" that ecclesial Christianity periodically needs for its regeneration.

Through Tomberg's writings we are able to experience how very differently Eastern Europeans view spiritual life than do Western Europeans (or, more generally, than do those from the Anglo-Saxon world). In 1935, Tomberg wrote about this, saying that, because of their inner constitution, Westerners focus primarily on sense perception and conceptual thinking, which, according to Steiner usage, characterizes the attitude of the "Aristotelian" type, who feels connected to the Archangel Michael (as understood in Anthroposophy). By contrast, before the rise of communism, Eastern Europeans had lived primarily in a world of revelations from the spiritual world in the form of imaginations, inspirations, and intuitions, which is precisely how Steiner characterized the "Platonic" type, whom we may further describe as tending to feel a connection with the being called Sophia (or Divine Wisdom). The "Aristotelian" schooling path of the Archangel Michael and the "Platonic" schooling path of Sophia are therefore quite different. Ideally, these two aspects of Anthroposophy would have been brought together in Central Europe, but unfortunately matters did not turn out this way.

By the time the Second World War had ended, Tomberg's anthroposophical work was no longer much read. But then, in the 1930s, a Tomberg renaissance began. In the United States, between 1982 and 1985, Candeur Manuscripts published his anthroposophical writings. In 1983, Achamoth Press in Germany began publishing them as well, as did the major Catholic publisher Herder. Anthroposophic Press published

one of his books in 1992 and SteinerBooks two more in 2006. Three other books appeared in 2009 and 2010 under the LogoSophia imprint, and in 2019 and 2021 two more with Angelico Press (with several more in press).

The first descriptions of Tomberg's life were very incomplete and often incorrect in their details. In 1995, however, the Ramseiner Kreis in Trier (Germany) commenced a research project on his life, work, and influence. This led to the publication of four books between 2000 and 2016. The two-volume biography number over 1200 pages. For this project I researched the periods of Tomberg's life in Estonia and the Netherlands, as well as the Russian Hermetic tradition and Tomberg's related work in the Netherlands. On the basis of this and subsequent research it is now possible to more accurately present Tomberg's relationship to the Christian churches and to the Hermetic tradition in general, as well as to that tradition's reappearance in a variously Christianized form especially in late nineteenth-century France.

An excellent, short English-language introduction to the life and work of Valentin Tomberg was written in 2006 by Christopher Bamford, then editor-in-chief of SteinerBooks. In German, the philosopher Michael Frensch published an important biographical article in 2019, illuminating Tomberg's life from the perspective of his spiritual activity. In an epilogue, he raised the question of whether Tomberg's name should be associated with the "hidden wound of the Anthroposophical Society," namely the failure of that Society to fulfill its karmic task before the spiritual world. Three years earlier, the English researcher Robert Powell had argued that Tomberg became the scapegoat of the Anthroposophical Society because he had provoked the Society's "group double" when he began speaking about the return of Christ in the etheric world. "Group doubles" (which Tomberg refers to as egregores) are beings or entities that attach themselves to the negative habits, emotions, and thoughts of people, groups, and nations. On a psychological level, they are most often called "shadows."

In a very real and, in principle, constructive sense, Tomberg held up a mirror to the Anthroposophical Movement. In our time, a century after the renewal of the Anthroposophical Society that took place at the Christmas Conference of 1923, this

Movement faces the task of giving a new impulse to the culture of initiation that Steiner had hoped to establish from within the Anthroposophical Society. Such a renewal requires of us a forthright and open weighing up of the past, undertaken with an especially keen awareness of the tasks that have yet to be fulfilled. In this, Tomberg is well qualified to offer guidance, for he was the first (now over eighty years ago) to ask fundamental questions about problems in the Society, the path of schooling, and the place of the religious life and of Sophia in Anthroposophy. In truth, this biography has been undertaken with a special hope that it may contribute to such a new beginning.

To this end, this book first offers a concise description of Tomberg's life before examining the background to the controversies that arose around him. It then elaborates important themes from his work, as well as the more general significance of the "Platonic" and "Aristotelian" currents for the spiritualization of thought. The story of Tomberg's life is a dramatic one, and so it is to be hoped that, by gaining new insight into its unfolding, readers may come to a new and independent valuation and appreciation of it.

My acquaintance with Valentin Tomberg goes back to 1986, when I asked in the library of the Finnish Anthroposophical Society for a book on the spiritual history of Finland. In response, I was handed a 1931 article by Tomberg concerning the significance of the Finns for Russian culture, which led me on to his other writings. For me as a researcher of the spiritual history of Europe, this was the beginning of a rich and fruitful decades-long encounter with the anthroposophist and Christian Hermetic philosopher Tomberg. In the years that followed, I devoted several small publications to him.

After the death in 1996 of Eva Cliteur, who had been a friend of the Tomberg family, Robert Powell (a leading exponent and translator of Tomberg's work in the Anglophone world) invited me to sort out her papers, stored in some fifty bags in her home. Upon transporting them to my flat and emptying them out, I found, among other things, correspondence about Tomberg, texts by him, and notes from his courses in Amsterdam (which in due course would be published by Achamoth Press). During this time I also met seven people who had known Tomberg fifty-five to sixty years

earlier, two of whom had participated in his Our Father Course (which will be discussed later). The image I took away from these reminiscences was of a highly gifted, kind, and modest man who, as an inspired speaker, made a deep impression on those who heard his lectures.

In my research I received help from several others who had already studied Tomberg's life and work for some time. I can mention here the names of Jan Evert de Groot, Michael Frensch, Robert Powell, and Willi Seiss. Mario Betti shared with me his thoughts on the "new Platonism." With Wolfgang Gädeke I had an extensive exchange of views on Bernhard Martin's conversations with Tomberg. Markku Maula and Uberta Sebregondi gave comments on the English manuscript. In Tomberg expert and editor Michael Frensch, this book, written originally in German, has found its best commentator. My sincere thanks go to them all.

Lastly, I am very grateful to James Wetmore, the editor of this English edition, who made a substantial enrichment of the content of the book, and thereby became a dedicated collaborator of this biography.

HARRIE SALMAN September 2022

From Pilgrim to Hermit

Valentin Tomberg's life inscribed a wide arc across Europe. He was born in 1900 into an Estonian family in St. Petersburg, Russia. In 1918, during the Russian Revolution, he fled with his parents to Estonia. Two decades later (a few years before the Soviet Union, and later, Nazi Germany, occupied Estonia) he came to the Netherlands with his family at the invitation of a circle of Dutch anthroposophists. He lived in the Netherlands from 1938 to 1944, in which year, shortly before the end of the war, his friend Ernst von Hippel invited him and his family to come to Germany, where he lived for four years (1944-1948). In the unstable post-war period, when it still seemed Western Europe might be occupied by the Soviet army, Tomberg decided to emigrate to England, where he was to live for twenty-five years. He died during a holiday on the Spanish island of Majorca in 1973.

Tomberg's city of birth, St. Petersburg, is situated in the area where, according to both Rudolf Steiner and the Bulgarian spiritual teacher Peter Deunov, the coming "sixth cultural epoch" will spread from Northern Russia over the world. Thus, we may take Tomberg's appearance on the Eastern horizon of Europe and subsequent residence in five countries as an image of his journey through Europe "from the future," bearing impulses from the Slavic culture of the epoch to come. He was the first representative of the Russian tradition of Divine Wisdom, or Sophiology, within the Anthroposophical Movement. But from there he "descended" further into the past. From 1959 onwards he immersed himself in the Hermetic tradition of Egyptian antiquity, with which he had already become acquainted forty-two years earlier, in 1917, in St. Petersburg. His purpose in this immersion was, however, to transform it into a Christian tradition. Behind this tradition stands the initiate Hermes Trismegistus ("Thrice-Great"), who is associated with the Greek god Hermes and the Egyptian god Thoth.

Although of Estonian descent, through his upbringing and schooling Tomberg was deeply grounded in the Christian culture of Russia. This culture was his soul's home. As regards his own spiritual development, it was on this Slavic foundation that he first associated himself with Anthroposophy, and later with the Hermetic tradition.

Outwardly, Tomberg lived the life of a refugee traveling through Europe. Spiritually, however, he was a pilgrim from the Russian tradition preparing the way to the next cultural epoch. He was a member, we could say, of "Eternal Israel," as he called the community of those intimately connected with Christ who, in the present, must "wander through the desert" of materialism. During his Dutch period, Tomberg made the drawing entitled *De Eeuwige Pelgrim* (The Eternal Pilgrim), reproduced on page Bio, which we may surely interpret as a self-portrait.



While working on his magisterial *Meditations on the Tarot: A Journey into Christian Hermeticism* in the 1960s, Tomberg was living in seclusion near London: truly, by the end of his life, the pilgrim had become a wise hermit. Following the example of the Egyptian Desert Fathers of early Christianity, he described himself as a hermit in the "modern metropolis." For this phase of his life, then, we might equally well take as his self-portrait the image of the Hermit of the Ninth Arcanum of the

Tarot.

In the first part of this book, we will follow Tomberg's journey, in five chapters, through its "stations." In the second part we will discuss his significance both for Anthroposophy and for the Hermetic tradition. Here we will look at the controversies that arose around his person in the Anthroposophical Society, and at his path as an anthroposophist and Hermetic philosopher within the great project of collaboration between the "Aristotelians" and "Platonists." <>

The Evil Creator: Origins of an Early Christian Idea by M. David Litwa, [Oxford University Press, ISBN 9780197566428]

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Why the Evil Creator?

Free will was the excuse for everything. It was God's alibi. They had never read Freud. Evil was made by man or Satan. It was simple that way. But I could never believe in Satan. It was much easier to believe that God was evil. —Graham Greene

Of the many beliefs held by early Christians, the notion of an evil creator is perhaps the most scandalous. It was fundamental to Platonism— the ascendant philosophy during Christianity's infancy— that the creator, though distinct from the high god, was good. Of all possible worlds, the creator made this world following the finest of all possible models. The creator's unstinting care for the universe— called providence— was widely accepted in antiquity as the only pious option available. The bright sun, clear air, and fresh water were silent but eloquent witnesses of divine goodness, not to mention the very gift that made gratitude possible: human intelligence. Far from shutting out people from the richest of benefits, the creator equipped them, according to Plato, to become as much like the divine as possible.

By contrast, some early Christian groups thought that the creator of this world (known in Hebrew as "Yahweh," or "the lord") was an evil or hostile being opposed to the true and transcendent deity. To quote just a sample of some early Christian texts:

The chief creator was a fool. He despised condemnation and acted with audacity.

The ruler was a joke, for he said, “I am god and no one is greater than I . . . I am a jealous god . . .” He is conceited and does not agree with our Father.

What kind of god is this? First, he begrudged Adam’s eating from the tree of knowledge. Second, he said, “Adam, where are you?” [This] god does not have foreknowledge. He has certainly shown himself to be a malicious envier.

The concept of a wicked creator was the hallmark of Christians who today are still grouped under the global category of “gnostic.” We shall shortly take the opportunity to improve on this fuzzy and contested term. For now, it is sufficient to note that these early Christians were spread out in major urban centers across the Mediterranean world (Antioch, Alexandria, Rome, Carthage). Their founders and theologians were educated and gifted writers. They knew how shocking it was to proclaim an evil creator in their time, but they composed lengthy origin stories to depict him in living and lurid images— such as a lion- headed serpent. The question is why— why did they affirm a malevolent creator, and how did they know that he was malign?

Scholars have searched for broader philosophical motives to explain the origin of the evil creator idea. Some Platonists of the second century CE were prepared to contemplate evil emerging from nature, matter, or the erring fluctuations of a World Soul. A distinctly evil creator, however, was generally not even considered as a philosophical option among the major schools, since it would conflict with divine providence. Now educated early Christians often wished to appear philosophical. Yet philosophy was little help for those Christians who imagined an evil creator. There must therefore have been other motives for some Christians to envision such a being.

The apostle Paul, following a trend in ancient Jewish theology, demonized the pantheons of all other peoples (1 Cor 10:20, following Ps 96:5). Paul lived in a world teeming with demons whom he called “rulers”— provincial potentates reigning from the lower heavens (Rom 8:38– 39; 1 Cor 2:6– 8).¹³ Paul also believed in their chief ruler: a quasi- divine figure of evil who had various aliases: the devil, Beliar, Satan, and so on.

Here was a “homemade” antidivine agent in Jewish lore whose oppositional role could readily be transferred to the creator.

Yet it is difficult to see why or how such a transfer would take place, since the creator in Jewish tradition was overwhelmingly conceived of as blessed and worthy of devotion. Jewish scriptures regularly called the creator compassionate, caring, and just. The Psalms sung at length of the abundance of divine mercy, forgiveness, and lovingkindness. Thus to imagine the creator as a malicious being arrayed against a higher, benevolent deity required another, much bolder step.

Yet what was it? Could it have been the experience of horrible social and political turmoil suffered by the Jews between 66 and 135 CE? During this period, Jewish groups drew up their battle lines against the Romans and thrice raised the ululations of war. In 66 CE, they proclaimed freedom in Jerusalem, slaughtered the Roman garrison, and defended their besieged city until mothers reportedly ate their own children.¹⁷ A party of radicals held out three additional years in the fortress of Masada, committing mass suicide the night before an enraged Roman army rammed through their charred gates. From 115 to 117 CE, Jewish militia in Libya, Egypt, and Cyprus took over entire cities, slaughtering at will and desecrating temples. Finally, in 132 CE, Jews in Palestine carved out a rebel kingdom in the Judean foothills, using the tactics of guerilla warfare until they were hunted, starved, or flushed out from every underground hideout and rocky fort.

Ancient Romans and Greeks could not understand why this tiny nation continually rebelled while larger and more powerful kingdoms lowed quietly under the Roman yoke. There were a bevy of socioeconomic and political reasons, but from the perspective of these Jews themselves, theological considerations played the most prominent role. These Jews acted as they thought their god had commanded— to rid the Holy Land of “heathen,” to set up a kingdom governed by divine law, and to await the Messiah’s iron rod reign.

But none of this ever happened. The Jewish deity did not intervene, and whole Jewish communities were drowned in their own blood. In Alexandria of 117 CE there was a virtual genocide, with Jews of all ranks murdered in the streets. Further down the Nile, festivals were arranged celebrating the defeat and slaughter of the Jews for over a century. Throughout the Mediterranean world, Jews were forced to pay a burdensome tax (the *fiscus Iudaicus*) simply because they were Jews or converts to Judaism. By 135 CE, they were banned from living in Jerusalem—renamed Aelia Capitolina—then the location of a gleaming new temple to Zeus. Jews were prevented even from setting foot on the island of Cyprus. According to one report, Jews that were shipwrecked there could be hacked to pieces on the shores with impunity.

Thus in the first forty years of the second century, political events turned sour, to say the least, for many Jews in Palestine, Syria, and Egypt. Yet despite apocalyptic prophecies new and old, the world never ground to a halt, and the thick veil of heaven remained unorned. Targeted by the tax system, and stigmatized by failed rebellions, Jews, according to one theory, looked around and began to see themselves “as strangers and afraid in a world their God had never made.”

Despite the enticements of this lachrymose tale, however, it does not actually explain how the notion of an evil creator arose. After all, Jews with apocalyptic and Messianic hopes— as is typical in Abrahamic religions— overwhelmingly blamed their sins for disasters, not the creator. If Jews became alienated from the world, this hardly meant alienation from god or the belief that their deity did not create the world. Failure on earth might, indeed, have tied their hearts more tightly to heaven. Even if it did not, why would Jews— whose sole hope and commitment was to exalt their putatively unique lord— rewrite scripture to portray Yahweh as foolish and evil? It would have been simpler for them to renounce the faith, assimilate to the larger society, and move on. (And indeed, some did.)

Perhaps, however, we have been looking for an answer in the wrong place. Perhaps it was not the Jews at all who turned in desperation against their deity. Christians, after all, had just entered history in significant numbers. Newly converted Gentile Christians

had no original love or loyalty for the Jewish god, and they already had a vested interest in criticizing the rules and regulations of Yahweh's Law, the so-called yoke of compulsion. Early Christians also paraded their Messiah as the true object of worship, declaring the Jews to be blind for misinterpreting their own prophecies. If any group could suddenly turn on the Jewish god, it was the Christians, who had already turned against Yahweh's people to carve out a space for their own identity as priests and kings in a new "kingdom of god."

Who were, we might ask, the Christians most hostile to the Jews? It was, we were once told, those Christians who were expelled from the synagogues. They were expelled because the Jews pointed out that they worshiped one god, not a divine Messiah and his reputed Father. One could not confess "the Lord is one" if one worshiped two distinct beings— or so the earliest rabbis thought. Against such reasoning, a group of Christians supposedly identified the Jews with "the world" and concluded that the world itself was evil because it had rejected and isolated early Christians.

Yet here again we run into the same problem we did before: the conception of a bad world does not necessarily or immediately lead to a bad god-who-made-the-world. Besides, a large contingent of Christians simply claimed the Jewish god for themselves, identifying him with their all-good and merciful father. They even appropriated Jewish scriptures, claiming that the Messianic prophecies were about Jesus and that the lord had in fact chosen them— not unbelieving Jews— before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4).

To be sure, the Jewish scriptures themselves could sometimes speak of other divine beings in the heavens. The book of Exodus speaks of an "Angel of Yahweh" who bears Yahweh's name and— according to later tradition— participates in the work of creation. This angel sometimes punishes sin, but he is never described as evil, nor is it clear why or how such an angel would ever become evil and be equated with the Jewish deity. This logic, though argued vigorously, is missing several steps and is often based on late evidence.

Nevertheless, paying close attention to scriptural interpretation does, I believe, set us on the right track. There were, after all, numerous “hard sayings” and stories in scripture— texts that seemed like thorns in the eyes of educated and philosophically informed readers. Typical examples come from the first six chapters of Genesis. Why, for instance, did the Jewish god prohibit the first humans from eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge (Gen 2)? Why did he not seem to know Adam’s location in the garden of Eden? Why did he eventually cast Adam and Eve out of Eden (Gen 3)? Why did he later send a flood to wipe out most of humanity (Gen 6- 8)? And— beyond the book of Genesis— why did Yahweh repeatedly say that he was jealous? Assuming he was the most powerful being in the universe, whom could he possibly envy?

These were questions that early Jews and Christians were asking already in the late first and early second centuries CE. Most Jews and Christians, it seems, found a way to answer them while preserving the glory and goodness of the Jewish lord. For other Christians, however, these problematic sayings and stories produced a cumulative case against the benevolent character of the creator. As more and more negative stories were told about the creator based on his own scriptures, the reading of these scriptures helped to cultivate a deep- rooted suspicion that the creator was not benign after all.

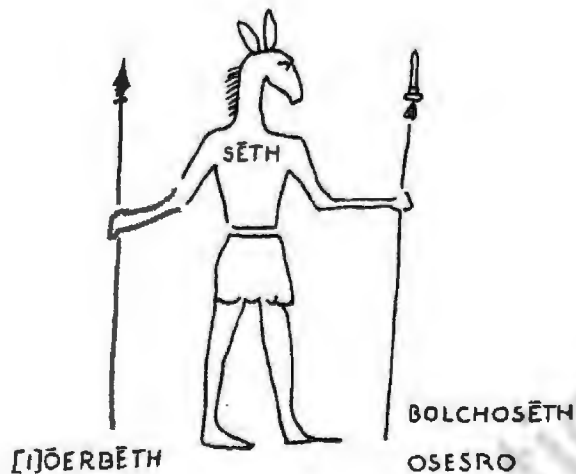
Although this hypothesis is hardly new, it has not, to my knowledge, been the subject of a book length investigation. Naturally, able scholars have written dozens of essays on individual scriptures that could be taken to support an evil creator, but these have mostly focused on passages from Jewish texts. In this book, I ultimately grant more weight to distinctly Christian scriptures (the “New Testament”), in part because the Christian interpretation of these texts gives a sense for the hermeneutical frameworks that were then applied to Jewish scriptures.

Figures and Sources

Before we dive into the maelstrom of early biblical interpretation, however, we must inquire about the Christians who used scripture to derive the evil creator. In many cases, their names have been utterly forgotten. We can reasonably refer to certain Christian conventicles as “Sethians” (aka the Seed of Seth, the Immovable Generation,

the Generation Without a King) in the sense of a distinct sociological group. It is inaccurate, however, to speak globally of “G/ gnostics” as if this label included every supporter of the evil creator idea. It did not, for instance, typically include Marcion, a key second century Christian theologian and our focus in Part II.

Here in Part I, I examine the origin of the evil creator idea among other early Christian groups. In Chapter 1, I refer to people whom Epiphanius of Salamis (about 315– 403 CE) called “Phibionites” in Egypt. I will compare the views of these Phibionite Christians with the description of the evil world rulers in the Secret Book of John and the so-called Ophite diagram. The Secret Book is widely held to be the classic work of the Sethian school of Christian thought. The “Ophite diagram” was named after a group that heresiologists called “Ophite” (“Serpentine”). We do not know how the latter group labeled itself, although “Christian” seems a fair guess since Celsus, a Platonist writing about 178 CE, assumed their Christian identity.



In Chapter 2, we encounter other types of Christians labeled “Peratic,” “Archontic,” “Severian,” and “Manichean.” Once again, it would be a mistake to clump together these systems under one global category, “gnostic,” since none of them belonged to a single school of thought or shared a coherent spirituality. What united them in this case were certain hermeneutical

strategies for interpreting John 8:44. They all agreed, as it turned out, that John 8:44 spoke of “the father of the devil,” a being whom they identified with the putatively wicked god of the Jews.

Method

In large part, this is a work of reception history— more specifically the history of interpretation. I define the latter as the study of the activated meanings of a text in a

given historical context. The historical focus of this book is the period between the mid– second and the late fourth century CE. Accordingly, I do not aim to uncover the earliest (“original”) meanings of biblical texts. Rather, I attempt to recover what they meant at a particular time frame to the particular Christian interpreters studied here.

As a scholar, I acknowledge that I have my own interpretive horizon, best disclosed, perhaps, through a discussion of hermeneutical presuppositions. I assume, first of all, that there is no “plain” reading of biblical texts, but simply readings that make sense in certain cultural environments to certain persons or groups for certain reasons. No text is hermeneutically determined. There is a hermeneutical fullness— caused in part by semantic gaps— in biblical texts that allow searching minds to fill in the blanks and make inferences. In new contexts, interpreters ask different questions and bring out distinctive facets of a text not readily visible to those in different times and intellectual traditions.

I presuppose, furthermore, that interpretation is always selective and limited by the horizon of the interpreter (whether ancient or modern). As a result, reception history is always our reception of an earlier reception. We are the ones who imagine and reconstruct the earlier interpretive horizon that is to some degree fused with our own.

It used to be thought that so- called gnostic exegesis was an intentionally perverse kind of “protest exegesis.” This view has been thoroughly criticized and is no longer tenable, at least as a generalization.⁴⁹ When the earliest Christian interpreters read John 8:44, for instance, it was not to counter a standard or “normative” reading of the verse, since such a reading had not yet emerged.

The greatest benefit of reception history for this study is that it allows a clearing of the table— a suspension (though obviously not a complete liquidation) of our value judgments in the interest of reading and hearing biblical texts as they were interpreted in antiquity. This suspension is especially needed when dealing with a theologically charged topic like the evil creator. Traditional (“orthodox”) readings of Christian scripture have in effect made the evil creator an impossible idea— or if possible, then

blasphemous and dangerous. To the best of our ability, we must bracket these traditional readings to endeavor to understand interpretations from a fundamentally different— though still Christian— preunderstanding. It is pointless to defend readings that construct an evil creator. At the same time, it is historically important charitably to understand them, in part because— as I point out in the Conclusion— analogous readings have resurfaced in the modern world.

In our quest for understanding, however, I must offer the following caveat. The early Christian interpreters discussed in this book were no friends of the Jewish deity and were likely no friends of the Jewish people either. Some of them were staunch critics of Jewish scriptures, at least insofar as these scriptures portrayed the creator as the true deity. A great deal of what these Christians wrote might seem (sometimes crassly) anti-Jewish in modern ears. As historians, we owe it to the ancients to understand them on their own terms and faithfully to report their words, their logic, and their inferences. It should go without saying, however, that I myself do not support or condone any interpretation that might lead to anti-Judaism in any form at any time for any reason. This point should be obvious, yet the terrible forces of racism that still lurk in our world compel the clearest of speech. In investigating the nature and sources of evil, we must never succumb to it.

Introduction to Marcion

If the gods do something foul, they are not gods. —Euripides.

Marcion of Pontus is the major focus of Part II and thus merits a brief introduction here. This early Christian theologian was born in the late first century CE in Pontus (north-central Turkey), immediately south of the Black Sea. Although most of his early history recorded by his opponents is unreliable, it is relatively secure that he became a shipowner who managed an affluent shipping business. He was wealthy enough, at least, to make a large donation to a church in Rome when he settled there sometime in the late 130s CE.

In Rome, Marcion met Cerdo from the Roman province of Syria. The report of Cerdo's teachings and the extent of his influence on Marcion are unclear. Apparently both men distinguished the Judean creator from the good and true deity revealed in and through Jesus Christ.

Likely, however, Marcion already made this distinction before coming to Rome.

At the time, Roman Christian movements formed a loosely connected network of churches run by individual leaders called presbyters. Individual presbyters jostled for preeminence with no undisputed leader. Claims about a succession of single bishops suggesting a unified organization appeared only later (in the 160s CE).

After some years laboring within established ecclesial networks, there was an opportunity for Marcion to present his views to a group of presbyters. A meeting— we do not know how official or how large— was convened. It became clear on this occasion that Marcion's conception of an evil creator, although based on a biblical principle— that good character cannot come from evil actions (Luke 5:36– 37; 6:43)— was not supported by the majority.

Marcion was not excommunicated. He left the established networks of his own accord. Probably using the cash of his previous donation (dutifully returned to him), Marcion organized his own ecclesial movement in Rome. From Rome, he began an ambitious mission to establish his form of Christianity in other parts of the empire.

Marcionite Scriptures

By Marcion's time, there was already an edition of Paul's letters known where he grew up in Pontus. Marcion republished an edited version of these letters (the *Apostolikon*). To it he attached a single gospel, called the *Evangelion*, evidently an early form of the gospel now referred to as Luke. Marcion also published a prefatory tract called *Antitheses* (or *Oppositions*), which I will introduce in Chapter 3.

Marcion had several leading disciples (Lucanus, Potitus, Basilicus, Syneros, Apelles, and Prepon are named in the sources). In these sources, it is often hard to distinguish their

teaching from the master's. To highlight this confluence (and ambiguity), I will often use the descriptor "Marcion(ites)."

When Marcion died and under what circumstances are unknown, but his church movement lasted several centuries, notably in the eastern Mediterranean. Epiphanius said that in his day (about 375 CE), Marcionites existed in Rome, Italy, Egypt, Palestine, Arabia, Syria, Cyprus, Persia— among other places. A Syrian bishop (about 450 CE) spoke of converting over a thousand Marcionites in a Syrian town and mentions eight other entirely Marcionite villages in his area. Evidently Marcion's message proved compelling to many, and in some areas Marcionite Christianity was the most widely known form. An inscription found in Damascus refers to a Marcionite congregation (synagogë) and dates from 318 to 319 CE. In the mid- fourth century, Cyril of Jerusalem advised Christians that, if they arrive in a new town, always to ask for the catholic church, lest someone lead them to the Marcionite counterpart. To Marcionites themselves, their Christian identity was not in doubt, and their movement produced not a few martyrs who died confessing the name of Christ.

Marcion's Teachings

I follow the current consensus that Marcion's intellectual project was not so much the separation of Law ("Old Testament") and gospel ("New Testament") as it was the distinction between two superhuman entities competing for the hearts and minds of human beings. Marcion compared two scriptural anthologies (now called the Old and New Testaments) to show that they were inspired by two different superhuman figures with two opposing characters.

Under the influence of the famous church historian Adolf von Harnack, older scholarship maintained that Marcion opposed a good god and a just creator. More recent interpreters, however, understand that he contrasted a good god with an evil creator. Although later Marcionites came up with a range of theological positions (causing confusion in the sources), Marcion's own position, it seems, was that the creator was evil.

Marcion and Philosophy

Based on his literary activity, scholars infer that Marcion had a solid education in grammar, though he probably lacked formal philosophical training. At the same time, popular philosophical ideas had long dyed the wool of Marcion's mind, forming his sense of what was theologically appropriate.

Christian scripture teaches that god alone is good (Luke 18:19). Marcion, following Plato, went further by his assumption that god, to be god, must be good—in fact the Good and source of all good for all beings. This Platonized Christian divinity was immensely powerful but had one limitation: he could not do evil. Indeed, it was sacrilegious to say that god did anything morally base.

By Marcion's time, belief in god's exclusive goodness had become cultural common coin. The idea appears in Philo, Plutarch, Alcinous, Numenius, and Apuleius— all leading Middle Platonists of the period. The Chaldean Oracles scold the ignorant: “you do not know that every god is good, you drudges. Sober up!” Bellerophon, a character in one of Euripides's famous plays, declared “If the gods do something bad, they are not gods.” The idea that god(s) must be good was widespread. In essence, then, all Marcion had to show was that the actions and character of the Judean creator were not— or not exclusively— good. Marcion could thereby show that the Judean god was no god at, but rather an imposter.

Two Gods?

It is often stated that Marcion believed in two gods, but this formulation is not correct. Marcion would not have described himself as a ditheist (a kind of polytheist). He maintained that there was another god superior to the creator, without affirming the creator's deity in an absolute sense. Marcion's distinctive term for the “god” of Jewish scripture was the “creator” or “cosmocrator” (“world governor”).

Marcion's most thoroughgoing opponent, Tertullian, called both Marcion's supreme deity and the creator “gods” in a polemical attempt to portray Marcion as a polytheist. Indeed, Tertullian opened his description of Marcion's theology with the claim that

Marcion “presents two gods.” Tertullian made this charge even though he largely adopted Marcion’s way of referring to the Jewish deity as “the creator.”

Tertullian well knew that for Marcion the creator was wicked, or at least not good. The creator, as Tertullian’s Marcion observed, was known to become enraged, grow jealous, exalt himself, become irritated, and so on. Marcion called him “severe, ignorant . . . capricious . . . petty, a lover of war,” and “most pitiless.” Whoever Marcion’s creator was, therefore, he was not good; and a being who lacked goodness, no matter how powerful, could not be god.

Superhuman beings overcome by nasty emotions and who stirred up trouble for humanity shared a common designation in Christian thought: they were demons. It is nowhere attested that Marcion called the creator a demon, though one early writer—a theologian named Ptolemy— indicated that for Marcion the creator was the devil. In our description of Marcion’s theology, we cannot blindly follow Ptolemy, but neither should we follow heresy hunters in calling Marcion’s creator “god,” since Marcion himself demonstrably preferred other terms.

For Marcion one could reasonably say that the creator looks more like what most early Christians called a demon than a god. Christians since the days of Paul had been demonizing competing gods (on the basis of Ps 96:5). The idea that Marcion demonized the creator fits this trend, especially since some of the very criticisms that early Christian apologists hurled against Greco- Roman gods were launched, by Marcion, against the Judean creator. Although Marcion recognized the creator’s power and his control over this world, he complained of his wicked character and refused to worship him as god. When compared with the supremely good Father, the creator was one of those falsely named “gods” who, to adapt a Pauline phrase, are “by nature not gods” (Gal 4:8).

Biblical Interpretation

If Marcion’s assumptions were informed by philosophy, the springs of his thinking were biblical through and through. He had his own canon, the Evangelion and Apostolikon.

Marcion also used the Jewish Bible as a source for his thinking, though not as scripture. It would be a mistake to think that Marcion's depiction of the evil creator is based "completely on Old Testament testimony." For Marcion, the Law and the Prophets told the true (if partial) story of a false god. Yet the wicked character of the creator was equally—if not more so—exposed in Marcion's "New" Testament.

Only by contrasting the god revealed in Christ did the evil of the creator shine through.

The task of exploring the logic of Marcionite biblical interpretation is complicated because hostile reporting has obscured Marcion's interpretive decisions. Heresy hunters generally presented Marcion's teaching as daring doctrine with little or no discussion of its biblical background or logic. Fortunately, there are careful scholarly reconstructions of Marcion's scriptures that provide the basis of his interpretations.

We also possess reliable editions of the chief anti-Marcionite tracts. The longest of these, a Latin work by the aforementioned Tertullian, was composed in North Africa (its third edition dated to 207 CE). Another useful work is the Adamantius, a late third or fourth century dialogue featuring two different Marcionite speakers (Markus and Megethius). Finally, there is the ample report on Marcion made by Epiphanius, a bishop and heresy hunter whom we have already had occasion to meet.

Roadmap

To summarize our itinerary for Part II, then: Chapter 3 studies Marcion(ite) interpretations of Jewish scripture whence derived the evil creator idea. Of chief importance was Isaiah 45:7, where the creator confessed to making "evils." The creator also admitted to being jealous and enraged (Exod 20:5; Isa 5:25). Marcion's special talent was contrasting the divine character deduced from Jewish scripture with the divine character of Christ. For example: (1) the creator's command to despoil the Egyptians with Christ's exhortation to voluntary poverty, (2) the creator's directive to punish "eye for eye" with Christ's principle of non-retaliation, (3) the creator's genocidal violence with Christ's call to be free from anger.

Chapter 4 treats the Marcionite interpretation of 2 Corinthians 4:4. Marcion(ites) understood “the god of this world” (2 Cor 4:4), to be the creator because (1) this is one of the creator’s known scriptural titles, (2) it accords with his well- known function (ruling creation), and (3) it concurs with his past actions (cognitive incapacitation). According to Marcion, “the god of this world” joined forces with the blind “rulers of this world” who crucified Christ (1 Cor 2:8). This wicked alliance encouraged the idea that the creator was evil.

Chapter 5 examines the Marcionite reception of Ephesians 2:15 (Christ “destroyed the Law of commandments by [his] teachings”). If Christ destroyed the Law by his teachings, the Law could not be good. Paul called the Law “good” in the sense of “just” (Rom 7:12). For Marcion, however, the creator’s justice was only a cover for his savagery. From his perspective, the Law revealed sin and thus enslaved people to the creator. Christ came to abolish this Law to free humanity from slavery. Since Christ came as destroyer of the creator’s Law, he proved that the Law was evil. If the Law was evil, so was the Lawgiver.

Chapter 6, in turn, shows how Christ “destroyed” the Law from stories in Marcion’s Evangelion. After treating Evangelion 23:2 (Jewish leaders accuse Christ of “destroying the Law”), the discussion focuses on Jesus’s concrete violations of the Law. For example, Christ touched lepers in violation of the Law and healed them apart from the Law’s purification rites. Moreover, Christ controverted the Law to honor parents by requiring a would- be disciple not to bury his father, and in general by urging his disciples to abandon their families. Finally, Christ, according to Marcion(ites), violated Sabbath laws on numerous occasions, even claiming to be lord of— effectively over— the Sabbath.

Chapter 7, finally, examines the Marcionite interpretation of Galatians 3:13. In this verse, Christ “becomes” a curse on the cross. As the source text (Deut 21:23) shows, Jesus was cursed specifically by the creator. The creator’s curse against Christ, despite its presumed salvific benefit, was an act of harm incompatible with the view that a divine being cannot inflict evil. Marcionite Christians understood the creator’s curse against

Christ as incriminating the creator's character. Whatever good resulted from the curse was not planned by the creator and could not exculpate him. A being who cursed the sinless savior was not only lacking goodness from a Marcionite perspective, he was also evil.

Finally, a word about method— here also reminding readers of what was said in the Introduction to Part I. In what follows, I will try to reconstruct how Marcion read or would have read certain scriptural texts as productive of the evil creator idea. This is my primary aim. To achieve that aim, I will appeal to the grammar and context of the text that we think Marcion was interpreting. In no case, however, am I trying to determine what the text “actually” or “originally” meant. I will also occasionally invoke interpreters roughly contemporary with Marcion to get a better idea of what might have been plausible to Marcion or indicative of his logic. In rare cases, I will invoke modern interpreters who read biblical texts in a way analogous to Marcion. All this data is gathered to support and reconstruct what I think was the Marcionite reading of a particular text. I make no claim whatsoever to exegete texts in a way that covers their entire biblical context or that engages with all the recent scholarly literature (most of which is miles apart from a Marcionite mentality). My endeavor is, through and through, to understand texts as Marcion(ites) would. <>

THE FIRST SCOTTISH ENLIGHTENMENT: REBELS, PRIESTS, AND HISTORY by Kelsey Jackson Williams [Oxford University Press ISBN 9780198809692]

Traditional accounts of the Scottish Enlightenment present the half-century or so before 1750 as, at best, a not-yet fully realised precursor to the era of Hume and Smith, at worst, a period of superstition and religious bigotry. This is the first book-length study to systematically challenge that notion. Instead, it argues that the era between approximately 1680 and 1745 was a 'First' Scottish Enlightenment, part of the continent-wide phenomenon of early Enlightenment and led by the Jacobites, Episcopalians, and Catholics of north-eastern Scotland. It makes this argument through an intensive study of the dramatic changes in historiographical practice which took place in Scotland during this era, showing how the documentary scholarship of Jean Mabillon and the Maurists was eagerly received and rapidly developed in Scottish historical circles, resulting in the wholesale demolition of the older, Humanist myths of Scottish origins and their replacement with the foundations of our modern understanding of early

Scottish history.

This volume accordingly challenges many of the truisms surrounding seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scottish history, pushing back against notions of pre-Enlightenment Scotland as backward, insular, and intellectually impoverished and mapping a richly polymathic, erudite, and transnational web of scholars, readers, and polemicists. It highlights the enduring cultural links with France and argues for the central importance of Scotland's two principal religious minorities--Episcopalians and Catholics--in the growth of Enlightenment thinking. As such, it makes a major intervention in the intellectual and cultural histories of Scotland, early modern Europe, and the Enlightenment itself.

- ❖ The first book-length study of the early Scottish Enlightenment (1680-1745)
- ❖ Presents a major new interpretation of this period of Scottish history
- ❖ Based on extensive archival research that recovers previously unknown works and authors of international significance
- ❖ Challenges deeply-entrenched narratives of cultural change in Scotland and offers a fresh way of reading Scotland's intellectual and cultural heritage

Reviews

"An excellent study, enriched by the often-brilliant use of myriad sources" -- R.J.W. Mills, *The Seventeenth Century*

"Erudite and attractively written, *The First Scottish Enlightenment* is a compelling reconstruction of historical culture in the first half of the eighteenth century. Connecting the familiar with the overlooked, alive to cosmopolitan links and local peculiarities, it deserves to be widely read." -- Alasdair Raffe, *Eighteenth-Century Scotland: The Newsletter of the Eighteenth-Century Scottish Studies Society*

"The book as a whole brings an important intellectual movement out of the shadows of previous neglect. It also reminds us that the story of English antiquaries (and Antiquaries) was not without parallels in Scotland and on the European continent." -- Neil Guthrie, *The Antiquaries Journal*

"Jackson Williams... carefully casts the 'city guard' and 'crowd of citizens' of an older Enlightenment drama in new roles. This new character set inspires comparisons beyond Scotland's north-east and it builds much-needed bridges between British and European political and intellectual histories." -- Tom Tölle, *British Catholic History*

"In this remarkable and engaging book, Kelsey Jackson Williams convincingly makes the case for the existence of an early Enlightenment in Scotland, which spanned the 1680s to the 1740s and achieved a dramatic and lasting transformation in the practice and conception of Scottish history." -- Felicity Loughlin, *Scottish Church History*

"a text that contributes wonderfully to our understanding of our past as we continue to struggle over how to imagine the future." -- Paul Gilfillan, *The Innes Review*

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Scotland and Enlightenment

In the summer of 1699 James Stevenson received an unexpected visitor. Stevenson had been keeper of the Advocates Library, late seventeenth-century Edinburgh's centre for legal and historical scholarship, since 1693 but now he found himself in the role of novice instead of master. Over two June afternoons his guest, one 'Mr. Fleming', taught Stevenson how to date medieval handwriting and even examined many of the library's manuscripts himself, determining their ages and correcting the descriptions made by Stevenson and his predecessor James Nasmyth. A few days later the stranger had vanished from Edinburgh, leaving Stevenson with only a baffled recollection of an unusually erudite 'foreign travelled man'.

The mysterious 'Mr. Fleming' was none other than Thomas Innes, a Catholic priest travelling in disguise and under continual threat of judicial apprehension and exile. Unlike the well-meaning but largely clueless Stevenson, Innes was one of Europe's leading experts in the study of medieval manuscripts, their styles, and dating: the new science of 'diplomatic' championed by the Maurist scholar Jean Mabillon. He was also representative of something greater than himself: a distinctive change in Scottish

intellectual culture stretching from the 1680s through the 1740s. In short, an Early Enlightenment.

This Enlightenment was concerned with many forms of scholarship, from botany to numismatics, and from agricultural improvement to mechanics, but its most notable contribution was in the field of history and that is what will be explored in the present work. Its practitioners used the critical methodologies of the European Early Enlightenment to understand the Scottish past in new ways, exploring how the Scottish state and Scottish culture had developed over the centuries and how that had led to the unsettled state of affairs existing in the wake of the Revolution of 1688. The questions it asked were ‘how did we get here?’ and ‘will understanding the past help us to change the present?’

When we think of the Scottish Enlightenment, we think of moderate Presbyterians sitting in Edinburgh drawing rooms, but the men and women of this earlier moment were very different. The Scottish Early Enlightenment was made up overwhelmingly of Episcopalians, Catholics, and Jacobites: outsiders who found themselves arrayed against the establishment politically, theologically, culturally, and intellectually. Nor did they, as a rule, hail from Edinburgh. These rebels came from the east and north-east of Scotland, the coastlands lapped by the North Sea which already had a long history of producing scholars, soldiers, and administrators at home and abroad.

This generation was decisively rejected by the better-known Scottish Enlightenment of the later eighteenth century, an unsurprising move given its radical opposition to the politics and theology of its successors. After 1745 a moment of cultural forgetting occurred and within a generation the names of writers such as Thomas Innes were nearly erased. But their scholarship remained and exerted a profound effect upon Scottish culture in everything from understandings of ancient history to the make-up of the literary canon. The project of this book is to recover the scholarship which produced those effects, to restore it to its contemporary contexts, and to reveal the full importance of the once powerful, now forgotten, Scottish Early Enlightenment.

Such a project entails a degree of gentle disagreement with long-standing narratives in Scottish history. For most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this period of Scotland's past was viewed as, at best, a preparatory moment for the Enlightenment of Hume and Smith, at worst, a final hiccup of bigotry and superstition, famously characterized by the execution of Thomas Aikenhead for blasphemy in 1697.⁴ Accordingly, the figures discussed in the present work tended to be presented either as minor supporting players—the 'city guard' and 'crowd of citizens' to the leading dramatis personae of the next generation—or as retrograde stalwarts from the bad old days, ripe to be swept away in the tides of human progress.

More recently, such concepts have been problematized, but the era of Scottish history after the revolution of 1688—which is, at least, no longer universally 'Glorious'—and before the publication of canonical texts such as Hume's *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748) or Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), remains contested and uncertain ground. In Scottish studies, Jacobitism takes centre stage, but while the political, military, and ideological aspects of the movement have received extensive study in recent decades, the place of Jacobitism within larger patterns of European thought has attracted comparatively less attention. Even after scholars such as Allan MacInnes made the case for the possibility of progressive—even Enlightened—Jacobitism, there is still too often a tendency to see it as an essentially atavistic and backwards-looking movement which, by its very nature, could hardly bear any close kinship to the Enlightenment of the following generation.

These crotchets in Scottish studies are reinforced by understandings of Enlightenment as a whole. Leaving aside the *longue durée* of Enlightenment studies, stretching back to Peter Gay and beyond, modern interpretations of Enlightenment have largely been conditioned as either agreements with or reactions to the seminal three volumes of Jonathan Israel. Israel's argument that the 'business of Enlightenment' was over by 1750 and his distinction between moderate and radical Enlightenments have proved enduring bones for subsequent scholars to chew over. One possible answer is the retrenchment of John Robertson. In *The Case for the Enlightenment*, Robertson

responded to Israel by pulling back the borders of 'Enlightenment' to the mid- to late eighteenth-century 'science of man' and tracing the parallels and intertwinings of that school of philosophical enquiry in Scotland and Naples. This avoided the problems, widely expressed, of a plurality of Enlightenments, but did so at the cost of sacrificing much of the eighteenth century to a strange intellectual purgatory.

Alternatively, J. G. A. Pocock disputed the fundamental premise of Israel's argument that Enlightenment was 'a single or unifiable phenomenon'. Pocock's critique of those Enlightenment scholars who see in the movement 'a cause or programme—typically a secular liberalism—with which they identify themselves and which they desire to defend against its enemies' was both a necessary riposte to the teleology inherent in Israel's work and also a more general warning against the presentist language sitting just below the surface of so much Enlightenment historiography.

Where does this leave us? Israel warned that '[i]f one is not talking 'Radical Enlightenment' one fails to grasp what the intell (r)0.7ccT4t5C.9 (t)]T]3t.3 (i)-3.5 (o)3.4hed. (T4t50 To

retaining the term 'Enlightenment' at all? And, second, how does this force us to rethink our received understanding of eighteenth-century Scottish intellectual history? The first question is, to a point, insoluble. Even if we take Pocock's most basic definition of Enlightenment as 'the conversion of theology into its history as a human endeavour', this still seems to simultaneously exclude much of what we have been discussing from the umbrella of 'Enlightenment' while failing to provide an intellectually useful or coherent category in which to fit that which remains. Is Enlightenment, then, simply too baggy and meaningless a term? For some, the answer will surely be 'yes'. In the case of the present work, however, there is an argument to be made for preserving, albeit cautiously, this outworn definition. To define the historical moment discussed here as 'Enlightenment' is to recognize its novelty, its participation in continent-wide changes in the way historical evidence was perceived and assessed, and its reaction to the decay of previously paradigmatic truths over the course of the eighteenth century. But it is also a move which gives it cultural capital in the modern day and allows us to recognize its equal importance in Scottish history with the better-known Enlightenment of Robertson and Hume. One of the goals of this book is to challenge the monolithic Scottish Enlightenment present in much of the historiography, arguing instead that Scotland had multiple moments, chronologically and ideologically separate, of Enlightenment, of which the present is only one.

This argument was partially anticipated by Hugh Trevor-Roper, who, in his infamous 1967 essay, 'The Scottish Enlightenment', slyly suggested that the intellectual origins of that movement might lie not solely with continental radicals but with the 'Jacobite, Episcopalian society' in the north-east, 'the cultural bastion of Scotland'. His insights were only patchily followed to their conclusion in his own work but proved influential on the subsequent generation. When they were reiterated by Colin Kidd in his 2005 appraisal of Trevor-Roper's scholarship, the outraged response to that article by William Ferguson only confirmed the extent to which Trevor-Roper had shifted the goalposts: the essential issue had become the origins of the Enlightened thought which

first manifested itself in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Episcopalian circles, not its presence, which was assumed.

Yet both Trevor-Roper and Kidd saw this Episcopal moment as essentially a prelude, an 'Episcopalian and Erastian pre-Enlightenment' leading to a 'Presbyterian Enlightenment' in the latter's words. In the present work, no such secondary status will be applied to this movement, which will instead be treated as an independent scholarly moment in its own right. Why has this not been done before? As hinted at in Ferguson's reaction to Kidd, to do so challenges traditional narratives of the Scottish Enlightenment and its beneficent, progressive, moderate nature. In particular, it challenges the still often implicit Whig narratives about Scotland, Great Britain, and progress during the eighteenth century. If Jacobites were Enlightened, where does that leave us? If Enlightened Scotland was a persecuting society with Episcopalians and Catholics acting as its Huguenots, how does that force us to reassess the century? Such questions strike close to the heart of many too easily made assumptions about the nature of Enlightenment in Scotland.

Accordingly, the present work is predicated on the assumption that dichotomies such as reactionary vs. progressive, moderate vs. radical, Whig vs. Jacobite, while they appeal to the human desire for binaries, conceal more than they reveal and distort the nature of eighteenth-century 'Enlightened' thought. Rather than beginning with the heroes and villains already named, this project endeavours to approach Scotland's Early Enlightenment non-judgmentally, asking the basic questions: 'what changed? and why?' It does this from an intellectual historian's perspective, closely reading key texts while also keeping both texts and authors grounded in their respective cultures. This is balanced with a cultural historical approach towards the spheres within which they moved, reading the minority groups of eighteenth-century Scotland—both religious and political—as a series of overlapping communities whose interactions, friendly or antagonistic, with each other and the establishment fundamentally shaped their beliefs and ideas.

What, we might ask, is the intellectual pay-off of navigating these poorly mapped shoals of Enlightenment? What can we learn from this scholarly movement? First, there is the intrinsic value of recovery. This work explores an intellectual world which was essential to its time, but which was rapidly discarded in the wake of the 1745 rebellion and subsequently elided over in mainstream history. But its value lies in more than that. It challenges the nature of Enlightenment in Scotland, as discussed above, arguing for multiple Enlightenments and multiple scholarly achievements, not all of which are either so straightforward or so triumphalist as the traditional narrative would suggest. It also challenges canards concerning Scottish culture which, though frequently debunked, enjoy a fruitful afterlife in the twenty-first century. Scotland was not inherently democratic, Presbyterian, or radical as famously argued by scholars such as Kurt Wittig. There was a side—a vibrant, rich, and complex side—of Scottish culture which was aristocratic, erudite, and absolutist: altogether closer to Louis XIV's France than George II's England. Recovering that culture not only transforms our understanding of eighteenth-century Scotland, it substantially reshapes and adds to our understanding of the European Enlightenment as a whole.

This volume is divided into ten chapters which collectively address the principle manifestations of the Scottish Early Enlightenment. The first two locate it in culture, space, and time. Chapter 1 argues that its catalyst was the intellectually febrile environment of 1680s Edinburgh, combined with James VII and II's attempts at its reconstruction as a Royalist and Catholic environment. The seeds sown there bore fruit in the wake of the Revolution of 1688 when the ousted establishment found itself urgently trying to justify its very existence.

Chapter 2, however, argues that the changes which took place in Scottish intellectual culture during the 1680s were not in themselves sufficient to produce this cultural moment. Instead, they interacted with and built upon the rich, long-standing cultural traditions of the north-east, 'Scotland beyond the mountains', which are here traced to the foundation of King's College, Aberdeen, by Bishop William Elphinstone and the early development of a distinctively north-eastern humanist tradition. The scholars and

scholarship discussed in the remainder of this book owed their intellectual and cultural world to this heady blend of Early Enlightenment intellectual ferment, revolution, and north-eastern humanism.

Chapters 3 and 4 explore the single most important scholarly debate of the Scottish Early Enlightenment: the decades-long dispute which ultimately saw traditional humanist histories of Scotland stripped of their cultural capital and revealed as late, partial, and entirely inaccurate accounts of the country's past. Chapter 3 recovers the first major assault on Scotland's humanist history, its myth of an ancient monarchy, in the 1680s and the subsequent, increasingly probing challenges which were directed against it in the wake of revolution. The authority of historians such as Hector Boece and George Buchanan was no longer sufficient to protect them from challenges based upon new and more sophisticated interpretations of medieval texts.

These challenges culminated in Thomas Innes's 1729 *Critical Essay on the Ancient Inhabitants of the Northern Parts of Britain, or Scotland*, the subject of Chapter 4. Innes's paradigm-shifting reconstruction of early medieval Scottish history, together with the final rejection of humanist history which it required, still underpins modern understandings of the period. Innes's own methods and goals, however, were more complex than mere seeking after truth and this chapter interrogates his Jacobite and Catholic, but surprisingly ecumenical, agenda as well as tracing the immediate and longer-term fortunes of his theories.

The scholarship which demolished the ancient monarchy mythos was founded on methodologically innovative approaches both to artefacts and to texts. Chapter 5 turns away from texts and towards artefacts, tracing the sudden rise in interest in prehistoric sites and monuments across Scotland during this period. It shows that cutting-edge approaches to the study of material as diverse as Roman forts and ancient megaliths could interact with older syncretist theories of knowledge and human origins to produce surprising, sometimes radical, reinterpretations of the distant past.

Archaeologists and writers as diverse as the opera singer-turned-antiquary Alexander Gordon and the free-thinker John Toland used these ancient monuments as telescopes

through which to glimpse an almost unimaginable antiquity, one which could exert a dramatically destabilizing effect on present-day hierarchies of culture and geography. Chapter 6, by contrast, highlights the foundational role of the French textual scholar Jean Mabillon in setting the agenda for the study of medieval Scotland in the archive during the same period. From the first adoption of Mabillon's methods by Scottish scholars to the triumphant 1739 publication of James Anderson's *Thesaurus*—a Scottish response to Mabillon's *De re diplomatica*—these methodologies went from being peripheral to axiomatic in Scottish historical studies, fundamentally transforming scholars' engagement with the archive and its documents.

These general and methodological chapters are followed by three case studies, each exploring in depth a field of Scottish scholarship which was transformed during the Early Enlightenment. Chapter 7 turns to national and local geographies, challenging older views of this period as a geographically impoverished caesura between the monumental achievements of the 1662 *Atlas Maior* and the 1791 *First Statistical Account*. Instead, it argues, geographical scholarship was very much alive during the Early Enlightenment, but was undergoing rapid and unpredictable change as scholars brought new methodologies and new mentalities to bear on a traditional, humanist discipline.

Chapter 8 interrogates the methods and motivations of a discipline often dismissed as the driest of dry and antiquarian pursuits: genealogy. It reveals that, far from being intellectually vapid, genealogical scholarship was intimately connected to the development of the Stuart state and the transmission of French textual scholarship to Scotland. It offered a proving ground for the new practices of archival research and could practically demonstrate the value of the new scholarship in a field of study whose application was widely seen to be both immediate and essential in a kin-based society.

The Early Enlightenment was, in many ways, a time of reckoning and wrestling with Scotland's humanist past and this was no different for those Scots attempting to build, rebuild, or deconstruct their nation's literary heritage. Chapter 9 explores a series of canon-building efforts during this period, all growing out of the much older dispute

between Scottish and Irish scholars over their shared Gaelic heritage, but all also partaking of new, Enlightened forms of literary scholarship and textual editing to create a distinctive canon of Scottish writers.

Chapter 10 turns outwards to assess the cultural impact of the works of scholarship discussed here. Were they read and, if so, by whom? Using subscription lists, it argues that not only were these texts widely received throughout and furth of Scotland but that their reception allows us to trace the culture of the north-east exporting its own traditions to Scotland at large in a crucial, but subsequently forgotten, moment of cultural and intellectual upheaval. This in turn is placed within the wider context of Early Enlightenment reading, within and beyond the nation. Finally, the conclusion reiterates the arguments of the book as a whole and looks towards the end of the eighteenth century and the fate of Early Enlightenment thought.

By its very nature, as a single book-length study of sixty years of intellectual endeavour, this book is limited and selective in its scope. It focuses almost solely on the historical scholarship of the Early Enlightenment; had it addressed medicine or botany or art it would tell a different story. It is also inevitably confined to a restricted cast of characters, all of whom are discussed in far too brief a space, but each of whom is richly deserving of further study. And it is only tangentially engaged with the vast literature on the better-known high Scottish Enlightenment, an unavoidable but hardly desirable necessity. In each case, a different approach would have resulted in a very different book.

The largest omission in the present work, however, is the decision not to explore the connections between the Early Enlightenment and its famous successor, nor to follow the threads of its scholarship forward into the later eighteenth century and beyond. Such an investigation is a great desideratum, but far outwith what can be achieved here. Instead, I hope that this volume will perform the more modest function of serving as a preliminary map—a chart of exploration—for this forgotten world and will lead to further scholarship which can begin to address these questions in the detail they deserve.

Let us then return to the end of the seventeenth century. But before we can reach Thomas Innes in the comfortable confines of the Advocates Library in 1699, we must go back to a moment some years before, when the project of Scottish scholarship seemed to be in itself a risible concept. <>

THE DEVOTIONAL LITERATURE OF SCOTLAND by Adam Philip, D.D. [Wipf & Stock, ISBN 9781666761191]

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Concerning Devotional Literature

A well-known firm of publishers has issued what it calls "The Library of Devotion," the masterpieces of devotional literature. The first book on its list is the Confessions of Augustine, the second the Christian Year. Amongst others, are the Imitation, Law's Serious Call, the Temple, the Psalms of David, Grace Abounding, and Lyra Sacra, a book of sacred verse.

This list of books, certainly not all of the same impressiveness or importance, reminds us how the devotional life may be strengthened and enriched by works widely differing, in power and outlook.

Robertson of Brighton tells us that he found devotional reading of great use. He read, slowly, the Imitation of Christ. Andrewes, at a later time, was a favourite, but, when he

could, he chose as his books of devotion the lives of high-minded, holy men like Henry Martyn and David Brainerd ; " it made his sense of the reality of religious feeling more acute, when he found it embodied in the actions of the men who expressed it."

At a later period of his life, he gave up all books of a devotional character, lest he should be lured into the habit of feeling without acting. But this was only for a time. " I feel the need of them," he writes, " and so shall begin them again." " Our affections must be nurtured in the Highest." Dr Smellie's series of " Books for the Heart " includes David Brainerd's Journal, the Heidelberg Catechism, Grace Abounding, John Woolman, Pulsford's Quiet Hours, William Guthrie's Christian's Great Interest, and Augustine.

My aim is to outline roughly a map of one territory in Scottish Literature. By the " Devotional Literature of Scotland," I mean the literature of Scotland which was intended either to awaken, or to express, or to sustain the devotional life ; which, in other words, was the fruit of that life, or its expression, or its food.

Several of the national literatures contain classic books of this kind, while nearly all have contributed some that have been vital in thinking, and done much to mould the life and thought of peoples. The list that begins with Augustine's Confessions, numbers within it hundreds of works by men like Anselm, Francis de Sales, Molinos, Andrewes, Baxter, Rutherford, Jeremy Taylor, George Herbert, George Fox, etc. Though only seeing some angle of God's great thought, these men belong to the goodly fellowship of those who for us have

" Held high discourse of God and Destiny, And the dear Christ of human love and hope, Gathering the weary wandering ages round The throne which was a cross, and conquering By His meek passion."

Within the first score on such a list there may not be many, or any, Scottish books. No Scottish work is ethereal and influential as the Imitation, none is so steadily thrilling as Bunyan, none in mere style is gorgeous, and in that sense appealing, as Jeremy Taylor, none is comparable in beauty with the English Prayer Book.

Nevertheless, it may be worth while to try to estimate the contribution of Scotland to such literature, and the appeal it has made to minds. If writers like Henry Grey Graham and Mr J. Hepburn Millar are to be believed, there is not much in this literature of our past that deserves anything but pity, if not scorn. The name of Samuel Rutherford is to Buckle what a red rag is to a bull ; but even his wrath is sober compared with the tumultuous speech of Mr Millar. Too often since his Letters were published Rutherford has been a target for sharp-shooters. But you cannot, as Dr James Walker put it, slay the immortal. Sarcastic critics of the earlier expressions of Evangelical Religion will find in Rutherford, in Welwood, in Boston, and the Erskines, something on which they can fasten, and with writers who have but an imperfect understanding of, and little spiritual affinity with, the searching thoughts and the deep religious experience of the early Seceders, it may seem fitting to write in mild derision of the spiritual pasture of these worthy zealots being found in the works of Manton and Boston, and Pike and Welwood's Glimpse of Glory (Graham's Social Life of Scotland, ii. 107). It may, however, be confidently affirmed that works which entered so deeply into the lives of these people, and which, through so many decades, were a cherished treasure on the book-shelf of the praying men and women of Scotland, are not to be dismissed with a smile or a sneer. On the contrary, if formative influence is a prerogative of genius, they are to be cherished as amongst the books that, in Scotland, have fed the life of prayer, of praise, and of adoration ; that have summoned its sons to the quest of high things, that have communicated to so many in Scotland and beyond it the meditative mind, and baptised them with the passion of gratitude and sacrifice.'

There are books of large influence in their day which, having done their work, are forgotten. During a space of one hundred years, Hume's History was the one history of England read by Englishmen. To-day it is forgotten. Yet certain it is, that David Hume did not write it without saturating its pages with a large love of freedom, nor did English people read it without their outlook and judgment of peoples and situations being, unconsciously perhaps, transformed. In Cramb's opinion, the changed attitude of minds to peoples (Jew—Catholic—Islam) and to political problems (Ireland—

Emancipation) is, in part, the result of Hume's work, but the volumes that wrought it have been quietly relegated to the almshouses of literature, in ducal halls and Carnegie libraries.

There are also books, as there are lives, that do not challenge the attention of the world, but whose story, if studied, will be found rewarding. Few books were so influential during the Welsh Revival of 1744 as those of Erskine, and Willison's Balm of Gilead. Willison of Dundee (1680-1750) is an admirable example of a little-known writer, whose influence still lingers, but who spoke with real power to the aspiring life of his own century. No one will read his Sacramental Catechism or his Familiar Instructor for Young Communicants without feeling their force and tenderness.

The story of the Memoir of M`Cheyne would itself fill a volume, and prove of moving interest. M`Cheyne, himself, was brought into the light by the Sum of Saving Knowledge. Mr Spurgeon once said in his own quaint way : " There are many good books like the saints of old, wandering about in sheepskins and goatskins . . . that will bear witness for Christ yet. You remember how Guthrie's Saving Testimony, long forgotten in Scotland, was found by a shepherd lad, taken to a minister, and read, and how there broke out from the reading of that book, that had well-nigh gone out of date and notice, a blessed revival of evangelical religion." Dr Hay Fleming quotes the above from Mr Spurgeon in his Six Saints, etc. (ii. 175), and the story has been passed on elsewhere as true, but there is clearly some confusion in the story, which it is only right to recognise, while, undoubtedly, it is true that many of our old books will yet bear witness for Christ. " I have been reading," writes so competent a judge as Dr James Hamilton of London, " the works of our Scottish worthies—Brown of Wamphray, William Guthrie, and Binning. The eloquence of this last is wonderful. He keeps you floating in a balmy, lightsome atmosphere, where in God's purest light you see all things clearly. Invisibles were realities with these old worthies."

Many books are admirably fitted to be companions of the devout life, which lay no claim to be so, Smetham's Letters for example, or the writings of Dora Greenwell.

Nothing was less present to Pascal than to write a devotional book, and yet he has penned what is, perhaps, the deepest and the highest.

Scottish literature possesses books of this kind. I would give as an instance the Letters of Erskine of Linlathen, a man whose thought borders on the misty and on the mystical, but whose words and life were suffused with the central theme of his thinking, the wonder of God's love. Dean Stanley said of him, that to hold brief converse with Erskine of Linlathen was to have one's conversation in Heaven. The spell of his life is greater than the spell of his writing. Few writers come nearer the heart in comfort. He speaks like a man living in a house with a window opening to the infinite, and even where the light fails him, you are conscious of a hush in his movement as if he had heard the murmur of the sea, and a truthfulness and beauty that draw you to a path which you feel is moving towards God.

The general criticism may be made on the Scottish books that they suffer somewhat from their vocabulary, sometimes from mistakes in taste, and too often from prolixity.

John Newton, who had the highest admiration for the writings of Halyburton, and regarded his work on Natural Religion Insufficient as a masterpiece, told Thomas Scott quite frankly, when he urged him to read them, that he did not regard Halyburton as a very elegant writer, and that he abounded in Scottish idiom, adding " But you will prefer truth to ornament." Some of the sharpest things, and also, let it be added, many of the truest and most appreciative things about Samuel Rutherford's style, have been said by Principal Whyte.

My own impression is, that the Scottish books have suffered less from difficulties of vocabulary than from their prolixity. Few of our writers had grasped the truth of what Matthew Arnold shrewdly says about style : " Style, style ! What is all this talk about style ? I do not know anything about it, except that a man should have something to say, and then say it as briefly as possible, in language suited to the occasion."

It cannot be said that they studied brevity, but it is easy to exaggerate those defects in vocabulary, taste, or style. They are faults of the time. You can match every one of them

from much lauded books of the past, and you can more than match them in applauded writings of to-day. " My style," wrote R. L. Stevenson, " is from the Covenanting writers "; and to Crockett, in Patrick Walker's writing, " there seemed a natural melody and fervour—like that of a linnet singing on a twig, a moment's burst and no more."

On the other hand, they are searching, and keep most to what Cargill calls the main things, and to what is behind them ; and there is a spontaneity, and a passion all their own, in what they say of the grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ, which have thrust great watchwords into Scottish religious life, and helped to keep vivid the message of grace.

" I am persuaded," Leighton says in a sermon in 1643, " that there is not anything that a pardoned sinner does desire more, than to magnify and speak much of that Free Grace ; he is net backward to send others to that door where he found grace, and, I think, if such a one could gather all the earth together, and have a stance to be seen of all, and a voice to be heard of all, this would be the thing that he would proclaim to them, the riches of Free Grace, and would invite them all to come in."

It may, I think, be claimed that the Scottish Church never overlooked the subject of " Devotional Literature." As it is Scotland's glory to have seized the Shorter Catechism for itself, and to have printed on the fibre of every Scot worthy of the name its immortal first answer, so it was the glory of the Erskines and of their group to capture all that is best in the Marrow and, by their recommendation in 1733, to make Marshall on Sanctcation a Scottish classic rather than a classic in England, the home of its birth.

Comparatively speaking, Scotland is rich in Catechisms and in kindred statements of truth like Patrick's Places, and John Craig's (1512-1600) Catechism. There are also the Assembly's Shorter Catechism in Metre for the Use of Young Ones, by Robert Smith ; Fisher's Catechism ; the Mother's Catechism for the Young Child, with a few hymns and prayers, by Willison of Dundee ; another Mother's Catechism and a Sacramental Catechism, by ouiphant of Kilmarnock and Dumbarton ; and John Muckarsie's Children's Catechism, etc., etc. Yet another must be named which, though not of

Scottish origin, has had a great place in Scottish life, and has printed its thoughts, if not its words, on many of the best of our people. I refer to the Larger Catechism. Some of its answers are extraordinarily wise and devout. This, for example :

Ques. 172.—May one who doubteth of his being in Christ, or of his due preparation, come to the Lord's Supper ? A.—One who doubteth of his being in Christ, or of his due preparation to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, may have true interest in Christ, though he be not yet assured thereof ; and in God's account hath it, if he be duly affected with the apprehension of the want of it and unfeignedly desires to be found in Christ, and to depart from iniquity : in which case (because promises are made, and this sacrament is appointed for the relief even of weak and doubting Christians) he is to bewail his unbelief, and labour to have his doubts resolved, and, so doing, he may and ought to come to the Lord's Supper, that he may be further strengthened. Dr Chalmers was disposed at first rather to pooh-pooh the value of devotional books, but after he passed through his great change at Kilmany, he became an enthusiastic student of them, and used every endeavour to bring the choicest within the reach of all. One of the volumes in his collected works, extending to 395 pages, is occupied with introductory essays to such books. Chalmers wrote such essays to the following works

1. A Kempis' Imitation of Christ.
2. Romaine's Treatises on the Life of Faith.
3. Serle's Christian Remembrancer.
4. Guthrie's Christian's Great Interest.
5. Owen on Spiritual Mindedness.
6. Owen on Indwelling Sin.
7. Scudder's Christian's Daily Walk.
8. Scott's Tracts.
9. Beveridge's Private Thoughts.

10. Booth's Reign of Grace.
11. Shower's Reflections and Hale's Contemplations.
12. Christian's Defence against Infidelity.
13. Howe's Living Temple.
14. Romaine's Select Letters.
15. Hall on the Faith and Influence of the Gospel.
16. Baxter's Call—Now or Never.

To the same series of books Erskine of Linlathen wrote introductory papers to Rutherford's Letters, Baxter's Saints' Rest, and Gambold's Works. Amongst others who have contributed essays to such works are Edward Irving ; Dr Robert Burns, the editor of Halyburton ; Dr Robert Gordon ; Dr Guthrie ; James Montgomery, the poet ; James Hamilton of London, author of Our Christian Classics ; John Brown of Edinburgh ; David Young of Perth ; Andrew Thomson and Ralph Wardlaw.

The succession of devotional writers and readers has never paused. In our own day, such work found in Principal Whyte an original and sympathetic exponent, whilst, in other directions, expository and liturgical, the work of production and study has been growing. This is notably so in the great Presbyterian Churches of the land ; but names like Pulsford and Hunter, and, by reason of his fine scholarship and devotional purpose, Bishop Dowden, are not to be forgotten. <>

PHILOSOPHY OF DEVOTION: THE LONGING FOR INVULNERABLE IDEALS by Paul Katsafanas [Oxford University Press, 9780192867674]

Why do people persist in commitments that threaten their happiness, security, and comfort? Why do some of our most central, identity-defining commitments seem to resist the effects of reasoning and critical reflection? Drawing on real-life examples, empirical psychology, and philosophical reflection, Paul Katsafanas argues that these commitments involve an ethical stance called devotion, which plays a pervasive--but often hidden--role in human life. Devotion typically involves sacralizing certain values, goals, or relationships. To sacralize a value is to treat it as inviolable (trade-offs with ordinary values are forbidden), incontestable (even contemplating such trade-offs is prohibited), and dialectically invulnerable (no rational considerations can disrupt the agent's commitment to the value). Philosophy of Devotion offers a detailed philosophical account and defense of these features. Devotion and the sacralization of values can be reasonable; indeed, a life involving meaningful, sustained commitment depends on these stances. Without devotion, we risk an existential condition that Katsafanas describes as normative dissipation, in which all of our commitments become etiolated. Yet devotion can easily go wrong, deforming into the individual and group fanaticism that have become pervasive features of modern social life. Katsafanas provides an alternative to fanaticism, investigating the way in which we can express non-pathological forms of devotion. We can be devoted through affirmation and through what Katsafanas calls the deepening move, which treats the agent's central commitments as systematically inchoate. Each of these stances enables a wholehearted form of devotion that nevertheless preserves flexibility and openness, avoiding the dangers of fanaticism on the one hand and normative dissipation on the other. But this is inevitably a fragile and precarious achievement: affirmation can slide into a focus on rejecting what isn't affirmed, and the deepening move can ossify into rigidity. Only the perpetual quest to maintain a form of existential flexibility, which may require oscillation between affirmation and deepening, can stave off these dangers.

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A central idea in many religions is that a satisfying human life requires wholehearted commitment to values or ideals that cannot be justified in the ordinary ways, that perhaps cannot even be fully understood. These values cannot be justified by reason alone; nor can they be established by empirical inquiry; instead, they require revelation, or divine insight, or the acceptance of dogmas, or some sort of ability to limn the structure of reality. So we need not just reason, but faith. This is an exceedingly common way of understanding the difference between religious and non-religious approaches to life.

Against this, many philosophers argue—again at a very high level of generality—that we can do without faith. The most optimistic of philosophers believe that we can (or eventually will be able to) justify wholehearted commitment to certain values by reason alone. Others back off just a small step, claiming that although of course there will be controversies about particular goods, we can get overlapping consensus on a number of shared goods. Others tell us that we can detach our desire for rational justification from our wholeheartedness: we can live as “ironists,” or “free spirits,” or existentialists, who remain wholeheartedly committed to values that we freely admit are not rationally justifiable. And others think we are doomed to vacillation or fragmentation or anomie: we have to choose between wholeheartedness and clear-headed rationality; we can’t have both.

Depending on which philosophical position seems tempting, sacred values will look different. Sacred values do involve a particular form of wholehearted commitment: we are completely committed to them in the sense that they are treated as uncompromisable. Moreover, they involve a particular form of dogmatism: I will argue that we treat them as incomparable and as invulnerable to ordinary rational argumentation. Finally, they often imbue our lives with a sense of purpose or direction, and thereby give us a way of attaining a form of contentment with life. So they have the features that many of us associate with traditional religious values. But sacred values needn’t be religious; they are far more pervasive.

In virtue of these features, I will suggest that sacred values enable us to stave off the forms of nihilism, anomie, and vacillation that I've mentioned above. This is why they play a crucial role in ethical life. But the sacralization of a value is typically premised upon the idea that commitment to the value cannot be fully justified by ordinary modes of rational thought. I think this is true and important. More precisely: I will argue that although we have reason to embrace some sacred values, we don't have a good justification for picking any particular sacred values. And there is where the need for insulation from questioning and critique arises: in order to fulfill their psychological function, sacred values have to be shielded from the effects of certain kinds of inquiry. But this doesn't mean that we need to seek some religious or metaphysical foundation for them. Instead, it can just mean that we delimit the quest for foundations. Nietzsche famously wrote that the ancient "Greeks were superficial—out of profundity!" (*The Gay Science*, Preface, 4). I will develop a version of that thought. To lay my cards on the table: as you might expect from someone who has spent much of his career writing on Nietzsche, I am an atheist devoid of religious sentiments. So the solution I propose at the end will attempt to preserve a version of the religious form without the religious content.

In particular: I will argue that there is an intimate connection between sacred values and devotion. Although you can be devoted without having sacred values, if you do have sacred values you will experience devotion as required in certain circumstances. Sacred values make devotion non-optional. There are other ways of manifesting devotion—in Chapter 9 I will explore a way of manifesting devotion without holding sacred values, and aside from that it is possible to devote yourself to something that you regard as entirely valueless—but they are more complex and potentially more tenuous.

Of course, we might respond to this conclusion in different ways. Some will view it as a reason to abandon the quest for the forms of devotion that are based upon sacred values: if those forms of devotion require sacred values, we had better learn to live without them! Others will view it as a reason to preserve certain forms of devotion. And

others, still, might seek some kind of compromise or balancing of these desires. I will explore these possibilities in the final chapters.

I pointed out that some of our commitments involve sacred values. To understand this point, we need to clarify the notion of sacred values. Chapter 2 reviews the psychological and philosophical work on sacred values and related phenomena. I argue that sacred values are commitments with three distinguishing features: they are overriding, incontestable, and invulnerable to certain forms of critique. In particular, we can analyze sacred values as follows.

(Sacred value) Let V_1 be a value. Then V_1 counts as sacred iff it meets the following conditions:

1. Inviolable: If V_2 is an ordinary value, then it is prohibited to sacrifice V_1 for V_2 , regardless of the quantities of V_1 and V_2 .
2. Incontestable: It is prohibited to contemplate trading or sacrificing V_1 for most or all other values.
3. Dialectically Invulnerable: The agent insulates her commitment to V_1 from the effects of justificatory reasoning. That is, while the agent may think about V_1 's justification, consider objections to V_1 , consider alternatives to V_1 , engage in thought experiments with respect to V_1 , and so on, the agent does not stake her commitment to V_1 on the outcome of this justificatory reasoning. There is no dialectical move that would disrupt the agent's commitment to V_1 .

Chapter 2 explains these features. In addition, I review several other factors that are characteristically but not inevitably associated with sacred values. These include certain types of emotions (such as reverence and awe); a sense of subjective import or meaning; and inarticulacy about the contents of or justification for one's sacred values.

With that, we will have an account of a distinctive type of normative commitment, the sacred value. But sacred values might seem paradigmatically irrational: isn't it

problematic to treat values as inviolable, incontestable, and dialectically invulnerable? Chapter 3 argues that it can be rational to hold sacred values. I start with features (1) and (2), the prohibition of exchanges and comparisons. The commitment to sacred values conflicts with views according to which every normative consideration can be assigned a weight (you are forbidden to weigh or even entertain the idea of weighing sacred values). Moreover, the commitment to sacred values conflicts with views according to which it is always problematic to refuse to compare things which are in fact comparable. I explore how it can be rational to have commitments that exhibit these features.

This still leaves feature (3), dialectical invulnerability. Chapter 4 examines the peculiar way in which sacred values are insulated from the effects of justificatory reflection. I begin by analyzing the concept of devotion. I argue that being devoted requires treating one's commitment to the object of devotion as dialectically invulnerable. I further argue that it can be rational to manifest devotion, for devotion is a precondition for the preservation of central features of ethical life. If it can be rational to devote oneself to things, and if doing so requires treating one's commitment to these things as dialectically invulnerable, then it can be rational to render certain commitments dialectically invulnerable.

The arguments in Chapter 4 turn on the idea that we need to treat certain commitments as fixed and immutable. One way of treating commitments as fixed is by immunizing them from critique, in the ways that Chapter 4 examines. But another way would be by decisively establishing these commitments through rational argumentation. Suppose, for example, that Kant's ethical theory were successful: we begin with some undeniable facts about agency and then show that some analogue of enlightenment values follow from them. If this worked, then we could do away with the dialectical invulnerability component of sacred values: we wouldn't need to treat the values as dialectically invulnerable, because dialectic would decisively establish them.

I think this strategy has no hope of success. In Chapter 5, I explain why. In essence, I argue that reasonable people can always find good grounds for questioning their basic

normative commitments. In particular, I argue that there is a sense in which we are unable to justify weightings or lexical orderings of competing basic normative claims. Reaching an all-things-considered judgment about what ought to be done in a particular case typically requires assigning relative weights to competing normative claims; and yet, according to a view that I call Normative Weighting Skepticism, we lack sufficient justification for assigning these relative weights and thus are unable to reach all-things-considered ought judgments. Although Normative Weighting Skepticism rests on certain assumptions about moral uncertainty, I argue that it is a reasonable philosophical position. I further argue that people who accept Normative Weighting Skepticism will experience a motivational problem that I label Normative Dissipation: roughly, they will find that normative entities (reasons, values, or principles) formerly treated as overriding cease to function as overriding. Having sacred values is one way of insulating one's values from these effects and thereby preventing the relevant form of dissipation.

Chapters 2 through 5 thus jointly show that it can be rational to have sacred values. But sacred values are not wholly positive; they have their costs. In Chapters 6 through 8, I examine pathologies that can arise from defective relations to sacred values. In being immune to rational critique, sacred values can foster and promote oppositional tendencies in individuals and groups. In particular, sacred values can easily give rise to a form of fanaticism.

Chapter 6 examines individual fanaticism. Several philosophers in the early modern period, including Shaftesbury, Locke, and Kant, argue that fanaticism consists in a certain type of dogmatism: one takes oneself to have an incontrovertible justification for some ideal but simultaneously insists that this justification outstrips ordinary rational standards, being based instead on personal experiences of divine communication, insight into the nature of reality, or some such. I call this the Enlightenment account of fanaticism. I argue that it is inadequate: while the Enlightenment account does identify one type of epistemic failing, this failing is not correlated with fanaticism. So we need a new account.

Chapter 7 offers that new account. I argue that fanaticism is based upon a constellation of psychological traits including a form of personal fragility, group orientation, and a view about the status of values. I argue that the fanatic is distinguished by four features: the adoption of one or more sacred values; the need to treat these values as unconditional in order to preserve one's identity; the sense that the status of these values is threatened by lack of widespread acceptance; and the identification with a group, where the group is defined by shared commitment to the sacred value. I explain how these features are mutually reinforcing and tend to promote the types of violent intolerance that we typically associate with fanaticism.

In Chapter 8, I ask how individual fanaticism relates to group fanaticism. The simplest view would be that fanatical groups are groups all or most of whose members are fanatics. But I argue that there is a more promising view. According to my generative view of group fanaticism, a group qualifies as fanatical iff it promotes individual fanaticism. But how, exactly, might a group promote individual fanaticism? I explore the way in which certain kinds of group narratives can promote resentment. Analyzing this notion of resentment, I explain how the production of resentment encourages individual fanaticism. Thus, my account runs as follows: a group counts as fanatical iff it promotes individual fanaticism; a common (though not necessary) way of promoting individual fanaticism is by promoting resentment; thus, a common characteristic of fanatical groups is their tendency to promote resentment. I argue that this account helps us to identify a disturbing feature of certain contemporary groups, movements, and political ideologies.

Chapter 9 draws these points together. We have seen that devotion plays an important role in ethical life; that devotion is fostered by sacred values, which are inviolable, incontestable, and dialectically invulnerable; that close examination reveals that sacred values pervade ethical and social life; and that sacred values stave off normative dissipation. More worryingly, we have seen that the person who holds sacred values risks meeting the Enlightenment conditions for fanaticism; that, when the person with sacred values displays certain additional features, he does indeed become fanatical;

and that fanatical groups encourage individuals to display these additional features and thereby lapse into fanaticism. So we now need to ask: are there ways of holding sacred values without risking fanaticism? I suggest that there are. There are ways of rendering values dialectically invulnerable, and thereby enabling devotion, without generating the most problematic forms of life that can be associated with sacred values. For I suggest that there are non-fanatical ways of expressing devotion, ways that differ from fanaticism in that they enable the agent to recognize a form of contingency, optionality, or revisability in her basic commitments. I investigate whether you can be devoted through irony; through affirmation; and through what I call the deepening move. Each of these stances preserves a degree of flexibility and openness in the objects of devotion; each one tries to preserve a wholehearted form of devotion despite this openness.

Finally, the Conclusion considers what lesson we should draw from these reflections. I began by arguing that we yearn for devotion. My ultimate recommendation is to achieve devotion in non-pathological forms, via affirmation and the deepening move. By doing so, we would avoid the dangers of fanaticism on the one hand and normative dissipation on the other. But this is always a fragile and precarious state: affirmation can slide into a focus on rejecting that which isn't affirmed, and the deepening move can deform into rigidity. Only the perpetual quest to maintain a form of existential flexibility, in which we may need to oscillate between affirmation and deepening, can stave off these dangers. <>

THE PALGRAVE HANDBOOK OF PHILOSOPHY AND LITERATURE edited by Barry Stocker, Michael Mack [Palgrave / Macmillan, ISBN 9781137547934]

This comprehensive Handbook presents the major perspectives within philosophy and literary studies on the relations, overlaps and tensions between philosophy and literature. Drawing on recent work in philosophy and literature, literary theory, philosophical aesthetics, literature as philosophy and philosophy as literature, its twenty-nine chapters plus substantial Introduction and Afterword examine the ways in which philosophy and literature depend on each other and interact, while also contrasting with each other in that they necessarily exclude or incorporate each other. This book establishes an

enduring framework for structuring the broad themes defining the relations between philosophy and literature and organising the main topics in the field.

Key Features

- ❖ Structured in five parts addressing philosophy as literature, philosophy of literature, philosophical aesthetics, literary criticism and theory, and main areas of work within philosophy and literature
- ❖ An Introduction setting out the main concerns of the field through discussion of the major themes along with the individual topics
- ❖ An Afterword looking at the interactions between philosophy and literature through itself enacting philosophical and literary writing while examining the question of how they can be brought together

THE PALGRAVE HANDBOOK OF PHILOSOPHY AND LITERATURE is an essential resource for scholars, researchers and advanced students in philosophy of literature, philosophy as literature, literary theory, literature as philosophy, and the philosophical aesthetics of literature. It is an ideal volume for researchers, advanced students and scholars in philosophy, literary studies, philosophy and literature, cultural studies, classical studies and other related fields.

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Broad Scope of Philosophy and Literature

Philosophy and literature is a very wide field and this handbook does not try to cover every possible aspect. The coverage is however broad in that the philosophy and literature largely stemming from Ancient Greece on through the Western tradition is covered in many aspects. No judgement here is made of the value of the Western tradition in comparison with others. No claim is made that the Western tradition is itself self-contained and continuous in any pure way. It is simply the case that this philosophy and literature most known to an English-speaking audience and that a genuinely global and comparative approach, also making allowances for variations on the canon, would be a truly vast enterprise which would require more than one volume or would have to sacrifice depth and detail.

There is no attempt here to summarise the chapters in the Handbook or offer bibliographical information except for suggested readings at the end. What is done here is to provide a view of the themes and topics explored in sections and chapters of the book, so that the structure of the book is explained and readers already have a general background to each chapter. The background provided in this introduction does not duplicate or summarise what each author has said, what it does is provide the

context for what the author has said within the broad development of philosophy and literature according to the view of the editors, so it provides another perspective, though one shaped in accordance with the book as a whole and what has been done in the individual chapters. The volume has been constructed on the understanding that philosophy and literature cannot be thought of just as a confrontation between philosophy and literary texts or on the application of philosophical aesthetics to literature. There are various gradations of philosophy and literary studies which must be taken into account in order to have something like a fully representative survey of the field. The chapters have very different ways of dealing with the relation between philosophy and literature, broadly distinguished according to the structure of the book. The chapters are organised into sections on: 'Philosophy as Literature', 'Philosophy of Literature', 'Philosophical Aesthetics', 'Literary Criticism and Theory', and 'Areas of Work Within Philosophy and Literature'. There is of course no absolute distinction between these areas, but in the view of the editors these distinctions are the best way of articulating what comes under philosophy and literature. That is, we can see the main elements of the field in this construction.

Part One: Philosophy as Literature

There is philosophy written as literature, the theme of Part One, which of course goes back very early in the history of philosophy and literature. There is no simple category of philosophy written as literature. The phrase itself might imply a kind of philosophy taking on the disguise of literature. This may be one approach to writing a literary kind of philosophy or thinking about the more literary aspects of philosophy, but what is more important is to think about the ways in which there is always something literary in philosophy and the deeper ways in which philosophy may be a particular kind of philosophy because of its literary style. Philosophy emerges from literature (also raising the status of myth in the beginning of both literature and philosophy) and is always at least in some minimal sense written in a style of some form, using figurative language and fiction to impress the reader. The most anti-literary kind of philosophical writing nevertheless appeals to imagination and the concrete nature of words at some points, because there is little chance of completely effective philosophical communication

otherwise. What this part is more concerned with is the way philosophy can appear in the main literary genres. This includes some account of the way philosophy deals with discussion of the genre in question, since the philosophical discussion of genres and the philosophical use of genres are interactive processes. The main focus though is the ways in which philosophy can be written through literary genres.

Dialogue

The first philosophical works that survive as whole texts are Plato's dialogues, and their appeal is certainly literary as well as philosophical. It is appropriate then that Dialogue is the topic of the first chapter of Part One. Aristotle also contributed to the literature of philosophical dialogues, though frustratingly these are lost. Cicero's dialogues are less remarkable than those of Plato, but add to dialogue as a major form of philosophical writing. Cicero's philosophical writings were part of his contribution to the formation of Latin style, towards the end of the Roman Republic. Boethius added to the use of dialogue in philosophy, shortly after the fall of the Roman state in the West. Later examples of philosophical dialogue include George Berkeley and David Hume, followed by passages in Soren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Martin Heidegger. This is philosophy written in such a way as to show the drama of ideas and of conflicts between ideas, presented through clashes between characters who speak. The genre of philosophical dialogue can itself be considered an element of novelistic form, since the conflict of ideas through the speech on characters features heavily in the novel, along with other forms of narrative including the more narrative kind of poetry. There is some division within philosophical dialogues between the ones with more literary and imaginative power, independent of the argument and the ones where the dialogue form seems more like clothing for the argument, maybe to make a provocative point of view seem more acceptable and more provisional since only held by a character in the dialogue. The former type begins with Plato and carries on through Kierkegaard. The latter type includes Cicero, carrying on through Berkeley and Hume. This is not to say that the latter type lack literary merit, but the dialogue form seems much more of a rhetorical adornment than a deep part of the argument. It is not clear that much is lost if they are transformed into direct prose, though of course even the role of dialogue

here in making the argument more acceptable is a significant concern. The dialogue as a form for accommodating conflict of ideas expands into forms which are not immediately defined as dialogues but present voices with differing ideas within an authorial voice. Maybe the most striking examples are the spiritual struggles in Augustine of Hippo and the essays of Michel de Montaigne. In the latter case, a whole genre is developed, in part, through a displacement of conflict of ideas within a dialogue to rival ideas considered by the author.

Essays

As has just been established, the essay as an aspect of philosophy and literature is very much associated in its origin with Michel de Montaigne. He developed the essay as an important form of writing and a philosophical approach concerned with subjectivity, at the same time. His philosophical legacy is the Essays, in which the possibilities of individual inquiry, storytelling, and discursive philosophising are all explored through essays which test the limits of coherence of writing. This approach permeates later philosophy, though the more digressive aspects of Montaigne's are mostly curbed in later practitioners from Francis Bacon through David Hume and Ralph Waldo Emerson to the authors of current scholarly articles in philosophy journals. Even though the philosophical essay in Bacon, Hume, and Emerson is relatively restrained and coherent compared with the work of Montaigne, it does provide an alternative to the technical style of the philosophical essay as it has developed since Gottlob Frege and Bertrand Russell. Their approach can be taken back a bit further to Charles Sanders Peirce, though he wrote in a less technical style. The technical philosophical essay can be taken back further to Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz in the seventeenth century.

Montaigne's essay writing carries on through forms other than the essay, in the fragments of Blaise Pascal which combine variegated insights, the maxims, and reflections of Francois de La Rochefoucauld, the various forms of writing in Rousseau, and so on through all the ways of writing French philosophy. This philosophical history writing cannot be separated from a literary history of letters, memoirs, plays, and novels onto Marcel Proust and since. The essays of Montaigne stand at the beginning then of the multiplication and intersection of ways of writing both philosophy and

literature which spread quickly outside France as can be seen in the use of the essay on cannibals in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Derrida's deconstructive style and the Analytic paper on necessary and sufficient conditions for use of a concept both come out of the form of the essay in Montaigne. Through Emerson, the essay becomes an expression of Transcendentalism; through Peirce it becomes an expression of Pragmatism. These philosophical positions were articulated following a literary model in Montaigne of establishing a position, exploring criticisms and alternatives, ending with a final position. The same applies to the most austere work of investigation into the philosophy of logic, language, and science.

Narrative

Narrative in philosophy goes back at least to Plato as does philosophical analysis of narrative. Narration is regarded with suspicion in Plato as a means to communicate false ideas, even while he often has narratives embedded into his dialogues. Homeric epic, the major narrative presence in ancient Greek culture is regarded with the deepest suspicion as the portrayal of immoral gods. Perhaps theatre is worse with its use of actors pretending to be someone else and its provocation to enjoy improper pleasures at someone else's suffering. However, these are all present in Homeric epic which provides source material for ancient drama and which was sung by performers. In Aristotle, we see a more sympathetic approach to narrative, though with less use of narrative. On the latter point, it is still the case that Aristotle's philosophy frequently relies on mininarratives, very short stories that illustrate and build up an argument. His analysis of narrative is in the *Poetics*, where pure narrative as in Homeric epic is held to be inferior to tragic drama in some respects, but is also more complete than drama. Long narrative is episodic, revealing a reality about the world and the ways in which events are dispersed and loosely connected. Narrative has always been part of philosophy given the latter's tendency to use stories to clarify, reinforce, and emphasise. There is more of the latter in later philosophy. However, we do see elements of narrative in Cicero, Seneca, Boethius, and so on or even full-scale narrative as in Augustine's autobiographical work. Descartes' most widely read philosophical texts bring in narrative as central in the supposed birth of modern philosophy. The

analysis of narrative is a far rarer thing in the history of philosophy, though a central work of Enlightenment eighteenth-century philosophy, Giambattista Vico's *New Science* does deal with narrative. Vico puts Homeric epic at the centre of a philosophy of history in a repeated cycle of stages. It cannot however be said that there is much narrative analysis in Vico's account. He provides more of an elevation of the earlier form of long narrative as revealing of the society which produced it. The central idea is that epic contains imaginative universals in which one thing stands for a universal class, while the development of philosophy shifts the whole of culture, including its literary aspect to abstract universals. The impact on literature is that narrative moves from myth to illustration of moral maxims. So though Vico does not really analyse narrative, he does set out a view of its cultural place and the transformation of narrative. There is philosophical work on the novel from the late eighteenth century onwards, but close discussion of narrative really emerges in the twentieth century on the basis of linguistics, semiology, and hermeneutics, along with Analytic philosophy.

Poetry

Philosophy before Plato was often written in verse, so we can say that philosophy was largely poetry in the Miletian and Eleatic schools, and other pre-Socratic contributions. The study of the earliest philosophy is often the study of poetry. Even in the time of Socrates, Anaxagoras wrote his poetry in verse. Centuries later Lucretius wrote in this way at about the same time as Cicero wrote dialogues. Boethius uses poetry as well as dialogue-marking a final point in the classical use of poetry in philosophy. The use of poetry in later philosophy is distinctly unusual, but Nietzsche sometimes includes poetry in his philosophical texts. Some writers considered poets more than philosophers were engaging with philosophy as can be seen in William Wordsworth and Friedrich Hölderlin. More recently Stéphane Mallarmé, Rainer Maria Rilke, T.S. Eliot, Wallace Stevens, and Paul Celan are among those widely recognised to make a philosophical contribution, even if they are largely regarded primarily as poets. Since the time of Boethius, poetry has been seen as philosophical more through philosophical aspects of poetic language rather than the communication of philosophical ideas. The connection between poetic language and a deep experience of

the linguistic, including what lies at the edge of language, is an idea from the Romantic era. However, we can see precedents for it stretching back into the Middle Ages, in the poetry or religious experience, as in Dante Alighieri's contribution and that of the Piers Plowman author. In comparison with later Romantic and Symbolist ideas of poetry, the religious and philosophical meanings are presented in very rhetorical ways, but still in a language connecting with the Romantic and post-Romantic worlds. The analysis of poetry goes back to Plato, if in a rather cursory form suggesting it relies on non-reasoned inspiration which may convey truths, but not the highest way of knowing them. Aristotle provides a more systematic approach in the Poetics, but what we have does not say much about lyric poetry. Out of classical sources, we do get the idea of lyric poetry as a subjective form of literature. It is in the late eighteenth century in Immanuel Kant that these ideas get elevated into lyric poetry as a particularly pure form of art, engaged with the deepest subjectivity. That idea is still very influential and informs continuing philosophical interest, even where as in Heidegger the idea of subjectivity is treated with suspicion. In the more Heideggerian approach, Being reveals itself in its self-concealment in a particularly powerful way.

Autobiography and Biography

The poetry which contains philosophy may have an autobiographical component as can be seen in Dante and Wordsworth. Philosophical texts may be written as autobiography. René Descartes wrote some of his philosophy as prose narrative, making storytelling part of the formulation of modern philosophy and more specifically bringing autobiography into philosophy. This is one part of the way that a lot of philosophy, particularly of the Analytic variety, despite its separation from literary style, uses storytelling, or at least brief imaginative fictions with some of the qualities of literature, as a main aspect of philosophical argument. Augustine wrote a literary classic, Confessions, which is part of his philosophical and theological output at the end of the Roman world in the West while also providing a paradigm for literary autobiography. Like Descartes' Discourse, it is not strictly known as an autobiography but has elements of it and is an important part of the background. There are strong autobiographical elements in Boethius and Montaigne, continuing this tradition from

Augustine. Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Confessions* might often be regarded as part of his literary output but also contains philosophical positions and arguments regarding the nature of the self and memory. This is a relatively straightforward kind of autobiography pioneered by Rousseau but of course always conditioned by fictional and aesthetic concerns which are very evidently at work in at least two texts. The generally accepted paradigm of the modern biography, James Boswell's *The Life of Samuel Johnson* appears later in the eighteenth century, suggesting that thought of this century, including philosophy, is entangled with the development of biographical form, through interest in mind, ideas, imagination, self-love, passions, and so on. Nietzsche presents philosophical autobiography as something much more detached from an account of a life and more the view of how a life is shaped from the point of view of philosophy.

Fragments and Aphorisms

Friedrich Schlegel made a perhaps underrated contribution to philosophy through a style of fragments and aphorisms, himself following precedents in writers like Anthony Ashley Cooper (Third Earl of Shaftesbury), Francois de La Rochefoucauld, and Blaise Pascal who straddle philosophy and literature. The aphorisms and fragments of French writers are fundamental to the development of French literature as well philosophy. Ideas about the passions in French literature operate in close relation to philosophical, or moral, aphorisms which refer to paradoxical and conflicting aspects of the passions. The style of aphorism in Pascal and La Rochefoucauld itself conveys a view of the perpetually unsatisfied and incomplete nature of the passions. They pose a challenge to rationalistic views of the human and natural worlds, whether derived from antique Stoic or modern Cartesian sources. They are in some degree maxims, as the title of La Rochefoucauld's book. His own contribution is accompanied by other writers of aphorisms and fragments in the Jena or Athenäum circle of German Romantics or Romantic Ironists. His style of writing and that of his predecessors is echoed in the work of Soren Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche, so does form a large part of the philosophical tradition since the seventeenth century. Kierkegaard discusses the Jena Romantic Ironists early in his career; one of his books is *Philosophical Fragments*

(though also translated as Philosophical Crumbs), and the whole of *Either/Or* I is a performative engagement with Romantic Irony including the use of aphorism and fragment. Theodor Adorno and Maurice Blanchot were the most obvious followers of the aphoristic and fragmentary style in areas of twentieth-century philosophy centrally concerned with literary aesthetics. Blanchot himself wrote literary fictions as well as philosophy. It is not only in French and German philosophers of Ludwig Wittgenstein through his two contrasting major works, between them marking at least and often two major transformations in thinking about logic, language, metaphysics, mind, knowledge, and foundations of mathematics. Wittgenstein was a great admirer of Kierkegaard, and though there are many differences in preoccupations, Wittgenstein's revolutionary philosophy is achieved using related forms of writing.

Part Two: Philosophy of Literature

Part Two is again organised around genres, and there is some overlap with the selection of genres in the first section. This approach has been taken to accommodate the different ways philosophy approaches different literary genres. If philosophy and literature is about interaction, if it is about more than philosophy taking literature as an object and literature illustrating philosophical claims, then it must deal with the ways that differences between genres are an issue for philosophy of literature as well as philosophy as literature. Just as philosophy is itself changed according to which literary form it might have, philosophy must change according to the kind of literature it discusses. While there must of course be general pure aesthetics of some kind, this may at times obscure the degree to which different kinds of kind, and then different kinds of genre with individual arts, appeal to different aspects of philosophy. The aspects of language explored in the aesthetics of poetry must be different from those explored in the novel, and the weight of language is different. Poetry is where language will be most central, and the novel is the discussion of language as style is important, but not so much the details of linguistic devices which tend to be subordinate to narrative issues. So where there is philosophy of the novel, the questions are about integrating the complexity of events, characters, linguistic registers, and themes into a unity of some kind. In poetry, certainly in lyric poetry, unity of the complex is important but as the

coming together of words and concrete ideas rather than the creation of a large literary world with time, space, structure, competing thoughts, and so on.

Myth

Both literature and philosophy have what can be described as a beginning and as a prehistory in myth. There are major questions about how far both philosophy and literature can be said to be distinct from myth at any time in their development, which include questions about the relationship of philosophy and literature. Myth contains explanations for natural and social phenomena. It is clear that by the time of Plato it had become normal to think of myth as having some rational basis, so as something that could be read philosophically. Plato's own form of rationalism still allows the deployment of mythic in his own philosophy. The investigation of the relation between myth and philosophy was central to the work of Giambattista Vico's version of Enlightenment and Adorno and Horkheimer's version of critique of Enlightenment. For Vico, his new science of the human world uncovers the reality behind myth, using the methods of philosophy and philology together. In this case, philosophy only has power to investigate the human world in conjunction with the study of literary texts, so is intertwined with literature. Homer's epics stand at the centre of historical progress from origins of human community almost lost to rational reconstruction and to the law-governed world in which the meaning of myth is almost lost. Adorno and Horkheimer also put Homer at the centre, seeing these epics as founded in a struggle of reason against nature in which myth is obliterated but rises anew within reason. The anthropological study of myth, itself rooted in the growth of social science following out of the work of Vico and other Enlightenment historical philosophers, comes into literary studies and philosophy again through encounters such as Mircea Eliade's philosophy of religion and history, or, Derrida's commentaries on myth and early philosophy. The idea of the fixity and long-term nature of myth existing in contrast with the changeable and subjective nature of poetry can be found in Romantic thought, as can be found in the progress from Schlegel to Kierkegaard. In looking at myth in the context of philosophy and literature, we can then see two broad themes: myth as inspired or archaic thought versus reason and myth as dominating tradition versus

individual subjectivity. The ways in which myth can be shaped to give an inspired aspect to philosophical argument while providing a carapace of traditional wisdom is itself an issue in Plato's philosophical writing which can be brought into later use and discussion of myth.

Epic

Epic is a way in which myth, philosophy, and literature mingle at the beginning of the development of literature and myth but not only the beginning. Homeric epic is a fundamental source for ancient Greek philosophy as well as an object of critical discussion. The successors to Homeric epic writing (Virgil, Dante, Milton, and others) have engaged with philosophical issues and in later development have become objects of philosophical discussion about their relations with romance and the novel. Homeric epic is also the source of stories taken up in Greek tragedy, itself leading us into philosophical questions about these genres and their relations. Ancient Greek drama, tragic and comic, interacts with Athenian philosophy as well as becoming an object for it. One route leads from ancient Greek epic to tragedy, another leads to Augustan Latin epic. Just as modern interest in Greek epic is almost entirely confined to Homer, interest in Latin epic is almost entirely confined to Virgil's Aeneid. Later epics still attracting attention are very largely in English (John Milton) or are Medieval to Renaissance works featuring knightly combat, which could also be classified as Romances, as in the cases of Torquato Tasso and Ludovico Ariosto. The big exception is Dante Alighieri's Divine Comedy, which can be grouped with John Milton's Paradise Lost as the central work in epic after Homer and Virgil. Though Dante and Milton are separated by centuries in time, by language and many other things, they both have a religious centre to their epics. Homeric epic was the major source of information about the Olympian deities and archaic heroes for the ancient Greeks. Virgil created a civic religion interwoven with theology. So the most grand epics in the tradition have had deeply and foundational religious aspects which generally separate from other instances of the genre, though does justify complete marginalisation of the other instances. Epic exists in relation to Romance as well as to the novel. Remembering this should reduce any tendency to see epic as self-enclosed and monumental as has often

happened. It should not be seen as the expression of a complete and untroubled world view which has been a tradition in looking at Homer in particular. In this respect, it may be useful to look at epic backwards; in the sense that when we look at Milton, we are able to place *Paradise Lost* in the context of other genres and his own variety of writing, in contrast to Homer where we lack framing texts and an idea of the writer as a complete author. We can further look at the epic tradition from its beginning in the context of the development of the novel. In his major novels, Joyce is engaged in encounter with epic in trying to write modern epic and play with the form of ancient epic. Hermann Broch gives another version of this in his novel on Virgil by making the context of epic creation and the presumed subjectivity of the writer a focus for a novel. This can be carried on through consideration of those novels (Miguel de Cervantes and Herman Melville), verse dramas (Goethe), and romances (Wolfram von Eschenbach) which have the most epic qualities.

Drama

The philosophical discussion of drama begins with a very critical reaction in Plato and a rehabilitation in Aristotle. The illusion of dramatic performance and the enjoyment of bad pleasures are identified as reasons for suspicion in Plato who sometimes seems to wish for a Greek culture free of drama as well as Homeric epic. In his own writing, he provides a counter in that dialogue is a variation of drama even if not performed. The non-performance may be an advantage from Plato's point of view. The essential quality of drama, that it is almost pure speech, is the essential quality of dialogue. Aristotle's reaction is to define tragedy as the highest art and give it moral dignity as a way in which develop awareness of the horror that can come from an error in the actions of someone of good, though not perfect moral character, and elevated stature in the community. The movement from ancient to modern tragedy has provided a particularly rich source of inspiration for philosophical discussion through G.W.F. Hegel, Kierkegaard, Walter Benjamin, and others. For them the development of tragedy shows the differences for philosophy of history and social philosophy between communal societies in compact city states and modern individualised societies under an impersonal state. There has also been a particularly persistent discussion about the

possible primacy of tragedy as a literary form and even as the highest form of any art, since Aristotle. Aristotle was himself following on from, and criticising, Plato's criticisms of the immorality and irrationality of tragedy. Related comments have been applied to comedy.

For Aristotle, comedy is inferior though as drama about low-status characters. The later discussion in German Idealism and Kierkegaard of comedy places it more as the counterpart of tragedy. What philosophy has often lacked with regard to drama is an account of the nature of the performance, of the specific qualities of text which should be turned into performance. Performance is always present in reading, which in earlier stages of history was very likely to be loud to an audience. The relation between text and performance to an audience is always an issue in literature and philosophy. Plato wrote philosophy which at least has some of the aspects of drama, in that his dialogues are dramatisations. The Ancient Greek dramatic performances brought together cities in ways which seem remote from modern theatrical performance, but do show how drama is embedded in the formation of community, the gathering of an audience for a collective experience. It is a community forming event in which writing and speech, text and body, interact and can pull against each other.

Lyric Poetry

The lyric poem was discussed in the earliest Athenian considerations of literary forms, as well as in Augustan Rome. It found a central place in the great eighteenth-century growth of philosophical aesthetics, in which the question arose of whether it was the most pure form of literature in the concentration on words as objects. Romantic lyric poetry had significant influence on and interaction with Idealist and Romantic philosophy, going on to become the centre of literary analysis in the New Criticism of the twentieth century. Immanuel Kant was the main Enlightenment and Idealist exponent of poetry as the highest form of the arts, as his aesthetics suggests a detachment of poetry from meaning in pure imagination. The idea music as the highest art in Kierkegaard and Schopenhauer also elevated poetry. For Kierkegaard, the highest form of music' is opera, the music exists through a poetic side. The poetic genre also attracted philosophical attention, particularly in the Continental philosophical

tradition in its development from Romantic symbolism to modernism, with regard to the limits of words and meaning, sometimes of ethical hope. The lyric poem, in its most pure form, was a part of Renaissance literary high culture, where it had an elevated courtly and aesthetic status. It was however more part of rhetoric and less part of any ideal of aesthetic purity, at least with regard to the way it was understood. The journey of lyric poetry from the most subjective of the literary genres recognised by Aristotle, less significant than epic and tragedy, to a continuing tendency to regard it as the most pure and absolute form of literature is striking, though in Plato there is already the idea of poetry as coming from ecstasy which is maybe revived to some degree in Romantic thought. The ideal of poetry spreads beyond the lyric poem itself to the prose poem and the idea of the novel as a work which might use poetic language of a lyric extended over an epic length. This is part of how the novel itself becomes elevated as a form. The focus on lyric poetry also involves a shift in the moral and epistemological issues that appear as from the Romantic period on, poetry is often taken up in challenges to the world which may appear alien in its reality and more claims from the point of view of the poetic voice. On way of looking at the development of literature since the Romantic era is of a shift of lyric poetry from illustration of a metaphysical or moral point of view to epistemological and moral challenge, through the intense subjectivity now attributed to poetry.

The Novel

The novel has a double history or prehistory in that its origins have been traced back to ancient epic and to ancient novels, along with other genres absorbed into the form. Despite its current place as a major component of literary culture, the elevation of the novel to a high aesthetic level worthy of extensive philosophical discussion is quite recent. The elevation of the novel in the culture maybe goes back to the mid-nineteenth century as the novel became the major literary way of commenting on the times or on history. The novel becomes part of history as it becomes part of the formation of nations, establishing a national language and a way of conceiving of the nation. The novel in a recognisably modern form does go back further, though exactly how far is itself not clear. There is a kind of double beginning of the novel in the

sixteenth century with Francois Rabelais first in France with, then later in the sixteenth century and on into the seventeenth century, Miguel de Cervantes in Spain. This itself conditions philosophical discussion of the novel, with the more idealising high canon discussions tending to place Cervantes at the beginning, while the more popular culture and anthropological discussions tend to place Rabelais at the beginning, most famously in the work of Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin. The latter approach also tends to bring in the plurality of genres feeding into the novel rather than treating it as the inheritor of the grandest aspects of the epic tradition. The idealising approach can be found in the first really notable work on the philosophy of the novel in late eighteenth-century Germany, that is, the work of Friedrich Schlegel and other Romantic Ironists of the Athenäum circle in Jena. This approach which did elevate the status of the novel was resisted by Hegel, who generally resisted the kind of elevation of subjectivity, fractured form, shifting perspective, and irony to be found in the Jena Romantics. For later readers, Hegel's judgement tends to self-undermine because he holds onto a relatively low aesthetic status for the novel, as part of his argument that art cannot reach the highest level after the perfection of Protestant Christian theology and modern philosophy amongst the German Idealists, particularly himself. Really major work on the philosophy of the novel does not appear again until the time of Kierkegaard, where it has a strange status since the novel as form and object of analysis is both an important area of Kierkegaard's and is not something he emphasises much. He discusses the form of the novel in his university thesis, along with some of his even earlier writing and later reviews. His own writing at some points can be regarded as a philosophical novel, an idea promoted by the Romantic Ironists. Kierkegaard does not present himself as a thinker about the novel, and the next work of lasting interest is that of György Lukács in the early twentieth century, followed by Bakhtin, Erich Auerbach, Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, René Girard, Georges Bataille, and Maurice Blanchot.

Romance

Romance as a genre could be said to come between epic and the novel, suffering an eclipse as the novel takes over as the main long narrative genre of the culture. The rise

of the novel itself includes a significant aspect of parody of romance, in Don Quixote. It can equally be said that romance lives on in the novel, which often brings in heroic, adventurous, and fantastic elements directly from romance or maybe reinvents them. Though it looks like the mediating term between ancient epic and the modern novel, it does not generally get much attention from that point of view. Attention tends to be limited to medievalist and Renaissance specialists, along with literary formalists, the archetypal criticism practised by Northrop Frye and Joseph Campbell. However, romance has enormous current cultural relevance. J.R.R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings trilogy, one of the most culturally significant works of twentieth-century literature, is a mixture of recreated archaic epic and romance. The ways in which Arthurian romance and the theories of Joseph Campbell have been present in cultural creation are numerous. The role of the parody of romance in Cervantes is really more of a reason for reading romance than not reading it. Romance may summon images of medievalist fantasy, but does also include Renaissance foundations of modern English literature in Geoffrey

Chaucer and Edmund Spenser. Looking at the aesthetic philosophy of the twentieth century, work by Bakhtin and Benjamin mostly known for its relation with the novel does deal at length with folklore, a vital component of romance, while Bakhtin as noted above does give importance to romance as a forerunner of the modern novel. The work of Benjamin and Bakhtin, in particular, draws attention to the roles of timelessness, repetition, irrelevance of space, and the fulfilment of the hero in folklore which enter into romance. It is important not to see romance just in terms of a literary world lacking in modern subjectivity or formal play though. It draws on folklore but also incorporated the antique legacy along with the growth of medieval literary culture over centuries in which relatively realist and historical locations may combine with awareness of the impossibility of human desire and the failings of human institutions. Arthurian romance in its many iterations is a way of dealing with the role of kingship, the relation between religion and war, nature and human community, the conflicts between pure love and social community, at least in the later medieval versions, playing a strong role in sharing political visions of monarchy at the time. Romance is

just as much about the tensions between the folkloric world and what appears to undermine its apparent certainties as it is confirmation.

Part Three: Philosophical Aesthetics

The central section of the book is on philosophical aesthetics, which is maybe appropriate if you think of philosophising about literary aesthetics as the foundation and centre of philosophy and literature. While there are good arguments for why this might be the case, the editors prefer to think that any section could be taken as equally close to the centre and foundation of philosophy and literature. What this section certainly does is provide a transition from discussions of genre in literature to discussions which cut across genres. The topics here are a mixture of philosophical approaches and areas of investigation. The distinction is not absolute though since Cognitive Philosophy and Language, Ontology, and Fiction are areas of investigation which tend to assume a philosophical approach though we should of course regard this always open to challenge and transformation. Any attempt to deal fully with philosophical aesthetics in Western philosophy must deal with the distinction between Continental European and Analytic philosophical approaches. This distinction is itself complicated by a number of factors including the oddity that it appears to be a distinction between a geographical location on one side and a philosophical method on the other side, along with the uncertainty about whether cognitive philosophy should be grouped with Analytic philosophy or placed in a category of its own. The Continental-Analytic distinction is usually traced back to the nineteenth century, but has precedents from early on. Think about the antique distinction between Plato's literary approach and Aristotle's discursive approach, or the Renaissance distinction between Montaigne's version of the essayistic and Descartes' version of the philosophical discourse, or the early modern distinction between Pascal's aphorisms and the logical model of Leibniz's philosophical writing, or the Enlightenment distinction between Vico's literary historicism and David Hume's historically decontextualised work on ideas.

Analytic Aesthetics

The Analytic approach in philosophy can be taken back to Aristotle as suggested above, and maybe those Platonic dialogues which seem closest to an Aristotelian mode, possibly because Aristotle had an influence on Plato from within the Academy. However, the distinction as a recognisable one in terms of the way philosophy is done now is usually taken back to the nineteenth century, maybe with reference to John Stuart Mill's criticisms of European ways of doing philosophy. The real emergence of Analytic philosophy as we know comes later in the nineteenth century, in the essays and monographs of Gottlob Frege on the philosophy of language, logic, and mathematics followed by the related work of Bertrand Russell in the early twentieth century. An earlier precedent might also be found in the work of Charles Sanders Peirce on pragmatist philosophy in the earlier nineteenth century. However, Peirce's essays are much more discursive and less cornered with conceptual purity than the work of Frege and Russell, while at times also incorporating theological speculations foreign to the determination of Frege and Russell to exclude anything not strictly relevant to conceptual discussion. In one of the oddities of the Continental-Analytic distinction, the Continental side is usually traced back to the German philosophers who followed Kant, particularly J.G. Fichte, F.W.J. Schelling, and Hegel, in a period distinctly preceding the emergence of Analytic philosophy. The Continental side of the distinction seems to assume that all philosophy before the German Idealists was Analytic, something of a concession. It is certainly the case that Analytic philosophy tends to see precedents in Kant and most pre-Kantian philosophy; however, not all such philosophy fits this pattern which is why it is suggested above that the distinction may in reality go back to antiquity. The Analytic position is less obviously tied to aesthetics than Continental approaches since the latter includes many philosophers who bring literary style into their philosophy and put aesthetics at the centre of their philosophy. Analytic aesthetics looks comparatively marginal; nevertheless questions of literary writing and the status of fictions can be found in Frege and Russell gave importance both to literary references and creating philosophical fictions. In this way, aesthetics may more be central to analytic philosophy than it appears to be, and this is

why a chapter has been given to this topic. Looking at what is normally defined as Analytic aesthetics, there is a tradition going back to the 1950s which looks at conceptual questions such as: defining the art object, defining the location of aesthetic qualities, defining art as an institutional creation or an intrinsic quality, defining aesthetic appreciation as more cognitive or emotive, the nature of art criticism, the nature of metaphor, art, and the nature of consciousness. Cognitive issues appear in the list which might or might not be regarded as specific to Analytic philosophy.

Cognitive Philosophy

Cognitive philosophy, that is, work on knowledge processes in the brain and mind, might be considered part of Analytic philosophy, and large parts of it are very clearly related to Analytic work on mind, epistemology, science, and language. Two things distinguish it from Analytic philosophy. One is that the analytic aspect of Analytic philosophy is usually taken to refer to some kind of priority for at least one out of logical, linguistic, and conceptual modes of analysis rather than to natural, or even machine generated, processes of any kind. The other thing is that cognition refers to an area of philosophical investigation so does connected with Continental European philosophy as well as Analytic philosophy. Maurice Merleau-Ponty did not organise his phenomenology and philosophy of psychology around the theme of cognition, but cognition is a part of it, and Phenomenology of Perception is a major influence on recent work in cognition. Issues of cognition are clearly part of philosophy, but additionally in recent years they have also become a significant part of literary studies and should be included in a book on philosophy and literature. Cognitive philosophy of some kind goes back to the origins of philosophy, certainly appearing in the discussions of mind in Plato, Aristotle, and later schools of antique philosophy. The issues of cognition should also be recognised as part of literature from the beginning, since literature contains assumptions about how the minds of characters work at an individual differentiated level and at a more unified universal level. Literary texts do not generally contain complete theories of perception and cognition, but do constantly rely on a view of how these processes work, or it could be said they create fictional worlds in which they work in certain ways. This is partly an absorption of the views of

the time and is partly a creation of a way of thinking about it. On top of this, discussion of cognition in literature now combines the study of the cognitive theories of the past in literature with cognitive theory as it is now, interpreting the cognitive theories of the past. One classic examination of this is Benjamin's discussion of humours in the psychological assumptions of baroque (seventeenth-century) Europe. The theory of humours is itself a mixture of psychology and physiology. Current cognitive theory is concerned with neurology as well as psychology, perception as well as theoretical knowledge. Psychoanalysis may provide one entry point into these topics, but is doing something different in its concerns with the unconscious, and is of less weight within the broadly psychological aspects of literary studies than it used to be this philosophy relates to literary ways of dealing with experience. Later philosophical work of Heidegger does put literary texts at the centre. There is a major issue of how far there is continuity between earlier and later Heidegger. Leaving that aside as far as possible, it can be said that the later Heidegger continues to be concerned with Being as something that evades the more scientific, logical, and empiricist forms of philosophy and that can to some degree be shown through poetic writing. Heidegger's own writing of this period sometimes tries to incorporate these poetic capacities. The hermeneutic tradition was carried on in philosophy by Hans-Georg Gadamer who establishes more of a systematic aesthetic approach than Heidegger. Paul Ricoeur was another major figure in hermeneutics after Heidegger, tending to be more systematic than even Gadamer and giving even fuller attention to what can be described as aesthetics or poetics.

Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics emerges out of German Idealism and Romanticism in the interpretation of the Bible and of ancient Greek philosophy. The key figure in the origins of hermeneutics is Friedrich Schleiermacher, who made major contributions to Protestant theology and to the interpretation of Plato, helping to establish the idea of a Socrates distinct from Plato within the dialogues. It is a philosophical approach to interpretation drawing on philology of classical texts and Biblical interpretation which are linked by the role of the philology of the Hebrew and Greek text making up the Bible. This is

shaped by the rationalistic demythologised understanding of Christianity in Kant and Hegel, itself drawing on an approach to Biblical literature going back to Baruch Spinoza in the seventeenth century. After Schleiermacher, Wilhelm Dilthey took hermeneutics into the sphere of social science, distinguishing between explanation as a method of the natural sciences and understanding as the basis of social science. More importantly from the point of view of literary studies, hermeneutics was taken up by Martin Heidegger in early work as a major aspect of his approach along with ontology. Heidegger's early philosophy is not itself a work of literary interpretation, but the centrality of 'Being-in-the-world' to its approach establishes philosophy in which anxiety, thrownness, care, authenticity, and inauthenticity along with other themes identified as part of the structure of Dasein' (the kind of Being humans have) interact strongly with themes both within literature and literary studies. The strong, but understated, roots of Heidegger's early philosophy in the often literary philosophy of Augustine of Hippo and Kierkegaard gives an idea of how

Phenomenology

Phenomenology overlaps with hermeneutics particularly in the case of Heidegger, so also in all the philosophy that came after Heidegger and was influenced by him including Emmanuel Levinas, Michel Foucault, Maurice Blanchot, Jacques Derrida, and Giorgio Agamben. Phenomenology as a philosophical movement is associated with Edmund Husserl, who himself claimed Phenomenology was what philosophy had always been doing properly understood. In particular, he argued that he was carrying on the approach of both Plato and Descartes. He was more immediately building on work in psychology and philosophy of psychology, though he was insistent that phenomenology was anti-psychologistic. Husserl also built on work in philosophical anthropology, personalistic ethics, and other versions of phenomenology. His approach to phenomenology was formalistic, concerned with ideal objects and forms of intentional consciousness. He had a negative reaction to Heidegger's way of continuing his approach. Towards the end of his life, Husserl became more concerned with history and ethical goals in history, but it is the formalism work which had a great influence. Husserl himself did not work on literature, but some of his followers, most famously

Roman Ingarden, brought literary objects within the scope of phenomenology. Heidegger pointed the way towards a phenomenology more concerned with history, time, authenticity, poetic experience, and all the things described under hermeneutics above. Discussion of literature appears not only in later Heidegger but also in Levinas, Foucault, and Derrida. The reactions to phenomenology spread to philosophers not part of the phenomenological inheritance, most notably Gaston Bachelard who turned to writing a poetics of experience rather than his earlier work on the formation of science. Jean-Paul Sartre's most widely read philosophical work concerns phenomenology in the fields of imagination and ontology. Accordingly this work attempts to make questions of Being questions of concrete experience. There is not much discussion of literature, but it does establish a way literature might be discussed in philosophical terms, and Sartre had already undertaken the task a few years earlier in his novelistic work. Work on feminism by Simone de Beauvoir and colonialism along with racism by Franz Fanon confirms how far phenomenology can enter a variety of fields of human experience which can be taken up in poetics.

Language, Ontology, Fiction

Issues of language, ontology, and fiction in philosophy have largely been part of analytic philosophy, both with regard to general objects of philosophical analysis and the status of literary objects. This specific but also broadly encompassing issue in Analytic philosophy does allow other modes of philosophy and brings philosophy and literature close to each other around very central issues. These are the issues of the reality of literary objects and the fictions constructed by fiction. The issue is one of the reality claims of entities that apparently only exist in language. Given that there are reasons why some philosophers consider all objects to be fictions constructed from perceptions, the question of literary fictions can readily move into questions of the reality of physical objects, along with the types of abstract entities often discussed by philosophers. The basis of the discussion of language, ontology, and fiction is deep in the origin of Analytic philosophy, as indicated above with regard to the chapter on Analytic Aesthetics'. This is the issue of names and the place of fictions in philosophy as discussed by Frege and Russell. There is also an overlap with the tradition of

phenomenology since Alexius Meinong is part of the discussion of fictional entities and was a part of the early history of phenomenology in the Austrian-German culture of the Habsburg Empire as the nineteenth century moved into the twentieth century. This coincides with the emergence of Analytic philosophy. The progress of phenomenology, as described with regard to the chapter on Phenomenology above, largely takes it away from Analytic philosophy, with some exceptions for the role of some later phenomenology in the philosophy of the mind. However, there are areas of interaction associated with early phenomenology, particularly regarding the status of fictional entities. For Frege, a major aspect of his discussion of

naming entities is the status of the terms 'Morning Star' and 'Evening Star' used for a long time to refer to the planet Venus seen in the morning and at night, without knowledge that it is Venus on both occasions. This brings up the problem of what the fictional entities 'Morning Star' and 'Evening Star' take as a reference and what the ontological status of the object is. Frege also raises the issues of the status of objects in fiction, more briefly. Bertrand Russell approaches these issues through the example of the sentence 'The present King of France is bald'. In Russell's view all sentences must be true or false, but, there is difficulty where a sentence refers to a non-existent entity, such as the present King of France. Meinong is part of this discussion because he gave importance to the question of the status of sentences about fictional and impossible objects. Unlike Frege and Russell, he suggests they belong to an ontological realm of objects which have some kind of reality, but not existence. This has all fed into an important vein of discussion of the role of truth, meaning, and fictionality in literature.

Deconstruction

Deconstruction clearly belongs to the Continental European tradition and for some represents its most excessive aspects. In any case, it has been very influential in literary studies and has brought literature in to the heart of philosophy with regard to the style of philosophical writing and themes of philosophy. It is the form of philosophising most concerned with finding a joint basis in language with literature, while also relating literature to ethical and political questions of naming, identity, and sovereignty. Despite its difference from Analytic style, notable attempts have been

made to integrate it with Analytic philosophy. It is very associated with the name Derrida but has strong roots in Heidegger's later philosophy, where the term 'deconstruction' was used for the first time, following Heidegger's earlier use of 'destruction'. As this indicates, there is no clear boundary in time or in other dimensions between Derrida's deconstructive philosophy and other philosophical writing. Derrida himself suggests that deconstruction is something that is part of all philosophy and all writing. The emphasis on writing in general, which is open to all forms of communication, makes deconstruction a particularly powerful force for interdisciplinary work. While Derrida's work is famously challenging to read, its central deconstructive claims can be summarised in a simple manner. There is no pure meaning and the search for meaning always demonstrates the possibility of different and contradictory meanings. The idea of meaning links with Being and various other terms, which all refer to the ideal of pure meaning, pure truth, metaphysical certainty, and so on. Deconstruction provides two main strategies to reveal this reduction and attempt to avoid it, though complete elimination of the reduction is never possible. The strategies are an affirmation of the differences beyond reduction to Being and a reduction to Being that itself shows the impossibility of the enterprise, manifesting the difference between Being and actual representation of Being. The first strategy is associated with Heidegger and Rousseau. The second strategy is associated with Nietzsche and with a literary writer, James Joyce. This is indicative of the extent to which Derrida explores his own philosophy through literary texts. Derrida's approach provides a way of reading the history of philosophy and has influenced a variety of philosophers concerned with literary questions, as well as large numbers of literary critics. Paul de Man stands out as the literary critic with his own distinctive version of literary deconstruction coming from interaction with the literary aspects of the phenomenological tradition as well as Derrida. French thinkers in philosophy and literature whose work has developed partly through an interaction with Derrida's thought include Blanchot, Levinas, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Jean-Francois Lyotard. His influence on English language work across the humanities and social sciences has been very widespread.

Part Four: Literary Criticism and Theory

The fourth section is on literary criticism and theory. The previous sections were already dealing with this, and there is no wish of any kind to suggest that a clear distinction can be made between philosophy, criticism, and theory. The work of philosophy certainly does not finish in these sections. However, it is necessary to acknowledge the contributions made largely by scholars in literature departments to the relation between philosophy and literature, through a practice of literary criticism formulated in the early twentieth century after the opening of departments of modern literature and then in the late twentieth century through absorbing philosophy, along with linguistics, semiology, psychoanalysis, and anthropology, political, social, historical, and cultural thought into literary studies. Some of the hopes of establishing a very unified field of theory, often with specific political commitments, have not lasted. The idea of theory as a separate but domineering part of literature departments has not lasted either. We cannot really call this failure. Theory dispersed throughout literary work and was taken up a wide variety of scholars with a wide variety of commitments and interests. Some fragmentation was an inevitable part of this process as an aspect of growth. Theory has been absorbed into work on literature as part of its practice rather than as a distinct operation claiming sovereignty over literary studies and legislating for it. The idea of a massive rather mechanical apparatus for theorist literature through semiotics, narratology, psychoanalysis, Marxism, or anything else has given way to forms of theory more intimately engaged with texts and with the history of literature, along with the historical context.

Literature as Theory

The dispersal of theory is partly apparent in the relatively recent field of literature as theory, which is related to anti-mimeticism. Here literature is discussed with regard to the truths and the world it creates, not themes of mimesis, representation, and reality. There is a strong rejection of any philosophical attempt to reduce literature to philosophical truths. The language of literature is recognised with regard to the truths of the violence of the world, so that literature can be seen as what incorporates the violence. Meaning itself comes from the forces in which words exist, they do not exist

as abstract entities. Literature carries traces of the externalities, which are understood through violence, and is made up of these traces rather than serving as a secondary representation of the real world. In this approach, literature is seen not as a distant representation or abstraction of the world. It is more composed of many ways of creating a virtual reality in which the aesthetic is not pure aesthetic detached from reality but is rather an aesthetic that creates alternative realities. These realities have an ethical reality in what they show about the ethical possibilities of a virtual world. The emphasis in literary studies shifts from representation to performance. Theatre and other performative activities are given priority over representation. This draws on Baruch Spinoza's criticism of transcendentalism and Arendt's emphasis on politics as performance in ancient Athens. In the case of Spinoza, the issue is that in the Ethics, he argues for one substance in the universe. God cannot be a separate substance from the universe, so is immanent rather than transcendent. That is, God is present throughout the world rather than existing separately from it. The idea of art as a transcending representation of the world has always been intertwined with the idea of a creator God standing apart from the world. The Spinozistic move from the transcendental to the immanent in the understanding of the divine allows a model for art of oneness with the material, practical world which is the world of ethical and political activity. Arendt's understanding of antique republicanism in Greece is that it is deeply bound up with the Homeric culture of the aristocratic semi-divine warrior hero. The formation of cities in ancient Greece leaves the aristocracy with a transformed heroic view of the politics of the city as a place for competition for the immortal glory sought by the Homeric heroes. So, politics is an activity in the city, not a representation of the city This still applies when democracy comes, as the people exercise their will through assemblies not representation. Philosophical and political critiques of transcendence and representation on these models inform literature and theory as a philosophical and political enterprise. This kind of recent work itself builds on and adds to traditions of literary studies across disciplinary boundaries.

Rhetoric

Rhetoric is something that is itself being revived while itself coming from a long history in the sense that it is used to refer to a way of grouping studies in the humanities and social sciences round the literary and communicative uses of language. Compared with the origins of rhetoric in public persuasion, it is still less focused on debating victory. It does however cover something like the range of topics that appear in Aristotle's work on rhetoric. The Aristotelian idea of rhetoric is very embedded in assumptions about the inferiority of public speech as an area of study compared with the parts of philosophy devoted to practical judgement (ethics and politics) and even more so compared with theoretical philosophy (metaphysics, nature, deduction). This low status of rhetoric is associated with Plato and Aristotle's rejection of the Sophists, the first experts in rhetoric, as unconcerned with truth. Much more recently, de Man establishes a view of rhetoric as the set of value oppositions established within a literary text, undermined during the course of the literary text. There is something of the ancient sense of the fallen nature of the rhetorician in de Man, taken up in the idea that all writing is inevitable fully of rhetoric. More recently, the label rhetoric has been used to cover the university teaching of writing as well as a unifying approach to the humanities. For the political economist Deirdre McCloskey, rhetoric is a way of referring to the desirable non-formal aspects of economics and its relation with the humanities, including philosophy and literature. All of this takes place against the background of the loss of rhetoric as understood by Aristotle and later antique writers stretching on through the role of rhetoric in the school curriculum. Rhetoric continues to be central to the curriculum, via the contributions of Marcus Tullius Cicero and Quintilian (Marcus Fabius Quintilianus), dealing with these issues, until the eighteenth century. Rhetoric does not look like a subject that is renewing itself by the time of the Enlightenment. One of the early

Enlightenment thinkers, Giambattista Vico, was a professor of rhetoric who moved from this background into an integration of philology and philosophy in a theory of the history of human communities published as the *New Science*. Vico puts the study of Homeric epic at the centre and takes the first steps towards literary studies as well as

history as major independent disciplines. At this point, rhetoric appears to be spinning off into different parts of the humanities as we now know them, including the more historical and literary aspects of philosophy. This is perhaps confirmed when we consider what is now the most widely read work on rhetoric from the eighteenth century and the most widely read since Aristotle, Adam Smith's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*. These lectures contain a large amount of what we now call literary criticism, but connected with discussion of the development of language, the use of literary language in history, philosophy, law, and political theory in relation to the political system. Rhetoric here is both a unifying way of looking at the humanities and is on the verge of breaking up between the different humanities. This all leaves rhetoric with a strangely ambiguous status in which it is often closely linked to period studies, within the long period of time in which rhetoric was central to the curriculum and so was part of what linguistic form writers used.

Feminism and Gender

The work of critics and theorists has been strongly affected by issues of gender difference and feminist analysis. This includes the themes of gender in literature, the study of literature overlooked and marginalised because of gender exclusion, and the place of gender analysis in relating literature to gender relations in society. These considerations themselves bring in questions of the roles of intimacy, desire, domesticity, and subjectivity which have been played down as feminine.

The role of feminism in literature goes back at least to the late eighteenth century in the influence of Mary Wollstonecraft on women writers of the time. Feminism as part of literary studies is a comparative later starter in that literature departments were not opened until the late nineteenth century and feminism as a major issue did not really enter then until Simone de Beauvoir's work of the 1950s and other feminist writing of the time. The understanding of the novel is significant here as the difficulties in accepting it as an elevated genre are related to its status as feminine, as literature that appealed to a supposedly limited feminine taste and even corrupted that taste. Despite the constraints on women writers, literature has often been a way for women to have a voice denied in other fields including philosophy. Literary writing has enabled women

to approach philosophy from a non-institutionalised position and therefore advance feminine and feminist perspectives. 'What feminism has often done is challenge assumptions about universal humanism, as gender biased so in need of reformulation or rejection, so providing a critical perspective on universalist humanist assumptions about literature along with appreciation for the ways in which literature may have always resisted this. The development of feminist theory after de Beauvoir has had significant presence in literary studies, which was not itself a major area of work for de Beauvoir, though she was a notable novelist. The most striking presence in feminist literary studies has been the influence of Freudianism and particularly the psychoanalytic theory of Jacques Lacan. This emphasis on desire and the nature of subjectivity has been joined by interests in deconstructive approaches to gender difference and historical approaches applied to the literary history of female writers along with the broader historical context.

Psychoanalysis

As noted above, Feminist literary criticism and theory has often employed psychoanalysis, which itself is highly literary in its origins. While Sigmund Freud had very scientific ambitions, clearly his work uses a literary imagination and often refers to literary texts. Despite Freud's scientific ambitions, many see his work as more part of literary interpretation and creation in its approach to symptoms, dreams, and literature itself. Freud's psychoanalysis also has an ambiguous relation with philosophy, particularly that of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, which serves both as precursor and a barrier to overcome, because it does enter the same territory as psychoanalysis. How much Freud takes from Schopenhauer and Nietzsche is itself a major area of discussion. The work of Jacques Lacan in renewing psychoanalysis and returning it to what Lacan regarded as the real Freudian insights has been a major presence in literary criticism and theory. This comes from the role that Lacan gives to the symbolic, language and literature. Some of Lacan's work can only be understood with reference to philosophy or literature or both. Equally his work has stimulated philosophical as well as literary debate about meaning in literary texts and the role that anxieties about meaning play in literary texts. Truth and the evasiveness of truth are intertwined with psychoanalytic

and literary issues in Lacan and those who react to him, including Derrida and Deleuze. Discussion in Lacan and Derrida of Edgar Allen Poe's short story

'The Purloined Letter' established a central debate in literary studies about the use of psychoanalysis. The work of desire in literature and the forms of literature has been centrally understood with regard to Freud and what come after them. Literary critical use of psychoanalysis has also focused on the theories of infant development in Melanie Klein and Donald Winnicott, because the focus on infant use of language and understating of the environment may give insights into the more playful and mythical aspects of literature. The infant has a playful attitude to words along with a tendency to symbolise fears and anxieties. More recently, Slavoj Zizek has brought the established Lacanian approach more into relation with German Idealist philosophy and various political concerns to discuss literature. As this includes use of the kind of Lacanianism employed in film studies, there is an interaction between the Lacanianism of the literary text and of cinema images.

Postcolonialism

Postcolonialism has become a major part of the literary theory field as a result of the work of those who have encountered literary from the point of view of subordination to colonialism and its afterlife. We can of course take this back before the formation of what we know as literary theory in the work of Frantz Fanon, along with others who both criticised colonialism and recognised the possibility of its ending. This area of work necessarily brings in issues of race, ethnicity, identity, and the migration from what were colonised regions to the old colonial centres. Though the main impetus has come from the colonised and the critics of colonialism, the field also develops perspectives from those who celebrated colonialism or at least shared some of its presuppositions. We can find an awareness of some kind of the colonial situations and the beginnings of its representation along with critical discussion. Frantz Fanon, Edward Said, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, and Homi Bhabha have played central roles in this field which also addresses the literature of the colonised, the peoples of recently colonised countries, and the migrants from those countries. Since they often write in the language of the colonial centre, the field incorporates the changes of language,

literature, and identity which come from these shifts associated with colonialism and its aftermath. Fanon's work precedes the development of the field of postcolonial studies, but its impact was greatly assisted by the rise of his work centred around his experience as a black African subject of French colonialism in the Caribbean, then his move to Paris, and then his participation in the Algerian War of Independence in which he defected to the Algerian side. He interpreted this through his education in philosophy and psychoanalysis and a literary skill in his theoretical writing. All of these aspects of his life and work anticipate what became important in later postcolonial studies. The literary work of Aimé Césaire was also important to the formation of the postcolonial field before it became known as such. Edward Said's work on Orientalism had a decisive impact on the field in its articulation of the relation between power and knowledge in colonialism, with reference to literary texts. Said also had a major influence on the understanding of Palestine, again bringing a rather existential concern with a postcolonial image known to him through his origins in British mandate Palestine.

Part Five: Areas of Work Within Philosophy and Literature

The final section is areas of work within philosophy and literature, ending the Handbook with ideas about where there are particularly strong focuses in the field, without trying to suggest that this is the only work that exists or is worthy of attention. This provides a way of bringing the themes of the previous parts together. There is not absolute distinction between the topics in this part and the topics in the previous parts. These topics do however seem particularly useful for showing what work does tend to highlight what brings philosophy and literature together, along with the ways in which they are articulated. What is particularly striking about these ways of bringing philosophy and literature together is that they are practically oriented, in the sense of the parts of philosophy referring to the social world rather than pure theoretical philosophy. Law, politics, ethics, and political economy all clearly belong to practical philosophy. The possible exception is philosophical fictions. These very often refer to ethical situations, but certainly do not always. However, when they do refer to issues of epistemology, language, mind, and metaphysics, they do so in relation to practical

social world situations and show a way from theoretical philosophy into practical philosophy. Literature then is shown to have a role in relation to philosophy of emphasising its practical aspects. Practical in philosophical language is to be distinguished from applied. Practical refers to the sphere of human action and can do so in the most abstract ways. Applied refers to the use of philosophy in very particular situations, which can of course enter into practical philosophy, but is not the same thing.

Law and Literature

Law and literature brings out the ways in which literature relates to judgement whether in addressing institutions of justice or bringing ideas about justice into play. Many works of literature have put issues of crime, the legal system, punishment, and the understanding of justice at the centre. Notable examples include Charles Dickens and Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky. A huge genre has grown up since of crime thrillers and detective stories. The law enters literary works in other ways. Franz Kafka's two major novels at the centre of modern literature revolve around laws, courts, judges, guilt, and punishment. Looking at the most recognised ancient epics, those of Homer and Virgil, we can see questions of laws of human communities and the consequences of breaking them at their heart. This is why Rousseau takes a quotation from Virgil as the epigram for his work on the social contract. Questions of justice are always present in literature, as there is always some sense of agency and responsibility. The very order of a literary work is suggestive of assumptions about moral order in the social world and maybe the natural world. Law and literature can deal with particular crimes and criminals, particular lawyers and court cases, in literature. The other side of this can be a sense of the literary in law, that is, the sense that the qualities of good judgement in court relate to interpretation of cases and legal texts. The justice derived from interpreting laws may differ from that derived from interpreting the facts of the case. This constantly possible dissonance between justice as law and justice as intuitions about cases is itself an issue for literary texts about law. It is a constitutive issue for law, that is in the question of how a court may resolve different understandings of what justice is. Here conflict between natural law and statute law, divine law and human

law, individual justice and communal justice, outward actions and inner intentions, can all play a role. The ways the judge has of dealing with this, as well as of interpreting the legal tradition, all call upon forms of judgement related to literary judgement, that is, questions of how to interpret texts, resolve ambiguities and conflict, and form a whole from many parts. Questions of law may be questions of justice in relation to power, which is a political question as well as a legal question. So the law and its operations in literature raise questions of what unifies the literary work and how enters into questions of justice.

Politics and Literature

The field of politics, that is, power, is also a topic in itself. Literature may deal with this by incorporating the world of politics in the sense of high politics, individuals near the top of the power system. It can also deal with the lowerlevel impact of politics and resistance to that impact. Politics may also have a literary aspect in that political thought can be written as literature. The political figure may be a kind of storyteller and artist, who is in some way a reflection of literature on itself. Literature may refer to politics as generally corrupt or lacking in real effects, so exclude it, but that is of course still a political gesture. Literature can be quite propagandist in a political way, and while literature as political propaganda is generally given low value, the reality is that even sophisticated literary classics often have some kind of political partisanship, sometimes disguised as a non-political set of values which do in reality become political when closely examined. Politicians and the political process tend to be promising territory for satire, so can be seen as a major impulse to satirical literature. The world of politics in literature can include political utopias and alternative realities. This itself overlaps with philosophical strategies in which arguments are supported by a thought experiment, which supposedly decisively supports or refutes a particular claim. Political thinkers themselves have written works of literature, most obviously the novels of Benjamin Constant, Rousseau, and Montesquieu. On the other side, Dante wrote on monarchy as well as producing an epic which itself is full of political commentary. More recently Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus are examples of writers who wrote on political ideas and engaged in political struggles, which they bring into

novels and plays. Leo Tolstoy provided amongst other things an account of the Russian politics of the time. The genre of tragedy was political in its Greek origins and has tended to be political, if less so, since its revival in ancient Athens. In lyric poetry, Walt Whitman's poetry is tied up with admiration for Abraham Lincoln and a vision of American destiny. Though the idea of literature as political often encounters resistance, there is not much of complete and complex work in literature which does not have a political aspect, even if it is not like the novels of Anthony Trollope in nineteenth-century Britain, famous for their insights into the church and political struggles of the time. Just about all literary works deal with power, state, and political concerns in some way, however hidden.

Philosophical Fictions and Thought Experiments

Philosophical fictions and thought experiments as part of philosophy have been mentioned above and deserve a chapter of their own. The thought experiment in philosophy may imagine a group formulating principles of justice from behind a veil of ignorance about their place in that world, as in John Rawls. That is his suggestion that principles of justice for a society could be best drawn up by a group deprived of knowledge of what place they have in that society. For Rawls, this is bound to lead to the adoption of principles which most benefit the poorest in that society. Whether the designers of justice behind the veil would really take such a risk in worst possible situations minimisation strategy is open to debate, but it is certainly an impressive and memorable presentation, the best known and widely read part of a famous book. It of course follows on from a tradition of writers who suggest an early contract or covenant as the foundation of a society. The writers are Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, to which we might add Samuel Pufendorf. A contemporary of John Rawls', Robert Nozick used a kind of thought experiment to argue for his rather different political philosophy, referring to how Wilt Chamberlain the basketball player became rich from people choosing to pay money to see him play. This is less of a philosophical fiction, as Wilt Chamberlain did exist and did take money from ticket receipts. However those were tickets to see a team, so we see that philosophy tends to need to simplify thought experiments. On less political and more semantic cases, there

is the example of Hilary Putnam. The philosopher may imagine a twin earth with some very precise and limited difference between the two earths, as Hilary Putnam does to test a theory of meaning. Going back further in history, the philosopher may imagine a deceitful demon, as Descartes does, in formulating his views on knowledge. In this case, we have what is set up as a revolutionary moment in modern philosophy, coming from the belongings in a closed order. Going back even further, the philosopher may imagine an ideal city as Plato did, or think about what happens when Achilles tries to overtake a tortoise in a race as Zeno of Elea did. These are all instances where philosophy engages in something which has qualities of literary imagination and fiction and does so as philosophically decisive moments.

Ethics and Literature

Just as philosophy may have literary moments, literature itself may have a kind of philosophical imagination in the way it deals with ethics. Some ethical element is always apparent in literature even where literature tries to avoid assuming ethically responsible agents itself. This is an act of ethical imagination questioning moral categories. There are at least three major ways in which literature deals with ethics. Firstly, it may deal in a kind of ethical experiment where the actions and intentions of characters are evaluated as morally worse or better. Secondly, it may be concerned with what moral agency there is in humans or in the cosmic order. Thirdly, it may present a moral order to be evaluated. In the third case, the fictional world itself presents a kind of moral order in which we can see whether ethical ends are maintained. Literature may provide moral criticism through satire or through an unrelenting realism. It may provide suggestions of moral improvement through the actions of exemplary questions. It very often shows some kind of moral growth in which the protagonist learns to deal with the world and other people without causing harm. The moral growth may be more in terms of a kind of inner orientation towards integrity and even perfection. The love situations often at the centre of literature may deal with questions of how people may understand each other, learn to evaluate each other properly, become better through interaction with a compatible person, or become better through deserving an object of love. What literature can also deal with are moral failures and blindness in this kind of

situation. Tragedies have provided particularly rich material for considering moral fault. The growth of the novel as a form is part of the growth of morality more oriented to universal sympathy and care about personal interactions. Some novels have been taken as sources of moral psychology as can be found in Nietzsche's view of Stendhal and Dostoevsky. The nineteenth- and early twentieth-century novel in Britain often seems like an area of exploration of moral dilemmas and moral growth. The novels of George Eliot are certainly formed by a wish to replace Christianity with a sense of moral seriousness and enquiry in literature. Thomas Hardy's novels introduce a strong sense of tragic moral disasters in rural Southwest England. Literature has sometimes also been a scene of anti-moralistic revolt against religious, metaphysical, and social sources of morality. The fear that something like this might be the case goes back to Plato.

Political Economy and Literature

Literature and political economy may interact in significant ways. Any work of literature that deals with money, work, consumption, investment, and management in any way is dealing with political economy. This applies to the farmer trying to make the land grow and the banker worried about the safety of investments, both of which can be and have been literary themes. Even the most aestheticised work of literature can deal with the decline of a great family whose land or investments are running out. This is of course a typical literary background. The decline of a great family may be particularly suitable material for a very aestheticised novel mourning the passing of a cultivated family,

even a whole class. However, this is in itself a way of being involved in economic issues. Epic heroes and knights in romances have slaves and serfs, castles and farms, plunder and inherited wealth, and concerns about gifts and marriage. All of these topics are economic topics even if the economic side is played down. Equally economic texts have literary aspects, particularly if we go back to the original classics. Adam Smith and Karl Marx both wrote using a lot of literary background and a capacity for literary imagination. Smith himself, as mentioned above, lectured on rhetoric and belles lettres. Marx was very well read in ancient and modern classics, which often shows in his

writing. This literary aspect declines as economics moves towards its current status as a specialised technical discipline. Nevertheless, economics is still sometimes written in relatively accessible non-technical ways, using at least some literary skill. John Maynard Keynes used some striking language and was close to the aesthete Bloomsbury group, which included Virginia Woolf. Joseph Schumpeter, Friedrich Hayek, and Ludwig von Mises all wrote non-technical economics during the twentieth century, as have Rosa Luxembourgh, John Kenneth Galbraith, and Jeffrey Sachs. It would be a stretch to say that most of this has much literary value, but it can at least be said that they have tried to communicate with a broad audience and use language with some literary value. Drawing on the above, there is a recent growth of awareness of the relation between political economy and literature, with the ways in which literature is deeply embedded in the economic assumptions and anxieties of the time. Bankruptcy, inheritance, marriage, work, legal cases, and investments are all aspects of novels which, directly or less directly, refer to issues of property and economic exchange which are part of the world of political economy. The use of language in literature can and should be linked with its use in economics in mutually illuminating ways.

Literature and Religion

Religion and political economy have been taken together and the classical political economy certainly had roots in a mixture of religious prudentialism regarding individual conduct and natural theology with regard to the possibility of a natural order within the world of human affairs. Religion itself has a frequent place in literature and has many literary aspects. The Bible is of course one of the major texts in world literature. Within English literature, we can add The Book of Common Prayer. The translation of the Bible into English as what we know as the King James Bible is one of the major events in the history of English language and English literature. For many people at many times, literature has really meant a few religious texts. In the history of English-speaking countries, that has often meant the King James Bible, accompanied by John Bunyan's pilgrimage story or maybe John Milton's literary contribution in the form of epics. Sacred texts accompanied by literary texts on religious themes have been a large part of the role of literature. The questions of literary criticism and philosophical

reading of literary texts are interwoven with questions of reconstructing, reading, and interpreting literary texts. Protestant Reformation models of individual reading and interpretation of the Bible established a model for reading literature. Hermeneutics and literary criticism have roots in the classical philology, which includes some Christian texts and in the Hebrew philology necessary to read the Hebrew Bible. They also have roots in the interpretative work undertaken throughout the history of Judaism and Christianity-. Religion is evidently less central to the culture now but still frequently informs literature and philosophy. Derrida brought religion into the centre of his work, as a space that needs to be understood regardless of faith or lack of faith. The aestheticism of romanticism, romantic symbolism, and high modernism has a strong element of relocated religious sensibility in its reaching for purity of elevated use and of words and literary forms. Theology and literature is a necessary part of the literary critical and religious studies sphere as it is also a necessary part of the philosophy and literature sphere. There is high proportion of philosophy and literature which cannot be understood without reference to religion. Enlightenment, humanist, and liberal forms of religion have often turned towards literary criticism, as in the case of Northrop Frye, and hermeneutics to understand the explicitly and implicitly religious sides of literary texts, as well as to study religious texts in ways detached from rigid assumptions about their literal truth.

Poetry's Truth of Dialogue

The Handbook finishes with an chapter on the performative aspects of philosophy and literature, which also serves as an editorial afterword, from, Michael Mack. This picks up from the discursive work on the parts of Philosophy and Literature which form the collection. It is writing on and engaged with the relation between philosophy and literature, in which there is continuity and difference between themes as well as between philosophy and literature. This is show what it is to be in the field of philosophy and literature, as an addition which completes and leads on from what is said directly in the earlier chapters. Showing is the more literary part of philosophy and literature, or at least that is the usual starting point which can become complicated in more boundary stretching kind of writing. That is, the earlier chapters say what the

discrete parts are of philosophy and literature, with the inevitable element of arbitrariness that comes from drawing boundaries. The chapter shows the continuity between philosophy and writing which have a performative aspect, showing this to be necessary in bringing philosophy and literature, saying, and showing, together. Of course, it particularly continues the themes of Mack's chapter on 'Literature as Theory' but also serves to bring together many aspects of philosophy and literature discussed in other chapters. It does so through showing the limits of representationalism in literature and the importance of literature that is performative rather than reflective or representational. Modern poetry can enact moral concerns just as much as Plato does in his dialogues though in less discursive ways. It does so however by encountering the greatest moral disaster of the twentieth century, the Holocaust, and the sense of collapse of transcendence that follows it. and literature is to concentrate on literature as the object of philosophy as Eileen John and Dominic Lopes do in the anthology they edited, **The Philosophy of Literature: Classic and Contemporary Readings** (2004). There is not really a great deal available beyond these works in the way of survey material though there is a very wide array available on specific topics within philosophy and literature. The best way of approaching the reading of multi-authored and introductory material in philosophy and literature may be to consult titles on philosophical aesthetics and literary theory. Some suggestions are made in the bibliography below along with the titles just mentioned. <>

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