SPOTLIGHT 115

Wordtrade Reviews: Identity in Shadows

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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. <>

PAUL WITHIN JUDAISM: PERSPECTIVES ON PAUL AND JEWISH IDENTITY edited by Michael Bird, Ruben A. Bühner, Jörg Frey, and Brian Rosner [Mohr Siebeck, ISBN 9783161623257]

This conference volume features cutting edge research from an international cohort of scholars on the still-controversial debates regarding Paul's relationship with Judaism. Taken together, the contributions represent a sympathetic but critical assessment of the Paul within Judaism approach to Pauline interpretation. They take up many of the key questions germane to the debate, including different perspectives on Jewish identity, ethnicity, Torah-observance, halakha, the relationship between Jewish and non-Jewish followers of Christ, and the contested character of Jewish identity in antiquity. By combining a broad swath of both German- and English-language scholarship, the volume attempts to bring different perspectives into conversation with each other.

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An Introduction to the Paul within Judaism Debate by Michael Bird
The Persistence of Pauline Scholarship

I have spent a large part of my scholarly career as a Neutestamentler wrestling with the apostle Paul, his life, his letters, and his legacy. The reason for that is quite simple. The study of Paul is inescapable for anyone concerned with the New Testament, the origins of early Christianity, Greco-Roman religion, ancient Judaism, the development of Christian thought, or even the history of western civilization. Paul was unknown to the rich and powerful of his time, he was a divisive figure among those who did know him, and I doubt very much that anybody thought he was destined to become the towering figure of religious and intellectual history that he became. Yet here we are with another scholarly symposium about Paul, another collection of essays about him, and another set of debates and disagreements over him. This volume and the conference it was based on, is but another example of the continuing fascination with Paul in minds of

scholars, people of all faiths and none, from different quarters of the globe, representing diverse streams of human experience, who are yet united by their abiding interest in Paul. The scholarship that examines Paul is both deep in its history and now relatively wide in the breadth of people who are drawn to the topic. Paul continues to have much significance for the academy, for those who specialize in the study of religion, and for living communities of faith.

What has become clear to me over the years is that "Paul" stands somewhere between a fragmented mosaic and a Rorschach drawing.

First, studying Paul is like brushing dust off a mosaic in an ancient Ephesian villa. The mosaic contains the face of a human figure and yet the mosaic contains gaps, a few cracked tiles, distortions of colour, and even some tiles that have been secondarily added to mosaic. We cannot and therefore do not see Paul as he really was, only as he was presented by the artist, and even that presentation is fragmentary. That is not to say we cannot see, understand, or know anything about Paul, but our knowledge of Paul is mediated as it is imperfect. The quest for the historical Paul is the quest for the Paul who is the most recoverable and plausible portrait of a historical figure of antiquity. Alas, we shall never find the holy grail that is Paul as his pure self, only Paul as apostle, author, and artwork, Paul as martyr and memory, Paul as a diaspora Jew and a symbol of Christian faith.

Second, studying Paul is also like gazing at a Rorschach drawing. I say that because Paul is a figure read from history and read into history, a subject of exegesis and eisegesis, an extrapolation and a projection, someone other than us and a mirror of us. It is not exaggeration to say that every book about Paul tells you something about Paul and something about the researcher of Paul! A biography of Paul, an introduction to his letters, a description of his religion, or a summation of his thought, is never done in isolation from one's own biography, ones own proclivities, and one's own religious atmosphere. That is not to say that the study of Paul is purely a mirror, as if all we think we know about Paul is only what we project onto him. I don't believe the domain Pauline studies is reducible to an exercise in interpretive self-construction.

But it is incontestably true that the study of Paul is determined very much by context, the context that Paul is placed in, and the context that interpreters find themselves within. E. P. Sanders acknowledges that his own comparative study of Paul and Palestinian Judaism was not prescriptive. Palestinian Judaism simply provided the analogue against which Paul's own religious pattern could be compared. Sanders writes:

Lots of people think that ... somewhere in the pages of Paul and Palestinian Judaism there is a claim that Paul must be discussed only in the light of Jewish sources of Palestinian origin. There is no such claim: I merely compared him with the material that I had spent ten years studying.

Thus, to study Paul in the context Palestinian Judaism remains a choice and the choices are ample.

Thus, it makes an immense difference if one tries to situate Paul in the context of the Qumran scrolls, intra-Jewish sectarianism, itinerant philosophers, Greco-Roman associations, imperial cults, Plutarch's account of Hellenistic religion, Iranian Manicheanism, Jewish hekhalot traditions, new religious movements, millenarianism, or ancient accounts of gender and ethnicity. Similarly, it matters much if one studies Paul from the context of fifth century North African Christianity, a twelfth century Parisian monastery, intra-Protestant debates of the sixteenth century, among Indian civil rights lawyers in nineteenth century Delhi, in African-American churches in Atlanta in the 1960s, or in a Critical Theory class at Stanford University in the first quarter of the twenty-first century. Context shapes the purpose of study, the language of enquiry, and the results of research.

The meaning of Paul, that is, the coherences that we try to draw about him, are really the fusion of these ancient and modern contexts. Pauline scholarship consists of the backdrop we place Paul in combined with the lens we manufacture to try to understand him. There are of course different ways of doing that, different ways of locating Paul and looking at Paul.

One could generalize that recent study of the apostle Paul and his letters breaks down into roughly five camps: Roman Catholic approaches, traditional Protestant interpretation, the New Perspective on Paul, the Apocalyptic Paul, and Paul within Judaism. Yes, there are other tribes and trends too. Yes, these are not rigid divisions, each is diverse in its own way, but I think the generalization holds true.

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Most of the contributions to this volume were delivered at Ridley College's virtual symposium on "Paul within Judaism" held 21–24 September 2021, during the height of the COVID pandemic, thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Australian College of Theology.68 Several of the presenters had their papers scheduled for other publication destinations, so other scholars were invited to contribute to the proceedings in their stead. The result is a truly international cohort of scholars writing on the topic Paul's relationship to and within Judaism.

Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr opens the volume with a comparison of the Pauline letters and the letter of James as texts that can be both safely located within Ju daism. In fact, Niebuhr wonders if Paul and James might even comprise an example of "mutual perception," whereby they illuminate each other as texts which belong to Hellenistic Jewish literature of the common era. Paul and James are to be valued as two distinct Jewish voices that both speak about the salvific agency of God executed in Jesus Christ. Niebuhr compares Jas 1:13–18 and 2 Cor 4:1–6 as texts that share a common creational monotheism, an eschatological divine act wrought in Jesus, and a possibility of salvation by placing faith in God and Christ. In Jacobean language, salvation is a direct divine act by God's efficacious word, that brings new birth, and makes them children of the Father of lights. Paul's discourse in 2 Cor 4:1–6 also refers to God's direct agency to enlightenment the minds of believers to perceive and believe the gospel about the glory of Christ, a glory which is veiled by a darkness caused by the "god of this age," but God can pierce through that darkness of unbelief. What is more, Niebuhr shows that both texts, with their cosmology and theology, fit comfortably into the world of Hellenistic Judaism as comparisons with Philo, Life of Adam Eve, and the Wisdom of Solomon demonstrate. For Niebuhr, James and Paul reflect a meta-level agreement on the divine

agency of grace, particularly in the scriptural language about "light," that is part and parcel of conceptions of divine agency in Hellenistic Judaism. Thus, James and Paul in their respective arguments about perceiving the Christ event, prove to be analogous with reflections in Hellenistic Jewish literary works about the agency of God towards his creation and towards humankind.

Jörg Frey addresses the apparent relativization of ethnicity and circumcision in Paul and his communities. Frey affirms the notion that Paul is to be located "within" Judaism and he explicitly identifies Paul as a Jew. In this sense, he is clearly aligned with PwJ practitioners. However, one aspect that Frey finds contestable is the proclivity of some PwJ exemplars such as Nanos and Fredriksen to insist that the ethnic difference between Israel and the nations are a fundamental and permanent chasm which remain in effect even in an eschatological state. Added to that are the premises that Paul himself remained Torah observant and his deflection of the normativity of certain aspects of Torah only applies to Gentile Christ-believers who themselves still "judaize" in some limited sense. In other words, what is contestable is the perspective Gentile Christ-believers do not in any sense become Jews or join Israel, they do however judaize, only not to the point of circumcision. The problem is that this requires (dis)regarding much of Paul's own remarks about Torah as rhetorical word play (Rom 2:25–29; Gal 3:13; 1 Cor 9:19–23). According to Frey, the PwJ consortium do not properly grasp how Jewish ethnicity was something fluid, permeable, and transferable. In any case, Paul himself rarely uses ethnic terms to describe his congregations, preferring civic terms like "assembly" and "citizens" or cosmological language like "new creation." Paul from his time in Antioch, argues Frey, Paul was deeply involved in fraternizing and fellowshipping with Gentiles in shared meals which tells against a compartmentalization of Jewish and Gentile Christ-believers. Paul's remarks about circumcision relativize its ability to serve as a marker of Christ's people, whether Jewish or Gentile, a position deeply offensive to many Jews contemporary with Paul. Yet, Paul adopted such a position, not as an enlightened "universalist" but as a self-identifying Jew. According to Frey, Paul construed of Christ-believers as possessing an identity that was neither nested in nor transcending a Jewish ethnic identity, but was rather a participation in the eschatological community of God.

Josh Garroway tackles the topic of metaphors for ethnic transformation in Philo and Paul. Garroway begins by noting how it is now widely acknowledged that a Jewish concept of conversion emerged in the late Second Temple period but remained contested and negotiated for several centuries to come. One challenge for Jewish authors was to explain how Gentiles might reconfigure their pedigree so as to join Israel, a people to whom they did not naturally or historically belong. Garroway explores the related metaphors used by three first-century writers: Philo, Paul, and the author of Ephesians. The images they choose – the organism (Virt. 102–103), the olive tree (Rom 11:17–24), and the person (Eph 2:14–19) – describe the attachment of Gentiles to Israel in a way that complicates the transformation, dividing even as it unites, subordinating even as it incorporates, with the result that each author intimates, whether intentionally or not, that Gentiles remain Gentiles even as they cease to be so. The messy descriptions of Paul's charges seen throughout Paul's letters, it turns out, are part and parcel of first-century ethnic discourse about Israel and the Gentile admirers, adherents, and converts to its religious way of life.

Brian Rosner explores in his contribution the extent to which Paul upheld his Jewish identity as the apostle to the Gentiles? Rosner examines the Jewishness of Paul's identity, his fundamental beliefs, and his strategy in his Gentile mission. Rosner concludes that Paul the apostle to the Gentiles from Israel remained Jewish to the roots. Paul described his own identity in five ways: as apostle, servant, prophet, priest, and herald. Each of these types or vocations is explicitly derived from the Jewish Scriptures, and significantly for our purposes, and perhaps surprisingly, each one defines and gives impetus to Paul's Gentile mission. In prosecuting this mission among Gentiles, Paul does not abandon his Jewishness, but rather he reconfigures the fundamental beliefs and practices of Judaism, including election, Torah and Temple. Finally, Rosner argues that Paul's approach to dealing with Gentile believers in Jesus Christ is thoroughly Jewish and his agenda for them follows emphases and patterns evident in early Jewish moral teaching. Indeed, Paul's consistent strategy has striking affinities with Jewish moral teaching contemporary with Paul. This can be seen in examples from the Sibylline Oracles and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. Paul undertook his Gentile mission in ways that are recognizably Jewish.

Chris Porter's contribution begins by observing that Paul's status as someone inside or outside of "Judaism" has become a much-contested interpretive rubric for modern exegetes. All too often the social categories that contribute to these heuristics are highly essentialised and treated in an exclusivist fashion. Accordingly, Porter attempts to revisit the complexity of this topic through the so-cio-cognitive lens of social identity theory. Porter, by treating some of Paul's self-descriptions in relation to Judaism, shows how ancient identity spaces yielded a complex set of overlapping identity concerns that can be juggled and leveraged for argumentative purpose, without abrogating an internally coherent identity. As such, Porter argues that Paul considered himself to be affirmatively and authentically. But this was only one part of his identity in a complex world. If pressed into a certain direction, such as Pharisaic zeal, Paul could also consider himself to be no longer lou8cdag6, and yet still claimed heritage as a "Pharisee." Consequently, Paul's identity in the ancient world – like other socio-ethnic identities – resisted easy classification as it incorporated a vast range of sub-groups.

David Starling focuses on the relationship between the story of Israel and the identity of the Gentile-majority churches that Paul established and wrote letters to. The chapter begins with the benediction that Paul pronounced in Galatians 6:16, which Starling reads as referring to the community of Christ-believers as members of an "Israel of God" that has been restored and reconfigured around the Messiah, Jesus. Starling goes on, however, to highlight the questions that such a claim must have raised for Paul himself regarding the identity and future of the national/ethnic community to whom that language originally referred. The remainder of the chapter traces the thread of Paul's argument in Romans 9–11, where he wrestled at length with those questions. Gentiles, Starling argues, are viewed by Paul as having become inheritors of the promises from Hosea that he quotes in Rom 9:25–26 because of the correspondence between their own situation as "not my people" and the situation of the Israel addressed by the prophet. But this typological extension of the scope of the promises' fulfilment does not erase their original reference to national/ethnic Israel. The "all Israel" of Rom 11:26 is, therefore, to be viewed as an enlarged, eschatological community that embraces both the Gentiles who have been incorporated into God's people through faith in Jesus and

the "natural branches" that have been grafted back into the same tree after having been cut off for a time because of unbelief.

J. Brian Tucker and Wally V. Cirafesi heed the call to account for both the particular socioreligious location and the theological texture of Paul's letters and those whom he recruited to join the early Christ-movement. Their response addresses three specific issues: (1) The way in which Jewish covenantal identity continues by deployment of the segmentary grammar of identity; (2) the socio-religious location of the Pauline Christ-movement within the institutional context of synagogue communities; and (3) the importance of the eschatological pilgrimage tradition for maintaining distinct identities for Israel and the nations. In turn, they offer a discussion of the grammars of identity, first, since the presuppositions in regard to the nature of identity being formed are determinative for much of the readings given of Paul's letters, especially Romans. They then offer their understanding of ancient synagogues – particularly those organizationally akin to Greco-Roman associations – and of Paul's Christ-groups as part of such synagogue communities. Finally, in light of this socioreligious context, they argue that an approach that sees Paul's in-Christ gentiles as members of nations closely associated with Israel, who participate in the eschatological drama as a member of the nations, rather than as Israel – sometimes described as the commonwealth or prophetic approach – has the most going for it, both sociohistorically and exegetically.

Ryan Collman explores the available evidence as to what Jewish followers of Jesus thought about Paul's teaching on the Torah. After surveying the relevant data, Collman concludes that while Paul himself and the author of Acts portray him as being devoted to his ancestral laws, not much else can be confidently said about what other Jewish followers of Jesus thought about Paul's teaching on the Torah. While it is likely that a range of positions existed amongst ancient Jewish believers regarding Paul, our access to their attitudes toward Paul's treatment of the Torah are inaccessible. Collman then provides a revisionist overview of Paul's teaching on the Torah, arguing that Paul did not find any substantial problem with it. Rather, the key problem that pops up in Paul's discussion of the Torah is not the Torah itself, but the nature of the things that it seeks

to order. This problem, however, is not solved by doing away with the Torah, but by the transformation that comes when humans are infused with the divine pneuma.

Kathy Ehrensperger examines how Paul tries to clarify for his addressees from the nations how the Christ-event impinges on their identity, in referring to them as seed of Abraham, that is, to Abraham as their ancestor. Ehrensperger argues that Paul places them on the map or into the lineage of Abraham, by arguing that through Christ a genealogical link has been established which institutes them as co-heirs to the promises. Genealogical narratives served a variety of purposes in cultures of antiquity. Evidently the inclusion into the lineage of an emperor via adoption aimed at controlling the succession to imperial power. On a collective level narrative maps of kinship relations were a widely shared means to structure and depict relationships between peoples near and far. Thus, Josephus knows of Jewish narratives which integrate Heracles into their family tree and thus claim a relation to Greek tradition. Christ-followers from the nations found themselves in a liminal space since their place of belonging, individually and collectively was unclear when considered in light of the maps of belonging prevalent at the time. Ehrensperger contends that Paul, via genealogical reasoning, tries to place Gentiles into the lineage of belonging to the God of Israel, not in place of but alongside the people Israel.

Janelle Peters examines the role of synagogues as formative socio-religious spheres for the Pauline churches. Peters notes how synagogue culture was very important to the Judaism of both Judea and the Diaspora. Synagogues were gathering places for communal matters and communal worship by Jewish/Ju-dean inhabitants of a city. Synagogues featured furniture and paraphernalia that were non-cultic but symbolized cultic items in the temple. The synagogues had their own extra-temple system of worship shaped by Torah reading, prayers, hymnody, and had their own system for resolving halakhic and legal disputes. Accordingly, synagogue practices and precedents perhaps influenced the Pauline house churches in terms of ethos, structure, and regulation. By submitting himself to corporal punishment of thirty-nine lashes, Paul was in fact submitting to the discipline of synagogue leaders. Peters also points out that the ability of the Pauline churches to gather for meals and to take up a collection makes

sense on the premise that they were a type of a synagogue since only Jewish synagogues had imperial permission to do such things. Paul too in 1 Corinthians 6 urges the believers not to solve legal disputes between members in a civic court, but to resolve the disputes among themselves internally as a self-sufficient and legally binding community, in other words, like a synagogue. The conclusion Peters reaches is that Paul's remarks about how to lead and regulate a house-church seems closer to the Jewish milieu of the synagogue, diverse though it was, than to Greco-Roman assemblies.

Ruben A. Bühner refers to sources from diaspora Judaism, where he shows the extent to which Jews in Second Temple Judaism found different and at the same time flexible ways to negotiate between typically Jewish customs, such as dietary restrictions, and the need to manage one's life as part of a mostly non-Jewish environment. By doing so, Bühner takes up some insights from the Paul within Judaism perspective and brings these insights in dialogue with more traditional exegesis of the Pauline letters. Thus, the flexibility of Paul's behavior described in 1 Cor 9:19–23 remained within the framework of what was accepted as "Jewish" at least by some Jews even before the Jesus movement. Paul does not "invent" a new way to live among non-Jews, but he gives a new christologi-cal basis for a long-established way of Jewish life.

Turning to the Book of Acts, Joshua Jipp contends that the Lukan Paul consistently affirms his faithfulness to the central tenets of his Jewish heritage, even though others accuse him of apostasy from Moses and betraying Jewish ancestral customs. Jipp in turn explores the Lukan Paul's Jewishness by means of delve into two central christological threads of Acts and their implications for Luke's depiction of the people of God, namely, the messianic and prophetic aspects of Lukan christology. Luke portrays Paul as a prophet of the resurrected and enthroned Messiah in order to explain Paul's task of calling both Israel and the nations to repentance as well as to establish a precedent that legitimates his rejection by most of his Jewish contemporaries. Viewed this way, the Lukan Paul does not in any way reject God's election of Israel or engage in a replacing Judaism with Christianity. At the same time, argues Jipp, Luke also sees the significance of God's election of Israel as found Jesus the

Messiah and where those who oppose Paul and reject his message find themselves excluded from their own covenantal blessings.

Murray Smith examines Paul's Christology in the Pauline speeches in Acts, asking the doubled-barrelled question, "How Jewish is the Lucan Paul's Christology?" and "How high is Paul's Christology in Acts?" Regarding the first question, Smith argues that Paul's Christology is both thoroughly Jewish, and historically novel. While all of the Lucan Paul's primary categories are drawn from the Scriptures of Israel, and many of his major affirmations find parallels in early Judaism, his specific Christological configurations are shaped by the history of Jesus of Nazareth and, especially, by his theophanic visions of Jesus on the road to Damascus and in the Jerusalem temple. Regarding second question, Smith contends that Paul, in Acts, proclaims Jesus not only as the crucified-and-risen Davidic Messiah, but as the one who embodies the very presence of Israel's God. Paul's accounts of his visions of Jesus are best characterized not merely as epiphanies, or Christophanies, but as Christo-theophanies – appearances of the risen Christ as God.

Lyn Kidson believes we can be in no doubt as to the impression the apostle Paul left in Asia Minor. Kidson maintains that when one examines the reception of Paul in many of the early Christian documents associated with Asia Minor from the first to the fourth century, Paul's distinctive Jewish identity seems to disappear. Accordingly, Kidson argues that the battle for a purely "Christian" identity in contrast to a "Jewish" identity led to a battle over the Pauline tradition in Christian churches in Asia Minor in the first three centuries, which was all but over by the fourth century. Following that hunch, Kidson proceeds to interrogate the Pastoral Epistles, the letters of Ignatius of Antioch, the Acts of Paul, and Amphilochus's Against False Asceticism for traces of this negotiation. Kidson suggests that the contest represented in these documents is a contest over Paul's tradition or how the Christian life was to be conducted. In this contest, opponents are labelled as "Jewish," and in this arena Paul's Jewish identity disappears. What becomes apparent is that Paul's nuanced arguments on the identity of gentile and Jewish believers "in Christ" and the resurrected flesh seem to become liabilities for later believers. Kidson contends that Paul's subtle negotiations, so evident

in his letters, collapse in subsequent literature into the torrid contest over his memory and tradition in Asia Minor.

Michael Kok sets off to examine Jewish Christian Gospels and what they tell us about perceptions and receptions of Paul and Judaism. Kok begins by noting that according to the "Paul within Judaism" perspective, Paul did not require the non-Jewish members of his Christ associations to judaize by adopting the "works of the law." Such a perspective he alleges rightly challenges the perception that Paul himself was an antinomian figure, which is how many of the Jewish Christ-followers known as Ebionites or "poor ones" during the Patristic period perceived Paul to have been. Nevertheless, there is some limited evidence that there were some Jewish Christ-followers in the fourth-century, known to Epiphanius and Jerome as Nazoraeans, who could affirm Paul's apostolic and Jewish vocation and maintain their own Torah-observant way of life. Kok proceeds, in turn, to offer a critical reconstruction of the Ebionites and the Nazoraeans from the heresiological reports about them and to examine their opinions about the "apostle to the Gentiles." <>

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NARCISSUS AND PYGMALION   LLUSION AND SPECTACLE IN OVID'S METAMORPHOSES by Gianpiero Rosati [Oxford University Press, ISBN 9780198852438]

Nature imitates art--not a paradox from Oscar Wilde's pen, but instead the bold formulation of the Latin poet Ovid (43 BCE-17 CE), marking a radical turning point in ancient aesthetics, founded on the principle of *mimesis*. For Ovid, art is independent of reality, not its mirror: by enhancing *phantasia*, the artist's creative imagination and the simulacrum's primacy over reality, Ovid opens up unexplored perspectives for future European literature and art. Through an examination of Narcissus and Pygmalion, figures of illusion and desire, who are the protagonists of two major episodes of the *Metamorphoses*, Rosati sheds light on some crucial junctures in the history of reception and aesthetics. NARCISSUS AND PYGMALION has, since its first publication in Italian, contributed to the poet's critical fortunes over the past few decades through its combination of sophisticated literary critical thinking and patient argument applied to the poetics of self-reflexivity and, in particular, to the fundamental

interface between the verbal and the visual in the *Metamorphoses*. A substantial introduction accompanies this new translation into English, positioning Rosati's work anew in the forefront of current discussions of Ovidian aesthetics and intermediality, in the wake of the postmodern culture of the *simulacrum*.

Reviews

"Rosati provides refined and insightful interpretations of Ovid's Narcissus and Pygmalion episodes...This book will be especially welcomed by those wanting or needing to read a foundational work in modern Ovidian studies." -- M. L. Goldman, *CHOICE*

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Narcissus and Pygmalion today

This book is the English version of a work first published in Italian in 1983 and reprinted in 2016. It originated from my tesi di laurea in Latin literature completed a few years earlier at the University of Florence under the supervision of Antonio La Penna, and followed the tenets of that disciplinary sphere, as was customary in Italian academia at the time: it focused on the philological dimension of Ovid's text, the framing of the individual episode within the structure of the immediate context and the poem as a whole, and analysis of language and style. The main aim of the work was

to interpret the two important episodes of Narcissus and Pygmalion—i.e. Ovid's rewriting of the respective myths—and to highlight the author's poetics, in response to the considerable interest that had grown in the latter decades of the twentieth century (documented, and greatly bolstered, by G.B. Conte's influential 1974 essay Memoria dei poeti e sistema letterario, which activated critical categories like poetic memory, allusion, and intertextuality). The theme of illusion, central to both episodes, was thus chosen as the key to penetrating the text and mechanisms of the poem; and to this the third and longest chapter of the book was dedicated. Additionally, the aestheticization of the female or ephebic body and its representation as a work of art—an obviously central aspect in Pygmalion, but also highly relevant in Narcissus—served to shed light on a crucial feature of Ovid's writing: its congenitally ecphrastic nature, which the book pondered (especially with regard to episodes like those of Perseus and Medusa), and which reveals a cultural and psychological attitude that says much about Ovid's readers. The intense visuality of the poem—the pleasure of the spectaculum—was the premise for an analysis of the spectacularity of Ovid's language and style, largely built on the split between reality and illusion, the plurality of surfaces or levels, and various effects of visual and linguistic 'reflection' and ambiguity, such as the gap between literal meaning and figurative meaning.

It is evident that the general approach of the book, and especially its entire apparatus of notes and bibliography, seem quite dated today, particularly after the prodigious development of studies in this second aetas Ovidiana of the past few decades, and also due to the increased importance of critical categories linked to the names of Narcissus and Pygmalion, not only in classical studies, but in various fields, from literature to art history to psychology. In light of these developments in the critical discourse on Ovid, the book would have required a radical revision or rather rewriting. Not being able to write a different book, I just add these few introductory pages which are intended to take stock of the enduring usefulness of the theses discussed in Narciso e Pigmalione (henceforward N&P), and to shed some light on the developments of these past decades with regard to the main themes the book touches on, as well as possible stimuli for the further growth of Ovidian studies.

A first point that now seems worthy of more in-depth reconsideration, particularly in light of lines of research that have come to the fore in recent decades, is the legitimacy, or the convenience, of reading the two myths, and the two Ovidian texts, in association with one another. The idea is obviously not a new one: the juxtaposition and contrasting of the two myths dates back to at least the thirteenth century, with the 'Roman de la Rose'. The author of the first part of that poem, Guillaume de Lorris, narrates Ovid's story of Narcissus very early on in his text, while Jean de Meun, who wrote the much longer second part about forty years later, counters with the story of Pygmalion towards the end. The shared Ovidian origin of the tales is in fact the explicit motivation for the contraposition of the two myths, intended to emphasize the different degrees of futility of the respective love objects (Pygmalion himself, in his monologue, asserts that Narcissus' is a greater and more destructive folly than his own). The association, by analogy or by contrast, between the two mythical figures and their respective psychological states has been repeatedly brought into play by authors (for example, in J. Starobinsky's essay 'The Living Eye', cf. below p. 77) even in recent years, and here I will try to discuss the most interesting of them.

The scholarly trend on visuality that saw vigorous development beginning in the last decades of the twentieth century, particularly in the sphere of art history, gave a fresh boost to an in-depth analysis of the Narcissus myth (beyond that of Pygmalion). Jaš Elsner, one of the protagonists of this research line, made the two myths—albeit independently from one another—central to his reflection on Roman art, precisely due to their visuality which exemplifies the importance of the gaze in Roman culture (a 'highly ocular culture'), and on how the gaze functions in the construction of subjectivity. Although N&P also focused on the importance of visuality in Ovid's poem, it does not expound on the matter beyond the too-generic idea of 'spectacle', or at most of the gaze conditioned by artistic models (the aspect that fuelled the hunt for lost or presumed-lost works in the past), or real objects seen or conceived as 'artistic', through what I called Ovid's 'ecphrastic eye'. The theme of visuality as a cultural construct was certainly insufficiently dealt with in N&P, and from this point of view there is still a great deal of work to do, in terms of both text analysis and comparison of the two episodes, and as a theme of central relevance to the entire poem (as noted here below).

An aspect that should certainly be studied in greater depth is the relationship between the act of gazing and the psychological and intersubjective dynamics activated by the interplay of gazes, in the two episodes most extensively dealt with here.

For example, the relationship between Echo and Narcissus needs to be read in a less schematic way, abandoning Fränkel's formula in which Echo is 'pure difference' and Narcissus 'pure identity'. Echo in fact does not have a purely passive function; her behaviour determines Narcissus' reaction and also influences his self-perception, almost offering him an external eye through which to see himself. There is, for example, the striking metaphor of 'heating up,' used to describe the effect the sight of Narcissus has on the nymph (3.371–2 vidit et incaluit ... flamma propiore calescit [when she saw ... Echo's heart was fired ... the nearer flamed her love]): an eminently Pygmalionic metaphor (10.281 visa tepere est [she seemed warm]) that makes her in some way an 'active' woman capable of acting on her own erotic initiative, but one who is frustrated, condemned to pure 'reaction,' to the point that she ends up turning into cold stone (the inverse fate of Pygmalion's statue, which turns from stone/ivory into flesh) and serves solely as an echo, a mirroring response to Narcissus' gestures.

We should also lend greater importance to the active function of reflection: the reciprocity of the actions of Narcissus and his reflected image, insistently replicated in linguistic and stylistic terms (415, 417, 421, 424–30, 436–7, 441–2, 446, 450–2, 457–62, 504), confirms the idea of the reciprocity of functions between the two figures—who swap roles and become interchangeable, in a sort of closed circle (Caravaggio's Narcissus naturally comes to mind)—and the need for an outside gaze, an active and passive role, or rather a doubly active role. And the lexicon of specularity, so typical of Narcissus, has its own analogy in Pygmalion's language of reciprocity (10.291–4 oraque tandem/ore suo non falsa premit, dataque oscula virgo/ sensit et erubuit timidumque ad lumina lumen/attollens pariter cum caelo vidit amantem [at last his lips pressed real lips, and she, his girl, felt every kiss, and blushed, and shyly raised her eyes to his and saw the world and him]), a reciprocity that is not illusory but real, in which the senses of sight and touch (282–9 temptat temptatum mollescit ... positoque rigore subsidit digitis ceditque ... remollescit tractataque ... flectitur ... retractat .. . saliunt temptatae [caressed ... beneath his touch ... grew soft ... hardness vanishing ... yielded ... softens

and is shaped ... the pulse beat]) play an essential role as instruments for perceiving one another. Today, this leads us to (among other things) a 'parallel' reading of the two myths, rather than one in which they are exclusively contrasted.

The fruitfulness of an approach attentive to the active role of the 'mirror' is demonstrated, for example, in Victoria Rimell's work Ovid's Lovers, which brings an important contribution to the discussion. Taking a different tack from established, more traditional readings that see in Narcissus a poetNarcissus, pleased with his own technical virtuosity (as proposed in N&P), or (from a feminist standpoint) that see in both Narcissus and in Pygmalion 'the male viewer who spurns woman and/or (re)creates her as artwork and fetish' (1), Rimell views the dialogue between Echo and Narcissus as an example of the interaction of desire and seduction between two different subjectivities. Rimell is interested in observing how a monologue can become dialogue, how female subjectivity resists and disengages from the masculine 'monological' pretension to claim its own voice and autonomy, but also how real and imaginary worlds interweave, and how simulacra attain concreteness and enter into actual reality, populating it and influencing its developments. 'Even in relationships which appear to be self-contained, Ovidian sex depends on multiplications, triangulations, substitutions, gobetweens, which inevitably render mirroring interactions much more complex than the Narcissus–Echo, subject–object (male–female) prototype would suggest' (5).

A theme that has now become unavoidable is Ovid's attentiveness to the woman's construction of her own image; he does not confine her to the purely passive role she is often assigned. This is clearly demonstrated by the importance lent to the mirror as an instrument of self-knowledge, a means of looking at oneself 'from the outside' and acquiring self-awareness (Ars 3.135–6). Today, the discourse on Narcissus and Pygmalion, as on other important episodes of the poem that revolve around female/male conflicts, must interlink with analysis of these themes in the rest of Ovid's work, particularly his early elegies. In this sense, Ovid's Lovers opened an important line of research that could shed light on little-explored territories and offer a global view of Ovid's erotica.

The same year as Rimell's volume appeared saw the publication of another, more properly philosophical, work that put Narcissus at the centre of a reflection on the gaze: The Mirror of the Self by Shadi Bartsch.9 Taking the story as the realization of Tiresias' initial prophecy (Ov. met. 3.346–8), Bartsch reads the Ovidian myth of Narcissus within a perspective that combines vision, ethics, and sexuality, against a background of Plato's Phaedrus and its reflection on mirrors, eros, and self-knowledge, as well as the Lucretian theory of simulacra. Narcissus is the victim of his own illusion, and his gaze and self-enamourment have a certain philosophical value: Narcissus hews to the Lucretian model rather than that of the Platonic Phaedrus, and instead of achieving greater insight through beauty, falls victim to the deceptions that Lucretius had shown to be the source of perpetual suffering and frustration for lovers. Because, as Bartsch observes, Narcissus is simultaneously on both 'sides' of the ancient mirror: one side is a noble philosophical instrument of self-knowledge, but at the same time, and most importantly, the other side is a feminine tool of deception, illusion, vanity. And the risks linked to an inopportune use of the mirror are confirmed, according to Bartsch, in the story of Hostius Quadra related by Seneca in his Naturales Quaestiones, which demonstrates the abuses and sexual perversions for which this instrument of self-knowledge can be employed. Thus, 'Narcissus and Hostius embody a negative and reactive development in the role of eros in the project of self-knowledge' (113).

Bartsch's reading proves all the more stimulating in light of the growing importance in our digital world of 'screenology', which focus on the function of the screen as an instrument of mediation in cognitive processes. Narcissus is the first to experience the screen, the visual surface—the device that is today an omnipresent support for the most varied of visual phenomena. Obviously, in Ovid's Narcissus we also see the identification and depiction of what is now perceived as a psychological phenomenon, namely the indistinguishability of these interfaces from actual reality, as well as the arduous process of disengaging from the image/screen (that is, the recognition of its illusory immateriality) on the cognitive–intellectual level, but not on the emotional one, which continues to hold us in its thrall.

Simulacrum and the power of the gaze

An important development in the interpretation of Ovid's Narcissus was marked by a 1988 article by one of the greatest modern scholars of Ovid. In that article, which was later incorporated into his crucial 2002 essay, Philip Hardie reconstructed the literary background of the Ovidian Narcissus episode. Love for an image—a theme that we know was crucial to courtly 'fol amour',11 and was central to the episode in Ovid—is associated with the idea of simulacrum, the basis of the Epicurean–Lucretian theory of sensations. According to Hardie, Ovid's Narcissus should be read as the poet's response to the 'void' Lucretius ('the great poet of the void', 150) had created, tearing down the illusory presences in human experience. Ovid reacts to Lucretius' cold rationalism by stimulating 'the sophisticated reader's nostalgia for a dream landscape where nature answers human desires', and also responds 'to ancient philosophical discussions of illusion and reality with reference both to the senses of hearing and seeing and to the psychology of desire' (150). The simulacra Lucretius exposed in all their deceptive inconsistency, which fuel vain amorous desire, are the premise that explains the frustration of that desire in Echo and Narcissus. Reacting to Lucretius, 'Ovid creates a mythological drama out of a psychological account of the delusions of the senses of sound and sight' (156), and the comedy of misunderstandings that characterizes the stories of the two frustrated lovers illustrates the deceptive mechanisms hidden in sensorial perception of reality, as well as in the lovers' illusory fantasies.

According to Hardie, this 'poetics of illusion' inspires not only the Metamorphoses, but can be found in all of Ovid's work, underlying his desire to create the illusion of a presence, or an 'absent presence' in the Lacanian sense of a perpetually fleeting presence of an object of desire; an illusory presence generated largely through words and images. If we consider that Ovid cogently theorizes the mechanism of desire (Quod licet, ingratum est; quod non licet, acrius urit [what one may do freely has no charm; what one may not do pricks more keenly on], am. 2.19.3), and if we accept the premise that desire is 'the master-term for an understanding of Ovid's poetics of illusion' (11), then we can understand why Hardie recognizes the myth of Narcissus as so central to a reading of the poem—and, as we shall see, that of Pygmalion as well. In Narcissus (chpt. 5 'Narcissus. The mirror of the text', 143–72) Hardie sees the 'paradigm for the

beholder of a work of art, for there is a narcissistic quality in the ancient rhetorical formulation of response to realist works of art' (147), deriving from the confusion between the reader/viewer's fantasies of a work of art and his desire to believe in the reality of the text or the image reproduced. The ephemeral nature of the image corresponds to the unrealizability of desire, and the surface of water is the Lacanian mirror that separates the Self from the Other. The impossible dialogue between Echo and Narcissus is thus the emblem of the Lucretian 'comedy of the senses' we mentioned above, that is, of the deceptive nature of the reflection of an image or a sound that feeds the idea of imaginary presences and ends up engendering the agonizing frustration of desire.

Hardie's Lucretian key to the Narcissus narrative astutely grasped the centrality of the simulacrum in Ovid, and opened the path to a reading of the episode built on the idea of absent presence (Derrida) and on the importance of the gaze in defining the structure of desire. Making use of this theme of the gaze as expression and exercise of power, an implicit comparison between the myths of Narcissus and Pygmalion is constructed by the classical art historian Jaš Elsner, the author of one of the most in-depth discussions on the theme of seeing and the inter-subjective relations of which it is the expression. For him, Ovid's Pygmalion myth is an allegory of the act of reading (chpt. 5 'Viewing and Creativity. Ovid's Pygmalion as viewer', 113–31): while he, like others, sees Pygmalion/sculptor as a symbol of the artist/writer (and of the tensions intrinsic to his work, which explores problems of naturalism in art), he views the observer/lover who eventually sees his dream come true as a symbol of the reader, of the reactions he might have when faced with the impression of reality produced by a work of art, of his own avid or minimal involvement in the act of fantasy and desire that reading entails.

Elsner goes on to dedicate a particularly exhaustive analysis to the myth of Narcissus (chpt. 3 'Viewer as Image. Intimations of Narcissus', 132–76), which he sees as 'a fundamental paradigm for the inseparability of self from representation, and for the inextricability of desire from either' (132).13 In the many variants of the myth, the central theme remains 'the question of self and its objectification' (133): what is the degree of autonomy between the observer's eye and the object he sees? Narcissus

believes his reflected image is a real person (this is the desire of naturalism, the same desire Pygmalion has), and falls in love with it; according to Elsner, this explains Greco-Roman art theoreticians' interest in the myth of Narcissus and its dynamics, 'which reflect with such acuteness on the desires of naturalism' (137). Narcissus is in fact 'naturalism's limit-case: the viewer whose success in believing that the imitation is real (that a reflection is its prototype) is tragically engulfed by his failure to see that the prototype he loved was not an other but himself' (142). Roman culture's fascination with the figure of Narcissus, evidenced by the myth's widespread diffusion during the Imperial era in painting and various forms of private material culture, focuses on the theme of seeing and the dynamic of gazes revolving around him, the object of desire. A Narcissus at the centre of a painting and of the world, introverted and indifferent to any form of social interaction, any voyeuristic gazes and attention aimed at him, trapped as he is in the web of his own image and disinclined to look at anyone but himself. This intense orchestration of the view staged around him, a procedure whose full self-awareness is indicated by the choice of Narcissus as subject, thus translates—in Elsner's reading of the myth—the dynamics of intersubjective relations, of which the Roman house was a sort of theatre, and the power relations between inhabitants and visitors.

Seeing and being seen is in fact a crucial element in defining the social identity of the first-century Roman citizen, who controls the world around him and is at the same time subject to its gaze, who sees and is seen. Social visibility, with the complex network of power relations it signals and affirms, is a requisite and a condition of primary importance for the Roman élite, and the widespread presence of the myth of Narcissus in domestic and private spaces is one of many clues to the widespread sensitivity to this experience.

Attention to the theme of seeing, of the gaze as instrument and exercise of power, proves to be an important key to understanding the construction of Ovid's poem as well. In the Metamorphoses, not only is the act of looking particularly frequent (and this would merit a study of its own), but it is an instrument through which the reader monitors the dynamics of the relations between characters as an outside observer, and is also involved in them, even to the point of having his own superiority and emotional

stability called into question. In short, looking confers power, but can also be a source of anxiety. For example, the recurrent process in the poem in which the reader is invited to 'look at someone who is looking'—a process that aligns the reader's gaze with that of a character staring at the object of his or her desire (usually a mortal woman, a nymph, or a boy), establishing a sort of complicity with the character— corresponds to the mechanism of 'mimetic desire' explicated by Réné Girard. The most famous mythological episodes of divine love—one of the most frequent and typical literary subjects of the Metamorphoses, and also divulged in a vast array of expressions of visual culture—are the perfect representation of the mediated nature of desire, which finds both ethical legitimization and aesthetic ennoblement of reality in lofty models produced by art and literature. The 'loves of the gods' are thus models of mediation of desire through the gaze, projections of fantasy elaborated thanks to literature and its iconographic expressions, of which visual perception (internal and external to the text) becomes the instrument. Looking at a painting, or a fresco in a domestic setting, that reproduces the loves of Jove or other male deities or great figures of myth means arousing the imagination of the observer (or the reader) and intensifying his emotional experience. If it is true that 'all desire is a desire for being', a metaphysical desire, then this stimulation of imagination contains an implicit invitation to the male beholder/reader to identify with the 'predator' god (the 'mediator of the desire'), intensifying the thrill of desire. As in Narcissus, the gaze and eros are closely connected, but they can produce a fatal outcome.

Narcissism and intertextuality

If it is true that, as August Wilhelm Schlegel said, 'Every poet is Narcissus', it is particularly valid for Ovid. The narcissistic nature of Ovid's poetry was noted by critics in antiquity: Quintilian, for example, the great Flavian-era rhetorician, criticizes the poet's unrelenting pursuit of expressive effects and the virtuosity of the devices that inspire the narrative syntax of the poem, dictated by his drive to solicit readers' applause (4.1.77). According to Quintilian, Ovid's attitude is complacently narcissistic: calling him nimium amator ingenii sui ([too fond of his own gifts] 10.1.88), he alludes to the poet's narcissism not only in terms of exhibition of awareness, but also in the modern, psychological sense of self-admiration, gratification in his own ingenium, his

technical ability shown off to elicit the admiration of his readers. In what only seems a superficial paradox, narcissism is selfadmiration that also demands admiration from others (as is the case of the peacock: AA 1.627–8 Laudatas ostendit avis Iunonia pinnas:/si tacitus spectes, illa recondit opes [When you praise her the bird of Juno displays her plumes: should you gaze in silence she hides away her wealth]); it is a form of 'self-enclosure' that nonetheless needs the 'other' (the paradox noted by Starobinski; cf. below p. 77). Ovid himself confirms this in works from his exile, when he laments the vain futility of composing poetry without readers to admire it: Pont. 4.2.33–6 in tenebris numerosos ponere gestus/quodque legas nulli scribere carmen idem est:/excitat auditor studium laudataque uirtus/crescit et inmensum gloria calcar habet [making rhythmic gestures in the dark and composing a poem which you may read to nobody are one and the same thing. A hearer rouses zeal, excellence increases with praise, and renown possesses a mighty spur].

This was one of the focal points of N&P, which illustrates a text that tells the story of Narcissus in a form that mimes the concept of reflection or mirroring, demonstrating the duality of language, the ambiguity between proprium and metaphor. This point, it seems to me, is still a valid one: the character of Narcissus, an emblem of both illusion and self-awareness, lent itself to interpretation as the symbol of a complacently reflected poetics that made its dualism (i.e. the intrinsically intertextual nature of Ovid's poem, which readily reveals the model-texts in which the characters have already had a literary existence) a strong point and an expression of cultural modernity. Studies focusing on formal analysis in recent decades have examined various aspects (language, style, metrics, semantic fields, narrative form and structure, mise en abyme, narrating voices, etc.) of the selfreflecting nature of Ovid's poem, its continuous reference to its own literary dimension, its innately 'dual' make-up—a trait that helps to explain the renewed esteem for the poet today.

The poetics of reflexivity is in fact the hallmark of modern (and postmodern all the more) literature, (cf. Barth 1967; Hutcheon 1984; Ercolino 2010), and obviously, the figures of Narcissus (and Echo) and Pygmalion have been widely employed by critics and scholars in the past few decades with regard to the concepts of repetition, reflection, mirroring, reproduction, allusion, and memory. In this perspective, the

phenomenon of the echo has been indicated as a self-evident trope of allusiveness, even insinuating itself into our everyday language (in locutions like 'to be an echo of' or to 'echo' someone or something). Alessandro Barchiesi in particular has explored Latin poetic tradition to highlight the fact that in it, the echo is 'an icon of repetition and poetic memory' (139). In the narration of the myth of Hylas, the beautiful youth lured away by nymphs, whom Hercules repeatedly calls in vain (and who is transformed into an echo), 'echo effects' serve to create an intertextual chain that runs from Theocritus to Virgil to Propertius to Valerius Flaccus, along with the likely-important passage from Nicander said to have introduced Hylas' metamorphosis into an echo (which would thus be the aition, the origin of this metapoetic image).

Stephen Hinds, for his part, showed that Ovid did not forgo the opportunity to exploit the words of Echo herself (in met. 3.501), making them echo a verse from Virgil's Eclogues (3.79), so that Virgil himself becomes a further intertextual echo. Following Barchiesi and Hinds, Mark Heerink's work on the topos of the echo of Hylas' name in Hellenistic and Roman poetry confirmed this 'natural' tendency of the echo to serve as a figure of intertextuality, or of the relationship between a word (especially when it is artistically formulated) and its repetition—a relationship of love/admiration, the same sentiment that dominates in Echo's voice until the end, i.e. until Narcissus' death, and even beyond: Ov. met. 3.501, 508. But all late-antique echoic poetry (like the Pentadius verses we will discuss below), built around the technique of echolalia, or 'echoed word', is not only a sophisticated intertextual product, but an act of expressly declared admiration and longing for the great models of the past.

So it is hardly surprising that Narcissus, the archetypal symbol of love for a reflection, is also viewed as a figure of intertextuality, of attraction to a text one admires and identifies with, from which one cannot or does not want to disengage. An exemplary case of this attitude seems to me Statius' silva 2.3, the Flavian poet's birthday homage (genethliakon) to his friend and patron Atedius Melior, which recounts the origin of the strange shape of a plane tree on the bank of a pond in his garden. It is the mythical tale, built on a typically Ovidian schema, of Pan's pursuit of the nymph Pholoe, who, to escape the erotic assault, plunges into the pond and melds with its water; the frustrated god can do nothing but leave a sign of his presence in that spot, protecting his beloved

nymph beneath the fronds of a tree he plants there as a symbol of his eternal love. The plane tree's branches stretch out over the water and then curve skywards from the middle of the pond:

> Sic ait. Illa dei veteres imitata calores
> uberibus stagnis obliquo pendula trunco
> incubat atque umbris scrutatur amantibus undas.
> Sperat et amplexus, sed aquarum spiritus arcet
> nec patitur tactus
> (2.3.53–7)
>
> [His speech complete, the god's old warmth is mirrored
> as tree trunk bends to fertile pool and leans with
> loving shade to penetrate the water.
> It wants embraces too, but these the sprite
> averts, nor will she let herself be stroked]
> (transl. B.R. Nagle)

The image of the tree, a metonym of Pan, bending lovingly over the pond towards the unreachable object of its desire—a water that 'averts' contact— evokes, or I might say mirrors, that of Ovid's Narcissus bending to admire his own tantalizing yet literally untouchable beauty (met. 3.427–9, 475–9, etc.). As Françoise Morzadec rightly observes, 'Statius makes the techniques of reflections and mirrors the sign of his poetics; in the reflection he signals the source of his inspiration', and after having clearly alluded to the Ovidian model of the episode (2.3.24–6, a reference to the numerous stories of rape in the Metamorphoses) in the image of the tree bending in vain over the water towards its unattainable love object, Statius evokes the gesture typical of Narcissus, the symbol of the Ovidian model-text, but also of the narcissistic poetics Statius himself shares. 'A reflexive figure, Narcissus is a mise en abîme of the self-conscious poet in his poem': a poet who mirrors his model, the much-loved and admired Ovidian text.

But alongside this 'direct' and immediate form (a text mirroring another text that is its declared or evident model), there are various other and more complex modes of narcissism. For example, the 'cultural narcissism' Jaš Elsner24 individuates as typical of the late-antique Virgilian cento (fifth– sixth century) entitled Narcissus, transmitted by

the same codex Salmasianus that also contains Pentadius' echoic verses (fourth century?), as if the narration of the myth of Narcissus were delegated to the 'voice of Echo' (265 Riese): two texts that share the principle of repetition—albeit achieved using different techniques—and the same intent found in Ovid's Narcissus to reflect the content of the tale in its form. The cento is presented as a rewriting of the Ovidian story of Narcissus' self-love condensed into sixteen hexameters, but reconstructed through a clever reutilization of segments of Virgilian text: Elsner reads it as an exercise in cultural 'narcissism' (p. 177), 'an interrogation of feelings of identification and highly valued emotional experience in a moment when the once vibrant presence of the ancient past was receding into the distance of a series of figures reflected in the pool' (p. 176). The figure of Narcissus acts as the symbol of a world in which the poet—whose era and context, fifth- to sixth-century Christian North Africa under the Vandals, is far removed from the classical world—seems to carry out an 'exercise of cultural nostalgia as narcissism' (p. 178), mirroring and emulating a distant, longed-for model.

Self-love, construction of the other: the primacy of the simulacrum

Although Ovid's Narcissus is not in itself a discussion on art, it does contain a few explicit suggestions in this sense: Narcissus poses and, his body immobile, bent over his reflected image, admires himself as if he were a statue (3.418–19 adstupet ipse sibi vultuque inmotus eodem/haeret, ut e Pario formatum marmore signum [spellbound he saw himself, and motionless lay like a marble statue staring down]); he sees himself as a Bacchus or an Apollo, whose iconography is obviously familiar to readers, contemplates his ivory-smooth neck (421–2 et dignos Baccho, dignos et Apolline crines/ inpubesque genas et eburnea colla [his hair worthy of Bacchus or Apollo, his face so fine, his ivory neck]), and strikes his chest with 'hands of marble' (481 nudaque marmoreis percussit pectora palmis [and beat his pale cold fists upon his naked breast]). In short, Narcissus' attitude reveals a clear analogy with Pygmalion's: he admires himself, but as one admires a statue, a work of art that he represents, which is the expression of his identity. The text focuses on the simultaneous activity and passivity of the gaze (424 cunctaque miratur, quibus est mirabilis ipse [all he admires that all admire in him]), in which the gaze of the 'other' is not merely a reflection of Narcissus' gaze but—as we noted above (p. 4)—also has an active, creative function,

somehow contributing to 'shaping' the self-image Narcissus is constructing (430–1 quid videat, nescit; sed quod videt, uritur illo,/atque oculos idem, qui decipit, incitat error [not knowing what he sees, he adores the sight; that false face fools and fuels his delight]). If he did not feel that he was seen and admired, Narcissus certainly would not react as he does to that incitement (incitat).

As has been repeatedly observed, the Ovidian myth of Narcissus broaches the theme of the relationship between reality and representation (that is, between nature and art), and with its focus on the act of gazing and the illusion of truth that the image transmits, it has always stimulated interpretations oriented within that perspective. In the De pictura, Leon Battista Alberti (1435) saw in Narcissus the inventor of painting, but long before Alberti, two Greek writers of the Second Sophistic (second–fourth century), Philostratus and Callistratus, used this myth, reproduced as artwork in the ecphrases they described, to discuss naturalism—the difference between the real person and his image—as well as eroticism, the amorous attraction the image arouses in its observer.

The association between a work of art (in the form of an extraordinarily attractive body) and enamourment, which is present in the myth of Narcissus, is obviously central to the myth of Pygmalion, especially the Ovidian version, which replaces the conventional story of agalmatophilia (the perverse 'love for a statue' attested by other classical authors) with that of the artist's enamourment with his own work. Ovid's Pygmalion does not love an already-existing statue, but a statue he himself is sculpting out of ivory (10.248 sculpsit ebur), the material used for the prosthesis that restores Pelops' mutilated body (6.405), and one that is often a source of illusion (as in the famous ivory gates that appear in Homer, Od. 19.564–7 and later in Virgil, Aen. 6.893–8). This of course (just as the myth of Narcissus functioned as the foundational myth of painting with its evanescent, incorporeal, superficial image, so does that of Pygmalion for sculpture, image as body in all its plasticity) demonstrates that images created by man are devices of his desire, and also shows the intrinsically narcissistic nature implicit in the myth of Pygmalion, in which the artist falls in love with a work that is a projection of himself, created in his image.

Shifting the focus from both the widespread idea of Pygmalion as champion of illusionistic art and the conception that dominated studies of the myth several decades ago of Pygmalion as an emblem of male desire's appropriation of the feminine, i.e. the woman constructed as the mirror image of male desire ('womanufacture'), Victor Stoichita, in a key work on the myth of Pygmalion in the history of European culture (The Pygmalion Effect, 2008), proposes a decidedly innovative reading. His interpretation focuses on the centrality of the simulacrum, of which the Ovidian myth would seem to be the originating text, thus debunking the widespread belief that the simulacrum is a creation of post-modern culture linked to the ideas of Baudrillard and the virtual world (2–3). While the 'Pygmalionian obsession' (55) that runs through art history of the early modern era consecrated him as the paradigm of the perfect artist who achieves the mirage of mimesis habitually celebrated in ecphrases, that is, the illusion that a work of art is alive (quam uiuere credas, 10.250), the Pygmalion story would actually be the earliest example in Western art history (later populated with many of its avatars) of an image—the statue he sculpted—that exists in and of itself, and not as a banal imitation of a pre-existing person or object. In Stoichita's interpretation (which corrects the widespread opinion that the myth 'is an illustration of the illusionistic power of art', N&P p. 76), Pygmalion goes beyond and against mimesis, improving on the traditional conception of the artwork as imitation of an already-existing model to demonstrate the creative energy and allure of the simulacrum, i.e. of the image perceived as real. His is the story of the artist who fulfils his own creative fantasies by constructing an object of desire that ordinary reality cannot give him.

The critical gain is evident and fruitful: seen from this perspective, the Ovidian Pygmalion episode (which illustrates how the simulacrum, a mere mental construction, attains concreteness and becomes effective reality) is not an isolated artistic product, but the coherent—and in all likelihood original—realization, and translation into origin myth, of a conception specific to Ovid: art as a creative act liberated from the function of imitating reality. In this sense, the interpretation offered by Stoichita, who obviously privileges the art-history dimension and is not interested in analysing Ovid's poetics as a whole, can be combined and integrated with the one proposed in N&P. In

summary, while the Church fathers saw this myth (in the traditional tale of agalmatophilia documented by Philostefanus of Cyrene) as a perverse manifestation of idolatry, Ovid retells it as the origin myth of an aesthetic principle, the primacy of the simulacrum over reality. This conception elaborated by Ovid was ground-breaking in the world of antiquity and, as the 'history of the simulacrum' alongside or on the heels of the predominant history of mimesis, was destined to have a vital, dynamic influence in Western art and culture. If Stoichita's 'Pygmalion effect' entails 'revers[ing] the hierarchy between model and copy' (5), and the myth of Pygmalion encapsulates the passage from mimesis to its opposite, then it can be recognized as the foundation of this anti-mimetic, anti-naturalistic aesthetic that Ovid not only 'invents' but hands down to later generations. We can thus comprehend, especially in light of the sweeping perspective offered by Stoichita's work, the relevance and fruitfulness of Ovid's development of an anti-mimetic, anti-naturalistic aesthetic centring on the primacy of the simulacrum over the real.

The classic locus of expression of this principle, on which I will not go into detail here, is the depiction of the grotto of Diana in 3.157–60, where it is said that nature, endowed with ingenium, imitated art: simulaverat artem/ ingenio natura suo (cf. here below p. 82). The assertion that nature has its own ingenium and uses it to imitate art is a subversion of the terms of the classical aesthetic of mimesis, and entails focusing on the creative power of fantasy and desire, opening a pathway to a great innovation in Western imagination. When, for example in Statius' Silvae, we read of a landscape endowed with its own artistic qualities even before man intervenes to lend it those qualities (1.3.15–16 ingenium quam mite solo, quae forma beatis/ante manus artemque locis! [how gentle the nature of the ground! What beauty in the blessed spot before art's handiwork!]), or of an ingenium of nature that competes with that of a sophisticated villa owner (2.2.44–5 locine/ingenium an domini mirer prius? [should I marvel first at the place's ingenuity or its master's?]) in the shared ambition to find models in art, we are clearly dealing with the Ovidian theoretical presupposition of natura aemula artis, and with the simulacrum's primacy over reality. The importance of all of this should be systematically explored in literary tradition as well (a 'Pygmalion effect' in literature), in which only occasional, albeit meaningful, instances have been noted to date.

To conclude, just these few introductory pages with my rapid review of a few of the works that have contributed in recent decades to scholarly debate (and not only about Ovid) seem to confirm the opportuneness of continuing to read the two myths in connection with one another, due to the numerous analogies between them and between the themes they implicate. For us, living in an era in which the digital revolution is redefining our relationships with the Self and the world, our complex visual perception of reality and the central function of simulacra in that perception, the myths of Narcissus and Pygmalion can once again constitute a useful lens through which to examine modes, effects, and consequences of our visual and intellectual experience. <>

A MAN OF MANY INTERESTS: PLUTARCH ON RELIGION, MYTH, AND MAGIC: ESSAYS IN HONOR OF AURELIO PÉREZ JIMÉNEZ edited by Delfim Ferreira Leão and Lautaro Roig Lanzillotta [Series: Brill's Plutarch Studies, Brill, ISBN: 9789004404359]

The title of this volume A MAN OF MANY INTERESTS: PLUTARCH ON RELIGION, MYTH, AND MAGIC. ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF AURELIO PÉREZ JIMÉNEZ is first and foremost a coalescing homage to Plutarch and to Aurelio, and to the way they have been inspiring (as master and indirect disciple) a multitude of readers in their path to knowledge, here metonymically represented by the scholars who offer their tribute to them.

The analysis developed throughout the several contributions favors a philological approach of wide spectrum, i.e., stemming from literary and linguistic aspects, it projects them into their cultural, religious, philosophical, and historical framework. The works were organized into two broad sections, respectively devoted to the Lives and to the Moralia.

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A feature particularly distinctive and remarkable of Plutarch's intellectual and professional activity is the way he managed to cover such an impressive range of areas and interests, which make of his work an inexhaustible source of information on the ancient world. This sensation is felt by any reader who is approaching for the first time his oeuvre, but is not less intense in a scholar who has been investing many years in studying it. Plutarch is in fact a 'man of many interests' and such is the case as well of Aurelio Pérez Jiménez, to whom this Festschrift is devoted and who distinguished

himself, throughout his entire life, as one of the most enthusiastic and brilliant specialists on the great writer of Chaeronea. Aurelio's particular emphasis on fields such as religion, myth and magic, rooted in meticulous philological approach, is made very clear both in the introductory section by Frances Titchener ("An Appreciation of Aurelio Pérez Jiménez"), and in the final contribution on his scholarly publications outlined by Luisa Lesage ("Bibliography of Aurelio Pérez Jiménez"). Therefore, the title of this volume—A Man of Many Interests: Plutarch on Religion, Myth, and Magic—is first and foremost a coalescing homage to Plutarch and to Aurelio, and to the way they have been inspiring (as master and indirect disciple) a multitude of readers in their path to knowledge, here metonymically represented by a number of Plutarchan scholars who present their joint tribute to both of them.

The analysis developed throughout the several contributions favors a philological approach of wide spectrum, i.e., stemming from literary and linguistic aspects, it projects them into their cultural, religious, philosophical, and historical framework. For the convenience of readers, the works were organized into two broad sections, respectively devoted to the Lives and to the Moralia, although each of these parts intersects with the work of many other ancient authors and sources, and as well fertilize each other, as would be expected (and is in fact imperative) in a volume devoted to the work of Plutarch.

The part dedicated to the Lives comprises seven studies. The first one, "The Life of Theseus: from Theater to History", by Carlos Alcalde-Martín, discusses the way Plutarch attempts to confer historical verisimilitude to the legends on this hero that he found in the works of poets, especially the tragic ones, but that the biographer could not accept in their literal sense. Taking his religious and philosophical ideas as a point of departure, Plutarch puts into practice a process of purging these stories by means of reason. José Luis Calvo Martínez, in the work " 'The Heraclean' and 'the Dionysian' as Structural Traits in Plutarch's Biography of Antony", explores the way the warlike spirit and erotic-theatrical character of Antony may be linked to the two hero-gods that somehow symbolize them, namely, Heracles and Dionysus. Delfim Leão, in his contribution "A Statesman of Many Resources: Plutarch on Solon's use of Myth and Theatricality for Political Purposes," deals with the way Plutarch presents this

paradigmatic statesman intervening at different times in the Athenian political scene. Solon quite often appears in a setting of strong social and political tensions that he manages to control by turning the situation in his favor. Famous examples are the exhibition of a feigned mania while performing in public the elegy for Salamis, the use of myth and Homeric poetry as means to reinforce the Athenian claim to the possession of the island, and the theatrical and strongly symbolic way in which he opposed the installation of Peisistratus' tyranny. In "Plutarch's Ghosts," Judith Mossman seeks to examine Plutarch's accounts of ghostly visitations and set them in context. These appearances—different than dreams, by the disconcerting characteristic that they appear to percipients who are awake—are frightening because of the manner they represent a rupture of the boundary between this world and the next, establishing an intrusion on the living by the dead. Anastasios G. Nikolaidis, in the paper "The Religiosity of Plutarch's Spartan Heroes and their Attitude towards Divination," discusses the changing attitudes of Plutarch's Spartan heroes (such as Lycurgus, Agesilaus, Agis and Cleomenes) towards religion and its manifestations (oracles, omens, sacrifices), by connecting them with Plutarch's own somewhat ambivalent attitude towards divination and oracles. With "Plutarch on the Great Battles of Greece," Christopher Pelling analyses the biographer's intellectual and narrative challenge in portraying heroes who were very often men of military achievement, thus personalities who, at times, might stimulate a sort of emulation that he might find unsuitable for treatment. The paper explores therefore Plutarch's techniques in treating such battles, and the way the heroic achievement is fully acknowledged and admired, while reflecting as well the points of distress and suffering caused by those internecine battles. Finally, Philip Stadter, with his "Prophecy and Fortune (τύχη) in Plutarch's Marius and Sulla," considers as a case study the biographies of these two generals who transformed Rome by their military skill, ambition, and disastrous rivalry with each other. Stadter pays particular attention to the manner in which, during the course of both Lives, and of the two men's conflict with each other, prophecy and divine signs remarkably interact with τύχη.

The part dedicated to the Moralia is a little longer and comprises twelve studies, which stimulate a vivid dialogue in particular with philosophical and religious issues, while

maintaining as well the philological approach as a methodological continuum. The opening text, by Paola Volpe, on "The μεταβολή of the Soul (frags. 177–178 Sandbach)," aims at studying the μεταβολή or 'transformation' of the soul at the moment when it departs from the body, underlining the way this experience can be compared to going through an initiation ritual, where wonder and fear are inextricably linked. Francesco Becchi, in his "The Philosophical Debate Concerning the Virtues and the Intelligence of Animals in Plutarch," approaches the question of the "moral superiority" of beasts deriving from their predisposition to follow nature as their master, whilst their incapability to achieve perfect rationality—and not their 'atheism'—properly explains the Stoics' denial of any form of intelligence to animals.

In "Plutarch's Image of the Androgynous Moon in Context", Israel Muñoz Gallarte focuses his analysis on the myth of the "androgyne" or "Hermaphroditus," and in the way its symbolism affects diverse fields of knowledge, and a number of different cultures that are in contact with each other, as is the case of Romans, Greeks, Jews, and Christians. Because Plutarch stands at the crossroads of these cultures, the study of his use of the sources pertaining to the androgyne myth provides a key to elucidating his relationship with the cultures of his age. With the contribution on "The Myth of Human Races: Can Plutarch Help Us Understand Valentinian Anthropology?," Lautaro Roig Lanzillotta accentuates the approach to mythical issues, by placing Valentinian anthropology in the wider religious and philosophical context to which it belongs, and by comparing it with Plutarch's conception of the human being as presented in his eschatological myths, in particular in the De facie. Myth is again at the core of Geert Roskam's essay on "Plutarch's Use of Myth in his Anti-Stoic and Anti-Epicurean Polemics," which analyses the complex and multimodal attitude of the writer of Chaeronea in what pertains to this topic. While sometimes Plutarch dismissed myths as mere fictions, on other occasions he appreciated them as interesting and valuable images of a deeper philosophical truth, and, as a Platonist, he also created his own eschatological myths.

In his study "From the Classical Age to Plutarch: a Diachronic Study of the Term ἀλιτήριος in Greek Literature," Vicente M. Ramón Palerm underlines the contribution of the philological approach to religion, namely in the way the irreligious vocabulary in

Greek contributes to an overall understanding of the "religiosity / irreligiosity" antithesis, a discussion in which Plutarch's input has special interpretative relevance. Frederick Brenk's "Plutarch the Greek in the Roman Questions" maintains that an examination of the Roman Questions reveals that Plutarch usually employs Roman answers for Roman "questions," while Greek answers are normally given as corroboration for the solution based on Roman culture. He then argues that, unlike the Roman Questions, most Greek Questions allow a precise factual answer, usually from myth-history or knowledge of the local religion. In "Plutarch and the Separable Intellect: Some Further Reflections," John Dillon presents a new proposal to explain the origin of Plutarch's conception of a separable intellect in human beings, especially in connection with Zoroastrianism, although allowing for a certain degree of creative adaptation on his part.

In his turn, Franco Ferrari approaches the "Platonic Elements in the Chaldaean Oracles," arguing that the Oracles reflect some important philosophical elements in Imperial-age Platonism, which are placed within a framework dominated by a religious and ritual approach, and marked by soteriological concerns. Aristoula Georgiadou, with her essay on "Marriage, Cult and City in Plutarch's Erotikos," maintains that, by making both women and men active agents, joined in their souls and fused together through the (Stoic) notion of "total blending," Plutarch erases the traditional (Platonic) boundaries between "lover" and "beloved," and between "to love" and "to be loved." In his final provocative study on "Plutarch on Philology and Philologists," Luc van der Stockt sketches, on the basis of Plutarch's use of the words φιλόλογος, φιλολογία, φιλολογεῖν, his view on the content and the extent of the notion of philology, and on the role of literature in philology and education.

It is our conviction that the essays collected in this volume (among whose authors are some of the most prominent Plutarchan scholars) make a very valuable contribution to Plutarch and to the understanding of his cultural and religious setting. And if the Festschrift has succeeded well in attaining that purpose, it will as well fittingly achieve the goal of paying our homage to Aurelio Pérez Jiménez, who, together with his most cherished writer of Chaeronea, are prime examples of men able to profoundly cultivate and illuminate a multitude of interests.

An Appreciation of Aurelio Pérez Jiménez

To most of those writing about the classical world, Aurelio Pérez Jiménez is first and foremost a distinguished scholar on Plutarch and his works, particularly the Life of Theseus. When like good Plutarchans we look at the publications of Aurelio, we can see many points of comparison between Theseus and Athens, and Aurelio and the International Plutarch Society (IPS). For we in the Society know Aurelio as the man who in early days established traditions for the IPS in publishing and philanthropia that persist to this day and are important focuses of the Society's attention and planning.

The vigor and success of the IPS, as well as the very existence of its journal Ploutarchos, owe an enormous debt to this learned and congenial man. Learned he certainly is: Aurelio has written not just on Plutarch, but many other things, including astrology, Hesiod, and Plutarchan reception in Spain. And congenial he is also, without question. Aurelio is one of those rare and very appealing individuals who really enjoys the role of host, and he plays it to perfection, whether that be taking visitors to tour the waterfront at Marbella, enjoy a local theatrical production, or enjoy the view from the Castillo in Málaga. He attends to details personally, and makes sure things go smoothly.

The story of the IPS has been told before, but perhaps not the significance of the Spanish Section. From the beginning, the Spanish section was notable for its important scholarly contributions, but over the decades, we recognize the Plutarquistas also for their fantastic Section conferences, beginning in 1988. Invitations to these conferences remain highly sought after because following the vision of Aurelio, these gatherings take place in beautiful, temperate places like Salamanca or Cadiz, too many to count!, and feature the highest levels of scholarly engagement as well as unmatched hospitality. The Acta tell the story, representing an impressive body of scholarly achievement by the Section and periodically, lucky guests.

Not only do the Spanish section conferences impress the memory, but especially the important international congress on Plutarco, Platón y Aristóteles, held in Madrid and Cuenca in 1999. That was only the fifth congress held by the young Society, who recently in 2017 held their 11th such congress in Fribourg, Switzerland. The success of that Cuenca meeting had a lot to do with people's enthusiasm over the years for

attending other congresses, and to this day, interest and attendance grow amongst the membership as each international congress is bigger and more successful than the last.

For Aurelio is not only an important scholar and administrative leader, but a generous and hospitable host. I recall many happy visits in Spain, often as Aurelio's guest, and most particularly, I recall visiting him in Málaga. I had not been to that historic city before, and Aurelio was generous with his time and knowledge. The past and present became connected for me in a new way, as an old Carthaginian town came alive in its different incarnations. Making a bridge between the past and present is something it turns out that Aurelio is very good at.

For instance, in the same way the Spanish section's very popular international Congress helped pave the way for more of the same, so did Aurelio's stewardship of Ploutarchos take the journal to the final stage of its journey. In 1986, Ploutarchos was a three- or four-page newsletter which relied on volunteer work and institutional generosity to exist. Within the next five years, the binding changed from saddle to perfect, a big improvement, but still a newsletter. In 2002, the vision of Aurelio was realized in Ploutarchos, a formal academic journal with original articles and book reviews. Even then, he did not rest, but in 2014, he transformed the journal's appearance, working with artists to create an elegant appearance. He has worked hard, and continues to do so, to help the journal raise its professional profile and become accessible to even more scholars around the world, creating a meaningful legacy that continues to grow.

But again, Aurelio's vision was greater. It was he during his service as the third President of the IPS who had envisioned the value of honorary volumes for individuals who had been important to the Society, starting with Italo Gallo and Philip Stadter, the first two Presidents. Typically, Aurelio was not constrained by a "category", but wanted to include Frederick Brenk, an important friend to the Society since the beginning in the early 1980s, and an important scholar on Plutarch's works. Aurelio assembled teams of co-editors and authors and was the driving force behind the printing and dissemination of these books.

This volume is a direct outgrowth of these Aurelian trends toward increased visibility, professionalism, and even beauty, and we naturally hope that Aurelio is pleased to see

the kind of fruit produced from that early tree. We ask him to accept this tribute to his scholarship, friendship, and leadership, and we salute him and thank him for the service he has done for the International Plutarch Society, and for all scholars of Plutarch's works. We all look forward to even more years of happy association, perhaps Plutarch most of all! — Frances Titchener <>

AGONAL PERSPECTIVES ON NIETZSCHE'S PHILOSOPHY OF CRITICAL TRANSVALUATION by Herman W. Siemens [Monographien und Texte zur Nietzsche-Forschung, De Gruyter, ISBN 9783110722284]

Nietzsche's strengths as a critic are widely acknowledged, but his peculiar style of critique is usually ignored as rhetoric, or dismissed as violent or simply incoherent. In this book, Nietzsche's concept of the agon or Wettkampf, a measured and productive form of conflict inspired by ancient Greek culture, is advanced as the dynamic and organising principle of his philosophical practice, enabling us to make sense of his critical confrontations and the much disputed concept of transvaluation or Umwertung. Agonal perspectives are cast on number of key problems in his thought across a broad range of texts. Topics and problems treated include: critical history and the need for a limit in the negation of the past; Nietzsche contra Socrates and the problem of closure; Nietzsche contra humanism and the problem of humanity; Nietzsche contra Kant on genius and legislation; the problem of self-legislation in relation to life and temporality; Nietzsche's sense of community in its articulation with law, and the normativity of taste; ressentiment and the question of therapy in Nietzsche and Freud; and the problem of total affirmation in relation to critique.

These studies have a broad appeal, from MA level to advanced Nietzsche research.

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Introducing the Agon

On the evening of the 8th of June 1870, Nietzsche went together with his best friend Erwin Rohde and his new colleague from Basel, the well-known historian Jacob Burckhardt, to a tavern in Muttenz, a village outside the city. They spent the evening into the small hours drinking and conversing on their shared passion: ancient Greek culture. This conversation was the birthplace of the idea of the 'agon', which in Rohde's

hands became a philologeme, in Burckhardt's hands the fulcrum of the history of Greek culture, and in Nietzsche's case a powerful philosopheme.

Introducing the Agon

This book is a record of my engagement with Nietzsche's concept of the agon over the past 20 years or so. The agon has attracted a good deal of attention among scholars and philosophers both within and outside Nietzsche-studies. [The agon entered the contemporary academic and popular lexicon in the late 1970s and early 1980s through Jean-François Lyotard's The Postmodern Condition (1979) and, in literary theory, Harold Bloom's Agon: Towards a Theory of Revisionism (1982). While both authors reference Nietzsche, their accounts have little to do with his concept of the agon. Drawing on the late Wittgenstein, Lyotard (1979, 10,16 f., 66) celebrates the pluralization of heterogeneous language games in postmodernity for their emancipatory effects, forming 'agonistic' networks oriented towards dissent. For his part, Bloom draws on Freud's drive theory, conceived as a dualistic / 'agonistic' struggle between Eros and Thanatos, to cast literary history as a neurotic agon with precursors, in which creativity is haunted by an Oedipal 'anxiety of influence' and 'contaminated' by 'negation, contraction and repression' (Bloom 1982, 98 f.). Both authors have drawn much criticism, which has only served to stimulate interest in the concept of the agon and extend its influence over a range of disciplines from continental philosophy, intellectual history, gender studies, Jewish studies, psychology, and sports studies to political science, zoology, art history, neurochemistry, materials science, and law. Some of these developments are recorded in the volume edited by Janet Lungstrum and Elizabeth Sauer, Agonistics: Arenas of Creative Contest (1997), which is concerned above all with the creative force of agonistic processes in various arenas. However, it must be said that, while lip-service is paid to Nietzsche, we learn little, if anything about his concept of the agon, or its fruitfulness for current issues an bates, since most of the authors use the 'agon' very loosely for conflicts, confrontations or struggles of various kinds (e. g. psychic conflicts, 'socio-sexual agons', 'agonal dialectic', 'the classical tragic agon', 'agonistic existence', 'agonal dialogism', 'communal agonal outreach', 'agonal demonization' etc.). As I try to show in this book, Nietzsche's 'agon' is primarily adynamic concept and as such is quite elastic. The problem is that the looser the

concept of the agon, the greater its extension and range of application, but the weaker its explanatory power.] Already in the 1930s, it was in circulation among Nietzsche-interpreters, including Alfred Baeumler's fascist appropriation. More recently, it has gained popularity in the hands of so-called 'agonistic' democratic theorists, who have used it in order to formulate a critique of, and alternate veto mainstream liberal democratic theories. This wide-ranging interest is rather puzzling, given that the most significant treatment of the agon is in a short, unpublished text, Homer's Wettkampf (HW), given to Cosima Wagner in January 1873 as one of 'Five Prefaces to Five Unwritten Books'. Thereafter, it makes few explicit appearances in Nietzsche's published works, and it was never promoted by Nietzsche himself as a signature concept of his philosophy, as were for example 'gay science', 'the eternal return', 'the will to power' etc. In Nietzsche's unpublished notes, 'agon', 'Wettkampf' and related terms do receive more sustained attention across his work. But the philosophical significance of the concept far exceeds the 'agon' terminology. Indeed, while the concept of the agon was by no means original to Nietzsche, his achievement was to turn it into a powerful philosopheme with wide ranging implications for fundamental questions in ontology, ethics, culture and politics, but also, as I argue in this book, with performative implications for Nietzsche's own philosophical practice.

As a measured and productive form of conflict, the agon is part and parcel of Nietzsche's life-long philosophical engagement with the problem of conflict, struggle and tension. As such, it undergoes a series of reformulations and permutation in line with the development of this problematic across his work: from his engagements with Schopenhauer, Heraclitus and Greek culture, to the origins of juse and social life in an equilibrium of forces (MA I and II); the feeling of power and its in agency, interaction and art (MA, M, GD); the naturalization of morality through the turn to the body and Nietzsche's philosophical physiology(Z, FW and the Nachlass of 1880 onwards);the question of rule and legislation in the wake of the overcoming of morality (Z and the Nachlass of 1883 onwards); the origins of slave morality in enmity (AC); and the problems of spontaneous activity and power-enhancement in the context of the will to power thesis, to name a few. But the agon isa multi-faceted concept, and individual facets have their individual trajectories across his work as well such as the problem of

life-affirmative idealization or sublimation; the concepts of envy and vanity and their place in our affective life and interactions; the drive for distinction (Auszeichnung) and the pleasure of victory; the concept of resistance as a stimulant, rather than an inhibitor; and the concept of freedom under pressure, to name a few.

In this book, my interest lies not in the trajectory of the 'agon' across Nietzsche's thought, nor in its significance for democratic theory, but in its potential as a model or cypher for his philosophical practice, and its implications for a number of key problems in his philosophy.5 From the beginning, when I first encountered this concept in the short text Homer's Wettkampf, it struck me that the agon had a tremendous resonance in Nietzsche's thought, a significance for him that went well beyond ancient Greek culture, and great potential as a hermeneutic key or cypher for his philosophy. In the succeeding period, I have tried to work this intuition out by conducting a series of studies in which the concept of the agon is applied in different ways to a number of key problems in his thought across a broad range of texts. Some of the results of these studies have been published in different journals and volumes over the years. In this book, I bring revised and expanded versions together with unpublished material from these and other studies under one cover, in order to make the case as best I can for the fruitfulness of the agon as a way to understand Nietzsche's thought. My hope is to open new lines of research by stimulating others to go further than I have and extend the agon to other problems and domains of his thought.

In broad terms, my main contention is that Nietzsche draws on the agon in a variety of ways in response to problems he locates in modernity. Specifically, I propose the agon asa model for Nietzsche's philosophical practice of critical transvaluation (Umwertung) and ask: To what extent does it afford insight into his contestation of

European (Christian-Platonic) values in the name of life, its affirmation and ment? While Nietzsche's strengths as a critic are widely acknowledged, his peculiar, antagonistic style of critique is usually ignored as mere rhetoric, or dismissed as violent and uncontrolled or simply incoherent. In this book, Nietzsche's concept of the agon, a measured and productive form of conflict inspired by ancient Greek culture is advanced as the dynamic and organising principle of his philosophical practice,

enabling us to make sense of his critical confrontations and the much-disputed concept of transvaluation or Umwertung, and also to understand better how he addresses a number of key problems intrinsic to the project of transvaluation

I do not aspire in this book to offer a systematic or exhaustive account of Nietzsche's philosophy, covering all the 'key concepts' and their development across his works. Nor do I claim that the agonal model can be fruitfully applied to all his texts or even all his transvaluative texts. Rather, as the title states, the book offers agonal perspectives on a number of texts and problems within Nietzsche's philosophy of critical transvaluation. Topics and problems treated include: critical history and the need to find a limit in the negation of the past (Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen II); Nietzsche contra Socrates and the problem of closure (Die Geburt der Tragödie); Nietzsche contrahumanism and the problem of humanity (Homer's Wettkampf); Greek classicist and the problem of original German culture (Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen I); Nietzsche contra Kant ongenius and the problem of legislation (Unzeit mässe Betrachtungen III); the problem of self-legislation in relation tolife and the overcoming of morality (Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen and the Zarathustra Nachlass); Nietzsche's sense of community and its articulation with law, understood as a normativity of taste; ressentiment and the question of therapy in Nietzsche and Freud; and the problem of total affirmation in relation to total critique (Ecc Homo).

My approach is marked, above all, by attention to the dynamic and relational qualities of Nietzsche's conception of the agon: What is the specificum, in dynamic terms, of agonal interaction? How best to understand the dynamics of reciprocal agonal engagement? At the same time, attention is also paid to the 'lower' and 'upper' limits of Nietzsche's agon: What are the conditions of possibility for the agonal dynamic to arise and be sustained? And under which conditions does the agonal dynamic become impossible and slide into the wrenching, violent conflict that Nietzsche calls the 'struggle for annihilation' or Vernichtungskampf? For Nietzsche, the agon is not a self-sufficient good, but presupposes and depends on what he comes to all 'approximately equal power'. What exactly this means is discussed in chapter 2. Of importance here is that 'equal power' is not the concept of equality criticized by the later Nietzsche as the tendency for democracy to promote uniformity. Rather, it designates a relational or

relative notion of power that includes the qualitative diversity that is lost under modern democratic values and includes relative differences of power. Mistaking 'approximately equal power' for 'equality' is, I believe, what has led some commentators to associate 'hierarchy' or 'order of rank' with Nietzsche's agon, instead of attending to his dynamic sense of approximate equality and the way it includes (relative) difference and diversity. In Nietzsche's concept of agon a interaction, as I take it, the difference in power between the 'weakest' and the 'strongest' is relative and never such that the former does not feel equal to the act of challenging the latter; by the same token, the 'strongest' or current victor is never more than primus inter pares. In other words, Nietzsche's agon precludes radical inequality, and radical inequality precludes agonal struggle in Nietzsche's sense, as some agonistic democratic theorists today would have it.

Asa dynamic concept, Nietzsche's agon is inherently elastic, and the agonal dynamic takes a variety of different forms in the different contexts and texts discussed in the following chapters. Indeed, I prefer to think of the concept along the lines of Kant's notion of reflective judgment, as so many attempts on Nietzsche's part to describe conceptually the dynamic relations of tension specific to the contexts he considers in their qualitative singularity, and with their own affective signature, for which there are no concepts at hand. In this vein, each chapter presents a separate study of a specific problem in Nietzsche's thought and the way(s) in which the agon throws light on the problem, as well as Nietzsche's response to it. Each chapter should therefore be intelligible on its own. At the same time, some cross-references to other chapters have been necessary in order to minimise repetition of some of the recurrent themes and concepts, or in order to indicate where the detailed exposition of a given point can be found. While, for this reason, the book does not prese a cumulative argument, the sequence of chapters does approximate the chronology ofmy research into the agon and so tracks a trajectory of thought. The principal trajectory is from the subject-position– the antagonists' affects, goals, desires, dispositions, the agonal 'experience' – as the key to understanding agonal interaction, to an impersonal, medial position in the relations between them. This move goes against the grain of the literature on the agon, in which agonal agency is thought exclusively from the subject-position, and its

unique qualities as a measured form of antagonism are derived from agential dispositions, such as self-restraint, 'agonistic respect', 'equal regard' or even 'empathy's.The argument fora medialreading of theagon isintroduced in chapter 2 and is tracked in relation to key concepts such as agonal measure,law and justice in succeeding chapters, so that the book can be read as an argument for the necessity of thinking about this particular form of conflictf rom a 'third' standpoint in the agonal relations between the agents.

Another, related trajectory is traced in the book, which begins with a programmatic account of the agon and its promise for deciphering the dynamics of Nietzschean critique, and ends by confronting the limits of the agon and its limitation as a hermeneutic device. The problem of total affirmation – one of the most intractable problems in Nietzsche's thought– is the rock against which the agon founders. The total affirmation of reality as antagonistic (and not just agonal) multiplicity marks the point at which we need to move beyond the confines of the agon and understand better Nietzsche's ontology of conflict. As such, the problem of affirmation also marks the point at which my work moved into Nietzsche's broader thought on conflict, some of the results of which will appear in a forthcoming book on Nietzsche contra Kant as Thinkers of Conflict.

All the chapters in the book share a number of presuppositions concerning Nietzsche's philosophical project (I) and the character of Nietzsche's texts (II), whichI would like to spell out in advance. Together they constitute the basic frame of reference for the book.

I Critical Transvaluation (Umwertung)

Throughout the book, I take Nietzsche to be a philosopher of life, whose project from the beginning to the end of his productive life is to contest the prevailing values of European culture in the name of life. Drawing on Nietzsche's own characterization of his life-long task from the late writings, I call this Nietzsche's project of critical transvaluation (Umwertung). Against the prevailing values of European – i.e. Christiann Platonic– culture, whether metaphysical, moral or religious, Nietzsche action time and again, to raise life as the highest value. At stake in the project of transvaluation is the problem of overcoming: how to overcome theoretical discourse

(metaphysics), morality and religion in the name of life, its affirmation and elevation, intensification (Steigerung) or'greatness'.

Nietzsche's transvaluative project has its sources in a sustained critique of moral values, culminating in a critical diagnosis of modernity. His style of critique receives its clearest formulation in the Preface to a questioning of the value of our most cherished, unquestioned values in the light of an investigation into their provenance (Herkunft):

> [W]e are in need of a critique of moral values, the value of these values itself is for once to be put in question – and for that a knowledge is needed of the conditions and circumstances out of which they grew, under which they have developed and shifted [...] (GM Vorrede6, KSA 5.253)

The question of provenance (conditions, circumstances) serves to undermine the se understanding of morality as a sovereign sphere of validity by collapsing value onto the plane of immanence. Given Nietzsche's negatively-derived one-world hypothesis, values are viewed as immanent to life, not transcendent, as really lived or 'grey' values; they are placed in relation to the life-forms or types (individual) that produce them and which they inform, guide and sustain, as well as the broad (socio-physiological-political) conditions under which they emerge and thrive. These considerations bear on the question of the value of these values, which comes down to a differential evaluation of values in terms of the value or quality of life they make possible. Nietzsche's questioning concerns the forms of life, th positions, attitudes, or types that flourish under the rule of a given value or set of

values: What form of life is conditioned, preserved, or fostered by the values in question, and what quality of life does it exhibit?

Have they until now inhibited or furthered human thriving [Gedeihen]? Are they signs of need, impoverishment, degeneration in life? Or, on the contrary, does the fullness, strength, the will of life betray itself in them, its courage, its confidence, its future? (GM Vorrede3,KSA 5.250)

To begin with these nonquestion: A purely discursive analysis, typical of philosophical readings, seizes on what is a product of discursivet hought– the thematic dimension of the text– at the price of writing off everything else as mere rhetoric or artistry. In so

doing, it effaces the uniqueness of Nietzsche's texts, their standing both within and outside the philosophical tradition. On the other hand, aesthetic readings that place the text wholly outside philosophical discourse – as a prophetic Schwärmerei, an eclectic Phantasieren or a higher kind of gossip– miss the point that Nietzsche does maintain a discourse. Against these two extremes, Blondel calls for 'an open confrontation with the enigma of Nietzsche's text' (Blondel 1991, 4), and that means: to find ways to connect what is open to discursive formulation– the thematic dimension of the text – and what resists and mocks discursive treatment– the performative dimensions of the text (Blondel 1991, 7). Until we are able to l Nietzsche's discourse with the rest without reduction, we have failed to address the unique status of his texts vis-à–vis the philosophical tradition.

As for the first question, the 'why' of Nietzsche's enigmatic style, Blondel proposes a two-fold response. On the one hand, he appeals to Nietzsche's vocation to be thevphilosopher of life and to make his text be the saying of life. On the other hand del points to the profound contradiction or gap that divides thought, theory and discourse– the discourse that would enable the saying – from the life to which this saying is to refer. Without doubt, it is from Schopenhauer that Nietzsche receives the shock that determines the direction his thought will take. It is Schopenhauer who first formulated the questions unleashed by the demise of Christian faith, question which'an astronomer of the soul could have calculated to the day and hour' (FW 357, KSA 3.599 f.): What is the sense (Sinn) or purpose of living (Wozu Leben)? And what is the value (Werth) of living? What is existence worth? Against Schopenhauer, however, Nietzsche takes it as his task, not to answer in the negative– because living has no meaning, it has no value– but to take the side of life and make his writing become the saying and yes-saying of life. However, this vocation confronts him with an insurmountable difficulty, a problem that afflicts the constitution of me through stable signification; that is, the very discourse that would be the saying an dyes-saying of life.

Following Blondel (1991, 22ff.), the problem can be formulated as follows Philosophical discourse – exemplified by classical rational discourse – is characterized by three aims: univocity ('clarity'); logical continuity (i.e. coherence); and tonic structure (systematic and demonstrative link a geotherms, based on fundamental principles and/or axioms).

The first aim, clarity, requires an unambiguous correspondence between the key terms in the text and the concepts they signify. The univocal meaning of a discourse is to be established by ensuring that each term or signifier brings to presence a single conceptual signified. This is achieved by inga code that fixes the links between signifier and signified, and so our understanding of the text. The code can be explicit – in the form of definitions and/ or axioms– or implicit. As an attempt to master and contain within discourse the code that regulates its understanding, this procedure seeks to stabilise discourse as a self-contained, closed and perfectly coherent signifying whole which imposes a fixed meaning on its external referent; a procedure that is reinforced by the further aims of philosophical discourse, logical continuity and architectonic structure. In this manner, the exteriority of the text is to be 'reduced', its exposure to contingency and to disruption from the surge of life is to be minimised.

Against this background, the problem of life-affirmation can be recast as a problem of closure. For the upshot of Nietzsche's genealogical critique of western values, beginning with the figure of Socrates, is that the 'will to discursive closure' in the name of stable signification and eternal truth (metaphysics), is in fact an attempted closure against time and against life that originates in a willing that is turned against the will. Now, if Nietzsche is right that our values originate in a life-form that is turned against life: the attempted closure of theoretical discourse against time and the senses in the name of eternal truth (as in metaphysics), and the concurrent war of annihilation against the instincts in the name of virtue (as in the moral demand of religion and metaphysics); if, in short, these values originate in a willing that is turned against the will, then they cannot be effectively challenged by a purely theoretical discourse that suppresses the body and closes itself off against the will. Such a discourse– even if it pitted life, its affirmation and elevation, against we use– would fall prey to a performative contradiction: that is, in its performance – as a discourse of values – it would undermine its discursive intention. So how, at the level of discourse, is Nietzsche to engage the entire problematic of values that issues from his genealogical critique? A strictly conceptual discourse of values will just replicate what Nietzsche is contesting – the illusory closure against time and the life of the body, the theoretical and moral denial of the will on the part of the Christian Platonic will. What Nietzsche needs to do

is confound the 'will to closure' endemic to discourse, to open up his discourse towards life – without undoing its discursive force. He needs to complement or supplement his discursive challenge with a performative challenge that enacts the concept of life raised and pitted against western values.

Blondel offers a paradoxical but compelling account of Nietzsche's response to this task with the claim that his text enacts a dynamic of saying and unsaying (dire et dédire), a dynamic that also signifies life as an essentially ambiguous, ever-shifting, open-ended play of forces in conflict, and so enables the text to say life, to'live':

> If a truth can be articulated about the body, life, reality, it can signify only through the text's saying (le dire), but also in the sense that it is a recanting or unsaying (un dédire). If, for discourse, a text can be considered 'false' since it is plurivocal, for Nietzsche, on the contrary, it is discourse which, in the face of the text as the saying of becoming, is a fiction: a repression of textual movement, a degraded text. (Blondel 1991, 29 f.)

As a 'saying', Nietzsche's text enables him to maintain a discourse and so to speak up against metaphysics and life-negating values, while in 'unsaying' what is said he avoid repeating the closure against life that he criticizes discursively. At the same time, the dynamic of saying-unsaying 'signifies' the dynamic character of life and the body – less as a sequence of signifieds than through the signifying process:

> In Nietzsche, the text is charged, not with designating signifieds (whose discourse has the task of reducing exteriority as much as possible), but with being the signifying process of the body and life, operating as the movement and labour of the text. (Blondel 1991, 29)

Since thetext, unlike discourse, does not master or contain the code or codes that regulate understanding it, there is no 'in-itself' of the text, no 'explanation' of it in this sense, but only interpretation, that is, the imposition of codes exte to the text (cf. Blondel 1991, 241).

Blondel's distinction between text and discourse is compelling because it takes up the discursive and anti-discursive aspects of Nietzsche's writing, enabling us to connect and make sense of them against the problem-background of life

and closure sketched above. The movement of 'saying and unsaying' enables us to see how Nietzsche maintains a discourse, while breaking the contrived closure of discourse and opening it up to its Other by supplementing it with a performative challenge that

enacts the concept of life to be affirmed. The movement of 'saying and unsaying' is also compelling because it captures a characteristic or recurrent feature of Nietzsche's style of writing, all-too familiar to any reader: his tendency to contest a position and then retract his contention, to oppose a claim only to undo his counter claim, to posit and then throw his posit in question. In the course of this, we will have occasion to see the variegated forms this dynamic takes in his work, but common to all is a double-movement of 'Absolutsetzung' and 'Nicht-Absolutsetzung'.

From a discursive point of view, all of this is hard to make sense of, and it ma Nietzsche's style look confused or simply incoherent. In The Body and Culture, Blondel's response is to appeal to metaphor Indeed, his book is a detailed study of the ways in which Nietzsche uses metaphors. It is, he argues, through metaphor that Nietzsche subverts and loses what he builds conceptually, so as not to fix and lose the dynamic character of the body and life (Blondel 1991, 28f.). And it is Nietzsche's metaphors that give a coherence to his thought that escapes the trap of discursive closure on one side, and the charge of incoherence on the other. In this book, the concept of metaphor or Übertragung also plays an important rolein a number of chapters, but it is Nietzsche's concept of the Greek agon, not metaphor, that serves as the 'masterkey' to his texts. From a perspective in agonal contention, the movement of 'saying and unsaying' begins to make sense as a coherent practice governed by adynamic of empowerment-disempowerment. Instead of isolating utterances and identifying Nietzsche with 'contradictory' positions, this book invites you to situate his thinkingwithin an agonal 'play of forces' (Wettspiel der Kräfte) that implicates us as readers, not just his chosen adversary, in a collective contestation of values.

My thesis in this book is three-fold:

1. First, that Nietzsche does not just oppose morality,religion, metaphysics or Platonism fromwithin theoretical discourse. His opposition takes the form of an artisticcultural practice– the agon–which sustains, regulates and organises his discourse

2. Second, that agonal culture represents or pre-figures thehighest form of life for Nietzsche, and it does so as a pluralistic, affirmativepractice of life-as-art.

3. Third, that Nietzsche's text is itself agonal culture, as the affirmative interpretation of life thematised in his work as the highest form of life – the rebirth of tragic culture. <>

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF W.B. YEATS edited by Lauren Arrington, Matthew Campbell [Oxford Handbooks, Oxford University Press, ISBN 9780198834670]

The forty-two chapters in this book consider Yeats's early toil, his practical and esoteric concerns as his career developed, his friends and enemies, and how he was and is understood. This HANDBOOK brings together critics and writers who have considered what Yeats wrote and how he wrote, moving between texts and their contexts in ways that will lead the reader through Yeats's multiple selves as poet, playwright, public figure, and mystic.

- A field-defining volume on W.B. Yeats, one of the twentieth century's most important poets and dramatists
- Includes forty-two essays by leading scholars and poet-critics
- Will appeal to readers interested in politics, history, and the arcane
- Considers Yeats's early toil, his practical and esoteric concerns as his career developed, his friends and enemies, and how he was and is understood

It assembles a variety of views and adds to a sense of dialogue, the antinomian or deliberately-divided way of thinking that Yeats relished and encouraged. This volume puts that sense of a living dialogue in tune both with the history of criticism on Yeats and also with contemporary critical and ethical debates, not shirking the complexities of Yeats's more uncomfortable political positions or personal life. It provides one basis from which future Yeats scholarship can continue to participate in the fascination of all the contributors here in the satisfying difficulty of this great writer.

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'What then?' the ghost of Plato asks in a late poem that surveys a life very much like that of Yeats himself: friends, family, a house and garden. But the interrogation that persists above all is of the poet's legacy. He declares, ' "Let the fools rage, I swerved in naught, / Something to perfection brought;" / But louder sang that ghost: "What then?"' Nearly a century later, scholars and everyday readers alike continue to be drawn to the reiterated question posed by Plato's ghost when offered a short four- stanza litany of the seeming achievements of the artist, impresario, public figure, historical thinker. Did Yeats use his fame and public voice with responsibility in tumultuous times? Did his work vindicate the friendship he had won among a fraternity of artists and thinkers and public women and men? Was he a good father, husband, lover? Did he ever manage to produce the perfection of great art? All of these questions remain open to literary criticism and history as generations of scholars and students continue to pore over the legacy of Yeats's seventy-three-year life.

Yeats's work covers a publishing history which began in 1885 and spanned Victorianism to modernism. He had a career as writer and director for the stage which began in 1892 and continued through decades of theatrical experiment. His life as a writer of critical and esoteric prose was surmounted by the two complete versions of a world and art- historical system, A Vision written in collaboration with his wife, George. By middle age, the Nobel Prize- winning Yeats was 'A sixty- year- old smiling public man', a senator who took an active part in everyday politics in the new Irish Free State, a performer whose lectures and readings could fill Carnegie Hall.

Above all, Yeats remains a figure whose work intersects at multiple points with the story of world literature. His voice is at once regional— the County Sligo family origins to which his writing returned throughout his career and to which his body was (probably) returned for burial; national— occupied in the political struggles and petty disputes of a small country at the western seaboard of Europe; international— a writer

whose audiences, interlocutors, and interests spanned Asia and the Americas as well as European literature from Plato through Dante to Blake and Shelley; and other-worldly— both in terms of an emerging new Einsteinian science and astronomy and the less tangible worlds of communicators, astrologers, and the tarot.

The forty- two chapters in this book consider Yeats's early toil, his practical and esoteric concerns as his career developed, his friends and enemies, how he was and is understood. This book brings together critics and writers who have considered what Yeats wrote and how he wrote, moving between texts and their contexts in ways that leads the reader through Yeats's multiple selves as poet, playwright, public figure, and mystic. The book cannot be encyclopaedic and neither can it ever be wholly consistent, but among the virtues of the Oxford Handbook series is that volumes like this can bring together a variety of views, establish a dialogue, and in this instance add to the Yeatsian sense of dialogue, the antinomial or deliberately divided way of thinking that Yeats relished and encouraged. Wedded to the questioning of certainty in a poem like 'What then?' is the deliberate 'Vacillation' of another late work. This book aims to put that sense of a living dialogue in tune both with the history of Yeatsian criticism and with contemporary critical and ethical debate, not shirking the complexities of Yeats's more uncomfortable political positions or personal life. It is hoped that the book will speak of Yeats's life and work from the times in which we find ourselves, and provide one basis from which future Yeats scholarship can continue to participate in the fascination of all the contributors here in the satisfying difficulty of this great writer.

Our collaboration as editors and contributors grew out of other collaborations and networks, especially the many gatherings at the Yeats International Summer School, where we served as co- directors. Many of the contributors in this book met in Sligo, and while it is invidious to mention individuals, we would like to thank Jonathan Allison, Meg Harper, Anne Margaret Daniel, and James Pethica for their invitations to be inducted into the community of the Summer School. For more than half a century the work of the Yeats Society Sligo has been a model for a cultural community which links the work of local and international expertise. We would like to thank those in Sligo who unconditionally shared their knowledge along with their hospitality, among them Martin and Maura McTighe, Damien and Paula Brennan, Susan O'Keeffe, and the

inestimable Martin Enright. The International Yeats Society has done tremendous work in expanding the boundaries of where and how W. B. Yeats is read, and we would like to acknowledge the work of those who have organized conferences and edited the journal, including Sean Golden, Catherine Paul, Alexandra Poulain, Charles Armstrong, and Rob Doggett. We owe many thanks to all three of these organizations for the opportunities they continue to provide for scholars to embark on an enterprise such as this book...

Yeats's Visionary Comedy by Matthew Campbell

> It is called 'wisdom' and this wisdom (personality reflected in a primary mirror), is general humanity experienced as a form of involuntary emotion, and involuntary delight in the 'minute particulars' of life. The man wipes his breath from the window pane, and laughs in his delight at all the varied scene.

What on earth does the everyday sensible reader do when faced with a poet who entertained beliefs that are not sensible at all? What to do with William Butler Yeats, a poet who believed in ghosts, attended seances, decided to get married only after consulting his horoscope, and then involved his much younger wife in automatic writing most nights for the first years of their marriage? How does one approach a poet who devoted much of the last twenty- two years of his career to elucidating a world- historical system revealed to him by mysterious communicators who wrote to him through his right- handed wife's left hand— often in mirror writing? And then, how can you read that same writer when he tells his readers not to take the system they have created seriously, and that even for the mediums through which the avatars spoke it was all a bit of a mystery?

Someone who has treated this material very seriously indeed, Margaret Mills Harper, says of the eventual bringing together of this material into the two versions of A Vision, published by Yeats in 1925 and 1937, that while he tells the story of his visionary experience, it sometimes looks as if he is inviting the reader into a joke:

> . . . the tone of 'any excuse however plausible' is the kind of smiling self- deflation which runs throughout A Vision, although it has not often been recognized as such. Self- deference is a significant rhetorical strategy in the book, . . . linked with the narrator/ writer's sense that he is not the sole author of his philosophical text and that he does not even understand all of it. The WBY who presents A Vision and has a secondary role as a character in some of its

bewilderingly prominent framing stories and poems is in fact several Yeatses, sliding between subject and object positions, who refer to each other in complex ways that are uncertainly and simultaneously serious and comic.

Harper tells us that Yeats had planned to include the following dedication to the 1937 Vision:

> To my wife Who created this system which bores her, who made possible these pages which she will never read & who has accepted this dedication on the condition that I write nothing but verse for a year.

Needless to say, George Yeats requested that he not include this dedication. She may have found the automatic writing physically hard work, but, as countless explorers of the Vision papers have told us, she was far from bored, rather an active collaborator, even instigator, of the whole project.

The epigraph to this chapter touches tangentially on Yeats's view of the wise in the twenty- third phase of the moon, for whom wisdom 'is general humanity experienced as a form of involuntary emotion and involuntary delight in the "minute particulars" of life'. The involuntary emotion is laughter. With such wisdom comes a comic or even comedic view of the world. The exemplars of this phase— 'The Receptive Man'— are Rembrandt and Synge, and Yeats does not entirely present them without demur. Their 'wisdom' may be a thing to be admired but, if it comes with an attention to 'minute particulars 'and consequently 'laughter', it may also come from a detachment from belief. It is also, as this section of A Vision goes on to say, associated with 'technical mastery'. Those artists who show too much technique also show too much involuntary delight at 'minute particulars' (the phrase is derived from Blake) as well as a willingness to shirk higher artistic demands, where the mastery exists for 'laying bare . . . general humanity'. The consequences are that the Receptive Man 'laughs in his delight at all the varied scene'.

This chapter explores various aspects of reading Yeats as a sort of comedian or, if not that, someone who wrote a visionary comedy, albeit one passing through 'general humanity' to 'The Fool' of the twenty- eighth phase of A Vision: 'his thoughts are an aimless reverie; his acts are aimless like his thoughts; and it is in this aimlessness that he finds his joy' (CW14, 135). Primarily, this is the Fool of Shakespeare, and specifically from King Lear, but it is a figure seen throughout the various world- artistic cultures

and forms with which Yeats experimented, from Mayo to London to Kyoto. In Synge and Shakespeare and the kyogen drama, the fool is both mindless and all-knowledgeable. There is, of course, another version of the comedic, that of the Dantean Commedia: that great foundational Western Christian engagement with other worlds, afterlives, eternity, and the divine was something that Yeats certainly had in mind for much of his career.5 And, later in life, Yeats reverted often to the example of Jonathan Swift and a sort of classical Fescennine poetry, a satire of the body, often obscene and bawdy.

In all of these versions, comedy comports with serious matter, and Yeats certainly thought of it as such: the idea of joy as the most important consummating achievement to which so many of his later poems aspire may be partly the comedic joy of divine knowledge and partly the tragic joy of the Nietzschean hero. But comedy is also something that we can mute down to the sensible, the ethical, the everyday, our feelings about what it is to be in good humour, to have an equable and not obsessive temperament. According to Yeats, this is the 'wisdom' of Synge or Rembrandt, as well as King Lear played through a now- forgotten contemporary of whose poetry Yeats spoke highly, William Watson: 'Out of the pool . . . Bubbles the wan mirth of the mirthless fool'.

If we don't immediately think of Yeats as a comic poet, we certainly don't think of William Wordsworth as one. But the critic Matthew Bevis argues just that in a book called, counter-intuitively, Wordsworth's Fun. It is an exploration of how we read for irony, innuendo, and insinuation, pratfalls and foolishness, incongruity and insanity, deflation and sometimes just for fun. True seriousness is at issue:

> . . . while the life of a good joke is often in league with the unabashed, the perilous, the tendentious, it may also prompt its audience to consider whether solemnity might sometimes be an act of bad faith, or an avoidance of true seriousness. If, as Schopenhauer suggested, humour is 'the seriousness concealed behind a joke', then Wordsworth is interested in humour— and in what the sharing, getting, and not-getting of jokes may say about us.

The urbane speaker who opens Yeats's great poem for the executed leaders of the Easter Rising admits that he had underestimated them: 'And thought before I had done / Of a mocking tale or a gibe / To please a companion / Around the fire at the club'

(CW1, 180). But the members of any respectable Dublin club of the time would be as likely to be delivering mocking jibes at William Butler Yeats as Padraig Pearse. When we snigger at the solemnity of our friends or idols, we may be acting in bad faith, but perhaps to take them and ourselves too seriously amounts to the same thing. And if we don't listen out for nuance and self- contradiction or attend to the tone of what is being said as much as to its paraphrasable matter, we are not taking them seriously either.

Yeats, like Wordsworth, knew that to present the perilous or, more likely, the tendentious in an unabashed way is to betray both the comic uncertainties of the minute particulars of everyday life and the larger implications for an ethical life too certain of what it is saying— or entirely without the tempering of appropriate doses of scepticism. For all his dabbling with the right wing of Irish and European politics, his lifelong fascination with authority and power, the practice of Yeats's poetry is neither authoritarian nor nihilistic: scepticism can be unhealthy, and to apply it too firmly can in itself mean we have missed the point and are thus open to a joke. For readers, as much as poets, attending closely to writing and what is written can be like listening to a voice, albeit an absent one; and voices when present have tone and pitch. By means of raising its pitch a poem can question; by lowering it can emphasise; and by inflection it can raise the matter of the humour that attends much social as well as linguistic intercourse.

Readers of Yeats, like readers of Dante or Wordsworth, need to listen for the comic intonation, look out for the linguistic sense that accompanies its poetic as much as mystical progress, be wary that what seems like an assertion has been phrased as a question and the raising of the voice can make us go back and ponder over the comedy of how we as readers got it wrong. We realize that something else might have been said once the ironic or the querulous have come into play. 'Did she put on his knowledge with his power / before the indifferent beak could let her drop?' 'Now I know' not that rough beast, but 'what rough beast, its hour come round at last / Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?' We might think that Yeats can be very silly sometimes, but we must be wary of laughing too hard when we actually read his poetry, in case the joke might be on us. As Louis MacNeice said, in what is still one of the best books about Yeats, published just two years after the poet died,

> I have met people whose attitude is: 'Yeats was a silly old thing but he was a poet.' This is a foolish attitude. No silly old thing can write fine poetry. A poet cannot live by style alone; nor even by intuitions alone. Yeats, contrary to some people's opinions, had a mind. He had also extraordinary force of personality. It is impossible to explain him by merely murmuring about beauty.

Yeats is a poet who can be both silly and fine, one who can allow the fanciful to intrude into the deeply personal and the deeply political. 'You were silly like us'9 (my emphasis), MacNeice's friend W. H. Auden had to say about this saving facet of Yeats's actual poetic process.

This comedic element works in Yeats's poetry and drama, where the humour is allowed to play over both the visionary and the deeply personal, extending rather than ruining it. To take the first of two examples, Yeats's poem 'The Cat and the Moon' was first published in 1919 in The Wild Swans at Coole volume, recycled in a different form from The Cat and the Moon, a play he wrote in 1917 but didn't publish until 1926. The poem is spread across the play as a sort of chorus but brought together into a single integrated lyric in the 1919 collection. These are the second and third 'choruses', which make up the centre of the earlier- published lyric:

> Minnaloushe runs in the grass
> Lifting his delicate feet.
> Do you dance, Minnaloushe, do you dance?
> When two close kindred meet,
> What better than call a dance?
> Maybe the moon may learn,
> Tired of that courtly fashion,
> A new dance turn.
> Minnaloushe creeps through the grass
> From moonlit place to place,
> The sacred moon overhead
> Has taken a new phase.

Leaving aside the phases of the moon, which are invoked at the end here, a historical cat, called Minnaloushe, belonged to Iseult Gonne, Maud Gonne MacBride's daughter. The poem and play come out of the difficult year, 1917, when Yeats proposed first to Maud Gonne after the execution by the British of her estranged husband, John MacBride, in May 1916 and then contemplated marriage to Iseult. When refused by

both, his proposal was accepted by George Hyde- Lees. The moon, of course, is a common symbol in astrology or the Tarot, say, but the male cat Minnaloushe and the female moon seem to be cavorting in a symbolic lyric.

Yeats later had this to say about what the relation of cat and moon might mean in a note to the published play, indulging what Harper calls 'smiling self- deflation' in his completely unhelpful gloss:

> Minnaloushe and the Moon were perhaps – it all grows faint to me – an exposition of man's relation to what I called the Antithetical Tincture, and when the Saint mounts upon the back of the Lame Beggar he personifies a great spiritual event which may take place when Primary Tincture, as I have called it, supersedes Antithetical – . . . I have altogether forgotten whether other parts of the fable have, as is very likely, a precise meaning, and that is natural, for I generally forget in contemplating my copy of an old Persian carpet that its winding and wandering vine had once had that philosophical meaning, which has made it very interesting to Josef Stryzgowski and was part of the religion of Zoroaster.

In a way this is a tease, challenging the reader to view the symbolism as impenetrable nonsense. In another way the antithetical and primary are key parts of the dialectic of world history in A Vision, vital elements of the geometry of horoscopes and lunar phases. Lyric and play invoke a sort of family story, or a love story, a story of men and women, for which you don't really need to know the biography or the astrology. Though it helps, particularly the role of Iseult Gonne and her cat, and the poem written about a cat which may once have belonged to a child, whom Yeats had known from her birth, but who when she was 22 was a participant in a vacillating half- courtship with the 52-year-old poet.

The story is a family story, or at least a story among families who had known each other for decades, and while there is no evidence that Yeats behaved in an improper or transgressive way, it is a bit funny— as in odd. But there is other much more difficult material in the environs of the poem and the play. As regards the play, Yeats envisaged it as the Japanese form of kyogen, not a Noh drama. The kyogen is a comic play, and we can see the Zen parable of the cat playing with the reflection of the moon in the lyric and a comic parable of holy man and fool in the play. Elsewhere in the note to the play Yeats suggests it could be played as 'a relaxation of attention between, let us say "The Hawk's Well" and "The Dreaming of the Bones" '. Taken together, all three plays move

from the heroic to the comic to the tragic, the latter concerning Padraig Pearse and the Rising of 1916.

'The Cat and the Moon', the lyric participant in this nexus of poems, plays, and biographical and historical event, is aware of itself as play, both child's play and play-acting. Its intention is to incorporate the symbol of dance into the symbol of the moon, but it can't help but teeter somewhat. 'Do you dance, Minnaloushe, do you dance?' This is an invitation to the cat to dance, which even children— particularly children— would know to be silly. What is it to 'call a dance'? At balls and gatherings— the social dance— it means the calling of quadrilles or waltzes. The type of dance, though, is not inconsequential: there are no balls here, or 'courtly fashion'. Rather, there will be a new dance, or, as Yeats puts it, 'A new dance turn'. The word 'new' in the 'new dance turn' will be picked up a few lines later in 'The sacred moon overhead / Has taken a new phase', where it refers merely to the astronomical phenomenon of a 'new moon'. The moon is not of course 'new', and its return to its newness every twenty- eight days is in part an astronomer's (or indeed astrologer's) metaphor for prediction as repetition. Fashion, wedded to another version of the new, thinks that nothing like it had existed before. For a moment, the everyday concern with the fashionable and the performative and the moment of play for its own transient sake has taken over in these figures of repetition as recycling. In the poem and the play about the cat and the moon, the focus in that word 'turn' is primarily sense 8b in the OED, as a slang term related to the theatre: 'A short performance, especially one of a number given by different performers in succession; an item in a variety entertainment; an act. Also: a person giving such a performance." It might occur only once in any given performance, but of course the whole performance— including the turn— might happen again on subsequent evenings. It is not a modern word (OED tracks it back to 1715), but it is sounded here with a certain modernity, or modishness: Minnaloushe or Iseult might even be a star turn, the girl and cat performing an Edwardian pantomime or Japanese kyogen.

This might be a small matter, a 'minute particular', if the word 'turn' didn't appear in other senses throughout Yeats's poetry: 'Turning and turning in the widening gyre', for instance, where it seems to presage a more apocalyptically 'new phase' ('The Second Coming', CW1, 187). And it appears in one place where the family are involved in one of

the most difficult writing tasks that might face a poet: how to match a public duty for the memorial poem with the personal memory of a great and justifiable hatred. John MacBride was not Iseult's father, and although the details are inevitably politicized, and tied up with Maud Gonne's legal case for divorce in 1905, it was alleged that MacBride molested Iseult when she was 9: 'the blackest thing you can imagine', according to Yeats. After the death of MacBride in 1916, as their correspondence shows, while Gonne was in a forgiving mood, Yeats was the one who had to say something in print:

> This other man I had dreamed
> A drunken vainglorious lout.
> He had done most bitter wrong
> To some who are near my heart,
> Yet I number him in the song;
> He, too, has resigned his part
> In the casual comedy;
> He, too, has been changed in his turn,
> Transformed utterly:
> A terrible beauty is born.

MacBride's part in the casual comedy is written throughout in the slang terms of the stage: 'number', 'resigned his part', 'changed in his turn' where it is his turn to be named, his turn to be the next to be changed, his turn to take a turn in the casual comedy. John MacBride is an unlikely candidate to be thought of as a comic turn, but, of course, 'Easter, 1916' is a poem about the turning of history and about change, in which even the drunken vainglorious can be transformed utterly. The mocking tale or gibe at the club, reserved for your enemies, has been transformed utterly into terrible beauty. The word 'comedy' appears nowhere else in Yeats's poetry. Here, the 'casual comedy' is of players and painted stage (as if it were no matter that violent revolution and MacBride's execution were not playing in the background). Geraldine Higgins recalls in this book that the Proclamation of Independence that was read and distributed from the steps of the GPO on Sackville Street on 24 April 1916 was mistaken for a theatre playbill. MacBride was not actually one of the signatories of the Proclamation, but he died for a document that, Higgins says, 'claims its authority by appealing to the "dead generations" . . . [and] does not display any doubts through ambiguous figures of speech. A Proclamation by definition has no question marks'. If

'casual comedy' is not the artifice of eternity, it is at least the artifice of history: cat, moon, and revolutionary hero play the ambiguous linguistic game where the heroic and the comic are nevertheless brought together in the joy of elegiac transformation.

* * *

Yeats is not making casual comedy of important historical matter, but the poetry consistently moves back and forward between positions in ways which suggest a comic shuttling. Sometimes it appears that, for all the system- building that goes on in front of the poetry, the actual poetic machinery is tugging in another way. This is as much a matter of the comedy of composition as it is of the critical comedy of trying to make out what the poem is about. Given this critical and scholarly conundrum when reading Yeats, with many readers caught between serious matter and sceptical judgement, MacNeice has a sensible thing to say about Yeats's symbols often not making sense:

> And it must be admitted that, whatever Yeats intended, he did not always handle his symbols precisely; not that this is necessarily to the bad if it is conceded that a poet may not himself know what he is driving at (Coleridge held that a poem gives more pleasure when it is not 'perfectly understood' by the reader; it is at least possible that some poems are more effective because they were not perfectly understood by the poet himself). Yeats, who in A Vision had arranged the universe in pigeon- holes, wished to treat his poetry similarly. But his poetry resisted him. The symbols, which were meant to retain their identity like the separate pieces of a mosaic, are always melting, fusing, becoming equivocal. For Yeats indeed the moon, being the mistress of the world's dialectic, not only contains all opposites but can identify herself now with one set of opposites, now with another.

The casual comedy is creativity, founded not so much in misunderstanding as deliberate un- understanding, a via negativa where 'the symbols . . . are always melting, fusing, becoming equivocal'. MacNeice is one of the first to say of Yeats that it is poetry which resisted the system, as if it contains the ethical as well as aesthetic material which can right the preposterous, the tendentious, or the silly. And this is, in a very particularly Yeats way, an aesthetically redeeming matter, where the elevated symbolism is brought down to earth.

Of course, Yeats's poetry itself could move in the space of a single page from the silly to the extremely unsettling, and as a poetry grounded in visionary experience moved on into the 1920s and 1930s the comedy struggles with its efficacy as a vehicle for meaning.

For a start, the visionary is something that Yeats believed you could schedule. Many varieties of orthodox religious experience seek transcendence through programmes of meditation or ritual. If Yeats didn't always believe it would happen on tap, as it were, he put himself in the way of such experience through years attending seances: his participation in the theatricality of those events was sometimes credulous, sometimes comic. The credulity could reach extremes, none more so than Yeats's delight in David Wilson's 'metallic medium' that purported to channel voices from the spirit world. Visiting Wilson in 1917, Yeats labelled the machine 'the metallic homunculus'.20 Many of the experiences about which Yeats wrote in his memoirs, however, were related with less enthusiasm. His first seance, recounted humorously in the Reveries over Childhood and Youth, ends up with him in terror, reciting the opening lines of Paradise Lost while his 'Catholic friend . . . was saying a Paternoster and Ave Maria in the corner'. The eventual gloss to his sense of being possessed is typically equivocal: 'Was it a part of myself— something always to be a danger perhaps; or had it come from without, as it seemed?'

The Gothic comedy persists through Ezra Pound's celebrated memory of hearing Yeats compose out loud when they shared a house in Surrey, Stone Cottage, in 1913:

> so that I recalled the noise in the chimney
> as it were the wind in the chimney
> but was in reality Uncle William
> downstairs composing
> that had made a great Peeeeacock
> in the proide ov his oiye
> had made a great peeeeeeecock in the . . .
> made a great peacock
> in the proide of his oyyee
> proide ov his oy- ee
> as indeed he had, and perdurable
> a great peacock aere perennius.

Pound's spelling of Yeats's accent pushes at the limits of the Irish joke, but his is part memory of haunting and part actual haunting, both having fun with the Gothic and explaining away the ghost with relieving laughter. The noise in the chimney 'was in reality Uncle William / downstairs composing'. In Pound's reality, the present of the

poem in which he was composing— 1948— was imprisonment by the victorious US army in Pisa after the disgrace of his fascist collaboration. Yeats was dead nine years. The apostate is haunted by his dead friend's voice, sharing the joke across the void: 'well those days are gone forever'.

Yeats's own peacock poem was composed as part of a synthetic visionary experiment, a so- called 'intellectual vision', where the person concentrates on an image or symbol until a vision appears. Pound's version of this is, as James Longenbach says, 'characteristically jocular':

> 'Intellectual vision' is, acc. Wm. Blake & others, the surest cure for ghosts. You'd better begin by seeing fire, or else by doing that visualization of points that I recommended. Fix a point, colour it, or light it as you like, start it moving, multiply it, etc. Make patterns, colours, pictures, whatever you like. You will end up a great magician & prize exorcist.

Pound printed 'The Peacock' in Poetry magazine in May 1914. He placed it on the same page as another poem, 'The Witch' from 1912, making a pair of poems, both in their way about the irreconcilables of art and mammon. When they were republished in Responsibilities they were printed by Yeats as numbers I and II. The first poem in the pair is slightly less conducive to comic interpretation:

> The Witch
> Toil and grow rich,
> What's that but to lie
> With a foul witch
> And after, drained dry,
> To be brought
> To the chamber where
> Lies one long sought
> With despair?

This is a visionary parable which can be set alongside Yeats's 'The Magi' and its version of the birth of Christ as 'the uncontrollable mystery on the bestial floor' (CW1, 126). That poem had gone back to Yeats's story, 'The Adoration of the Magi', and the latter- day Magi who discover a dying prostitute who has been impregnated with the power of history: 'the Immortals . . . have chosen this woman in whose heart all follies have gathered, and in whose body all desires have awaked; this woman who has been driven

out by Time and has lain upon the bosom of eternity.' Later in Yeats this woman will appear as Leda, in 'Leda and the Swan', and as Mary in 'The Mother of God'.

As is the way with visionary or occultist poetry, the trail is initially obscure. But eventually that obscurity must give way, for the contemporary reader at least, to something which is ethically complicated. Perhaps even more so when we learn that in 1916 Yeats attempted to revise the phrase 'a foul witch' with 'some stale bitch' when including the poem in Responsibilities. His editor at Macmillan objected, and Yeats climbed down in order to avert attracting the notice of the censor: 'much as I desire to see the vocabulary of the seventeenth century restored I prefer to leave martyrdom to the young who desire it'. Whether or not the revision stood, the episode is one of the first examples of how this visionary and, in the genuine sense, occult material is provoked into an obsession with the bodily, the risqué, and the obscene. For the critic Elizabeth Butler Cullingford, that can best be thought of in terms of bawdy classical verse, in particular the Latin 'Fescennine'. And that Fescennine had a history in English and Irish poetry from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, most typically in the work of Jonathan Swift and his many adversaries in controversy and obscenity.

* * *

The word 'witch' is associated with a risqué joke, especially in the poems spoken by the figures of Crazy Jane or Tom the Lunatic in the 'Words for Music Perhaps' sequence in The Winding Stair (1933), where the experience of sex, love, and ageing leaves one not blessed with wisdom but 'mad as the mist and snow'. An earlier poem, 'Solomon and the Witch', is about a carnal love that is not just a metaphor for transcendence and unity of being but one that can itself attain unity, no matter how momentary. Elsewhere in Yeats— 'The Supernatural Songs' or 'A Woman Young and Old'— this unity of being is associated with the love of angels or even of Gods: 'Godhead on Godhead in sexual spasm begot / Godhead.' Yeats knew that self- creation as tautology was silly in the Auden– MacNeice sense, and funny even in a schoolboy sense. In terms of his longer-held desire for transfiguration it is the comedy of a bodiless ecstasy that ghosted the early years of his marriage and its mystic accompaniment of voices from the other world; or, to evoke the title of one poem about alternative loves and sexual

imaginings of affairs that might have been, 'images from a past life'. The poem that goes by that title faces terrors, but the joke comes at the end of 'Solomon and the Witch' when gathered into the volume, and thus between the ecstasy and the fear, as it were. It emerges from the unity of the supernatural love of the gods before Eden, both preceding human history and out of nature, and thus beyond both the contingent and the human will: 'Chance being at one with Choice at last . . . And this foul world were dead at last'. 'At last / at last', the Yeatsian full repetition (at end- line rhyming position) is of the things that will have no repetition: you can't repeat the thing that comes 'last'. These might be paradoxes, even logical antinomies, and they are conveyed in a kind of non-poetry, or a giving up on rhyme, as if the best that the linguistic and aesthetic medium can offer is repetition as the self- reproduction of unity of being which belongs only to the divine: 'Godhead on Godhead . . . begot Godhead'. Human history is a brief hiatus between two cockcrows; eternity has been crowed out and then back in again. But for eternity there can be no 'again'.

This is comic, or at least comedy. 'Solomon and the Witch'— as with other dialogue poems and the dialogue between poems— contains voices that are separated because they are on the earth, as well as voices separated by the separation of the earthly and the human itself. They are also separated by gender: they comment on each other within poems, across poems, and across the divide between men and women, Yeats's own marriage, and the sexual history of his images from a past life and a supernatural other. Yeats held these views with the utmost seriousness as a visionary possibility, but they are rendered in these surrounds as the comedy of what is on the one hand 'mere' human life ('All mere complexities, / The fury and the mire of human veins') and on the other the only life we have, one which refuses to remove itself from our momentary grasping of something which might appear to be transcendence, and stubbornly persists in remaining as the earthly medium through which art and poetry and love must work.

The punchline to the joke in 'Solomon and the Witch' develops thus:

> [']Yet the world ends when these two things,
> Though several, are a single light,
> When oil and wick are burned in one;

> Therefore a blessed moon last night
> Gave Sheba to her Solomon.'
> 'Yet the world stays':
> 'If that be so,
> Your cockerel found us in the wrong
> Although he thought it worth a crow.
> Maybe an image is too strong
> Or maybe is not strong enough.'
> 'The night has fallen; not a sound
> In the forbidden sacred grove
> Unless a petal hit the ground,
> Nor any human sight within it
> But the crushed grass where we have lain;
> And the moon is wilder every minute.
> O! Solomon! let us try again.'

Jahan Ramazani says in this volume that 'the newly married Yeats goes to Muslim Asia in part because it provides an opening to relatively free and frank references to sexual relations', also allowing into the poem 'a remarkable assertion of female sexual desire and agency'. Sheba has already had her own one- line riposte to Solomon's other- worldliness, or end- of the- worldliness. When he offers an image for consummation as extinction— 'oil and the wick are burned in one'— Sheba responds with what we might imagine to be a simple gesture from the grass on which the lovers are lying in the morning: 'Yet the world stays'. Her last lone request, 'O! Solomon! let us try again', with its two exclamation marks, speaks from the bed to the rather useless philosophizing of the male lover.

Sheba's is not so much a call from the body as a call back into the conundrum which is puzzling Solomon, and he is rendered here by Sheba as in a comic pickle. The worldly, the earthly, the ribald even, are at all times in play: a wick doesn't need a Freudian analysis to suggest its semantic provenance, since it retains a history in the vernacular as obscene innuendo— dip your wick— and cockney rhyming slang, Hampton Wick / prick. In 'Solomon and Sheba' there is no sense that the sex was bad. Neither indeed, as Cullingford points out, is the candle burnt out. If the 'sexual apocalypse of Yeats's early love poetry is here reframed as comedy . . . Desire satisfied is not desire quenched, but desire continually reborn.' What is being asked of that sex— an experience which will

setMaxLength

end the world?— is comically out of proportion. Spiritus Mundi, is, as Yeats says in the note to 'An Image from a Past Life', the 'general storehouse of images which have ceased to be the property of any personality or spirit'. And to the comedy of Sheba's reply can be added the storehouse of images that includes symbol and allegory, the past and current social usage of language and the crudities of its everyday symbolism into which a less than pure, comic, thought might come. Thus the lover speaks back from the bed and the poet (as Solomon) continues with the conundrum in poetic regatherings of the question along with its recreation in image and metaphor and symbol.

What is this aspect in Yeats, this odd ribaldry just when his poems appear to be closest to expressing his desire for supernatural knowledge, his desire for unity with lives and loves in the present and the past, as well as a unity of being which every bit of sense he has (which includes the instincts of his art) tells him cannot be? It is partly a comedy of disappointment, or law of irony, where what is willed always falls short in the enactment of it. This is something that Samuel Beckett, for instance, saw in Yeats, and usually saw as funny. As Marjorie Perloff says in a suggestive and sensitive 2007 essay on Beckett's perhaps unexpected admiration for Yeats (in an essay called 'Beckett's Yeatsian Turn', where a 'turn' is a modish word for the modish itself, the literary-critical 'new'),

> Beckett was hardly a Yeatsian 'last Romantic'— indeed, he could confront the notion of passion only obliquely and parodically— but it was Yeats who, so to speak, gave Beckett the permission to explore the aporias, not of sexual failure as such, but of the failure to follow one's inclinations which animates such key Beckett plays as Krapp's Last Tape.

In Beckett, the failure is ultimately played as comedy, and, according to Perloff, the Beckettian pay- off in the use of Yeats is the mock- heroic. In Yeats that involves sometimes downright silly characterizations, such as Maud Gonne as Helen of Troy or Yeats himself as Solomon, later to be speared in Paul Muldoon's parody of the Gore-Booth– Markievicz elegy: 'Two girls in silk kimonos. // Both beautiful, one a gazebo.'36

In 'An Image from a Past Life', one half of the dialogue and the marriage— the male half, whether or not he be King Solomon— is presented in a seance with the image, 'A sweetheart from another life floats there'. The other, female, half is both the medium

and the present lover (at this stage in Yeats's life, his wife George). What, then, does that other half think when she is not acting as medium for the male? If Yeats himself can appear unwittingly preposterous, being high- minded about earthly loves never coming to satisfaction while suggesting other loves from previous lives, George is simply afraid— of the ghost and for her marriage. Readers of Yeats's poetry and biography, who know about the circumstances of his mediumistic composition in the early years of his marriage and the poet's past loves in this life, will see that the poet may be said to have missed the ironies of the situation. The medium— 'She'— is, after all, the one who sees the ghost of the former lover. As Yeats puts it in his note, he has not misrepresented the (fake) information he has constructed from the messenger Michael Robartes in 'permitting the woman and not the man to see the Over Shadower or Ideal Form, whichever it was' (CW1, 645 n).

'She' is given the last stanza and expresses terror before 'the hovering thing night brought me'.

> He. But why should you grow suddenly afraid
> And start – I at your shoulder –
> Imagining
> That any night could bring
> An image up, or anything
> Even to eyes that beauty had driven mad,
> But images to make me fonder?
> She. Now she has thrown her arms above her head;
> Whether she threw them up to flout me,
> Or but to find,
> Now that no fingers bind,
> That her hair streams upon the wind,
> I do not know, that know I am afraid
> Of the hovering thing night brought me.

'He' is solicitous here and offers husbandly protection ('I at your shoulder'), but it is he who is the visionary beneficiary of 'images to make me fonder'. Fonder of whom? Her? Or just happier in himself? This is the only occurrence of the word in Yeats's poetry, and OED tells us that until the nineteenth century 'fond' meant 'Infatuated, foolish, silly. Since 16th c. the sense in literary use has been chiefly: Foolishly credulous or

sanguine'. In one of Yeats's earliest pieces of journalism, his 1891 tribute to the recently deceased poet Rose Kavanagh, he quotes Ellen O'Leary on Kavanagh's 'the fond, foolish dreams of fervid youth'.

Ambiguities multiply into irony, as they must in Yeatsian ghost belief. The poem does admit that fear of ghosts and horror and laughter are close kin— we allow ourselves not just a sort of ironic scepticism here, but also the nervous laugh as vent for the shock. Yeats's poems continue to insist that the fear must give way before desire. 'The world stays', Sheba tells Solomon, and the punchline which answers his conundrum is the short or reiterative— 'let us try again'. That is in many ways the utterance of a Yeatsian poetic in which for all of his talk of 'a poem which comes right like the click of a closing box', the end of the poem— like consummation as the end of the world— is usually only a presage to trying it all over again. We don't need to insert our own scepticism into this thinking to hear that something is happening with tone of voice.

Given Yeats's insistent play with the ribald, the obscene, the suggestive— whether or not it be 'Freudian'— Elizabeth Butler Cullingford suggests another word for what is going on in these poems. It is one which empowers the woman speaker within them as much as the sniggering of the unbelieving reader:

> The sexual comedy that in classical fescennine verses took the form of the ribald male joking at the expense of the bride is appropriated by Yeats's Sheba. The wedding night frozen into the hieratic structure of the epithalamium is, through her provocative and teasing initiative, here opened up and prolonged into a succession of nights dedicated to sexual and occult exploration. Desire satisfied is not desire quenched, but desire continually reborn.

Cullingford suggests that in these poems Sheba and the sceptical reader can turn 'ribald male joking' back on the male. Yeats himself is doing this, as even the terrors of ghost stories are released into a sort of humour. But at this stage of his career (and marriage), how then did Yeats begin to explore the tonal possibilities of Fescennine comedy while bringing up matter that was so close to his mystical concerns? And how can we as readers discuss this as comedy as we view the poet engaged with an ethical, or even political, negotiation with the women in his bed and in his dreams (and in her dreams)?

* * *

Cullingford calls the Fescennine 'classical', and if it might in fact have been pre- Roman, it does waver over the 'Augustan'. In the Loeb Library an example can be found as epithalamium, in Claudian's marriage verses for the Emperor Honorius, but this is late in the Roman period, fourth century ad. As such it is epithalamium as the Renaissance (or, for Yeats, Byzantine) poet might understand it, a marriage poem singing to Lords and Ladies of what is past or passing or to come. In English- language verse the mode is associated with the so- called Augustan age, and more particularly with Jonathan Swift. Poet and Church of Ireland clergyman, the Dean of Clogher Jonathan Smedley directed a 1728 squib at Swift called 'A Lilliputian Ode; In Imitation of, and humbly Inscrib'd to, Captain Gulliver; sole Redivivor of the ancient Fescennine'. Smedley tells us that his poem has been composed in imitation of the Fescennine metre, a three- syllable trochaic line, or amphibrach. It ends with the accusation of sinking in tone:

> And Dean Swift,
> Left hath us
> Useful Gift!
> True BATHOS.

For Smedley, Swift was last in a long line of 'dull imitators of Anacreon'. Swift's friend Alexander Pope had Smedley swimming in the shit in The Dunciad, and the word 'bathos', in the sense used by Smedley here, was invented by Pope in The Art of Sinking the year before Smedley's squib was written, in 1727.

It might be that this is not quite related to the Yeatsian Fescennine— although the word 'excrement' does make an appearance in 'Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop' (CW1, 260). Yeats can allow himself the saeva indignatio with which Swift described himself in his self- written epitaph. Yeats's 1932 version of the epitaph translates both the Augustan poise and satiric anger ('Savage indignation there / Cannot lacerate his breast') as much as the oddness of the self- memorial, something that Swift had been doing much before his death, including the extraordinary— and extraordinarily funny— obituary for himself, 'Verses on the Death of Dr Swift'. What Yeats recreates in his version of the epitaph is not quite what is going on in these poems. Indeed, where we might find Yeats at his most Swiftian—in the late prose invective On the Boiler (1938– 9)—when Yeats quotes Swift, it is an early poem to William Temple, which

turns to a diatribe against those who would tear down 'unity of being'. The extract from the poem to Temple that Yeats quotes ends:

> They purchase Knowledge at the Expense
> Of common Breeding, common Sense,
> And grow at once Scholars and Fools;
> Affect ill- manner'd Pedantry,
> Rudeness, Ill- nature, Incivility,
> And, sick with Dregs of Knowledge grown,
> Which greedily they swallow down,
> Still cast it up and nauseate Company.

In Yeats's quotation of these early lines by Swift to his patron, this is in one way a riposte to the critics (perhaps literary critics). But we can see how Yeats would be attracted to a classic conservative statement of the case. On the one hand, there is the mention of 'common Breeding', which elsewhere in On the Boiler vexes many readers of Yeats. And on the other, there is the conservative satire directed at what Swift calls 'Scholars and Fools' and Yeats calls 'the specialists': 'The specialist's job is anybody's job, seeing that for the most part he is made, not born'. 1930s and successive authoritarian populist movements to this day continue to reserve their ire for those sceptical of claims made for unified national cultures: 'culture, unity of being, no longer sufficed, and the specialists were already there'.

A century earlier, in 1859, John Mitchel accused the poetry of James Clarence Mangan of 'Fescennine buffoonery . . . purposely spoiling and marring the effect of fine poetry and turning it into burlesque'. His complaint was partly that Mangan did not deliver on the seriousness of Mitchel's own radical mission. If the main purveyors of the Fescennine are conservative, not all comedy is inherently of that position. Yeats's comedy is one half of a dialogue or even antinomy of tone, a bringing down to earth or earthiness to set against the transcendent. Even in the brief moments in Yeats when its mere possibility is considered, unity of being must include the earthly and the divine, the demon and the beast, as well as the attentions of both the well- bred and the specialists. Yeatsian comedy, like Yeatsian history, swivels between destruction and rebuilding, rough beast and renewal. Where the Fescennine starts in the marriage bed, it gives comic colour or tone to something we might call 'sexual politics', and from that

we intuit another politics, freighted with longer historical memory: images from a past life.

The Yeatsian comedy of belief in human history is, in one of its antinomies, a working through of tragedy. In this book Hugh Haughton reminds us of Yeats's view of tragicomedy: 'it is in moments of comedy that character is defined, in Hamlet's gaiety, let us say'. The idea returns in 'Lapis Lazuli', a poem which turns around the tragedies of both Hamlet and Lear: 'All things fall and are built again / And those that build them again are gay.' However, 'Lapis Lazuli' does not end with that aphorism, which the poem could satisfyingly have done. Instead its last verse paragraph offers 'A symbol of longevity', the piece of sculpted lapis lazuli and the figures sculpted on it: 'Their ancient, glittering eyes are gay'. The symbol is both cold rock and 'tragic scene'. The ending of 'Lapis Lazuli' could not be further from the Swiftian bathos which preoccupied Yeats in these years, but Yeats does leave his reader with a typical equivocation, transfiguring dread while allowing the glittering eyes of the wise, recalling the Receptive Man who 'laughs in delight at all the varied scene'. Theirs is not the mocking tale or gibe at the club, although the sinking of the Swiftian satire remains a tonal possibility. Yeats's later poetry develops to comedy, and it is in the broadest sense a comedy which explores a Dionysian potential which both proceeds by vacillation and is vacillation. It is a poetry, Geoffrey Hill observed, of returns and revocations upon itself, as in the poem 'Vacillation', where Yeats contemplates his own remorse: 'something is recalled, / My conscience or my vanity appalled'. Hill comments that the last line 'concedes the element of clownishness in the man who might have preferred to be a hero in remorse'.

By this account it would be a rare moment in a Yeats poem unreservedly to give the reader its author's personal experience of unity of being as transfiguration. Does it happen in 'Vacillation'?

> While on the shop and street I gazed
> My body of a sudden blazed;
> And twenty minutes more or less
> It seemed, so great my happiness,
> That I was blessèd and could bless.

It was an everyday transfiguration. The surrounds were banal, a café in a London shop, and the timing of the experience courts bathos: 'twenty minutes more or less'. 'Vacillation' nevertheless sets itself up between the sinking of remorse and moments of blessedness, and it questions the spoiling and marring of joy by burlesque. Yeats echoes the amphibrachs of the Fescennine metre when he opens the poem by asking, 'What is joy?':

> Between extremities
> Man runs his course;
> A brand or flaming breath,
> Comes to destroy
> All those antinomies
> Of day and night;
> The body calls it death,
> The heart remorse.
> But if these be right
> What is joy?

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BERGSONISM AND THE HISTORY OF ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY by Andreas Vrahimis [History of Analytic Philosophy, Palgrave Macmillan, 9783030807542]

During the first quarter of the twentieth century, the French philosopher Henri Bergson became an international celebrity, profoundly influencing contemporary intellectual and artistic currents. While Bergsonism was fashionable, L. Susan Stebbing, Bertrand Russell, Moritz Schlick, and Rudolf Carnap launched different critical attacks against some of Bergson's views. This book examines this series of critical responses to Bergsonism early in the history of analytic philosophy. Analytic criticisms of Bergsonism were influenced by William James, who saw Bergson as an 'anti-intellectualist' ally of American Pragmatism, and Max Scheler, who saw him as a prophet of *Lebensphilosophie*. Some of the main analytic objections to Bergson are answered in the work of Karin Costelloe-Stephen. Analytic anti-Bergsonism accompanied the earlier refutations of idealism by Russell and Moore, and later influenced the Vienna Circle's critique of metaphysics. It eventually contributed to the

formation of the view that 'analytic' philosophy is divided from its 'continental' counterpart.

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During the first quarter of the twentieth century, Henri-Louis Bergson was probably the most famous living philosopher in the world. His name was frequently discussed by the popular press, and his public appearances in France, Britain, and the United States attracted large crowds. His celebrity would influence diverse aspects of his contemporary culture, with a host of prominent artists, intellectuals, scientists, and even politicians embracing different versions of what they took to be Bergson's views. These remained fashionable for a period spanning roughly between the publication of Creative Evolution in 1907 and Bergson's controversy with Einstein in 1922.2 Bergson's work was largely forgotten already before his death in 1941, and would remain so for the rest of the twentieth century despite various later attempts to revive it. It is only

recently that a concerted effort to revisit his output has begun to take place, for example, with the recent publication of a multi-volume critical edition of his work edited by Frédéric Worms.

During Bergson's rise to fame, most of the widely read portrayals of his philosophical views were not produced by academic philosophers in dialogue with their peers, but by various non-experts communicating with a lay public. Such commentaries served to widely circulate misunderstandings of his writings. Milič Čapek describes this phenomenon as a

> pseudo-Bergsonism, which was nothing but a mere literary fashion, comparable to existentialism today. [...] the content of this pseudo-Bergsonism consisted in the enthusiastic response to the emotional color of certain words, like 'intuition', 'création', 'élan vital', without the slightest effort at critical analysis. In this sense what Julien Benda called 'le succes du bergsonisme' was in truth the greatest damage done to the authentic Bergson's thought; authentic Bergsonism was misunderstood because it was wrongly identified with its fashionable and literary counterfeit. (1971, ix–x)

In this book, I follow Čapek's terminological distinction between, on the one hand, what in the book's title I refer to as 'Bergsonism', which designates the oft-distorting popularisation of Bergson's views, and, on the other hand, more scholarly interpretations of Bergson's own work, to which I will apply the adjective 'Bergsonian'. I do not, however, straightforwardly adopt Čapek's disparaging attitude towards Bergsonism. As a cultural phenomenon and as an episode in the history of philosophy, the rise and fall of Bergsonism is an unprecedented and unique case of a philosopher attaining such widespread influence while still alive, without posthumously becoming a canonical figure. In different ways, Bergson's work would function as a Rorschach test both to those who enthusiastically championed some of its popular renditions and to those who opposed them. The former tended to see in Bergson what they sought, the latter what they feared or despised.

Bergson was clearly not a Bergsonist. He did little, however, to discourage the circulation of distortions of his views. He contributed to the Bergsonist current by responding to interviewers' requests for his opinions on diverse then-current affairs, ranging from cubism to feminism. Furthermore, by contrast to the abstruse technical vocabulary of his contemporary academic philosophers, Bergson's writing style seemed

deceptively lucid, and thus accessible far beyond the confines of professional philosophical circles. This could easily mislead both Bergson's critics and defenders into misidentifying his views with their distorted popular over-simplifications. As this book progresses, it will become clear that this is a trap into which many of Bergson's analytic critics fell. In some respects, Bergsonism would become analytic philosophy's Rorschach test, onto which figures like Bertrand Russell, Moritz Schlick, and Rudolf Carnap would project deplorable philosophical errors. By contrast, this book will show how both Karin Costelloe-Stephen and L. Susan Stebbing endeavoured to avoid popular misunderstandings of Bergson's position. Costelloe-Stephen thus puts on a formidable defence of Bergsonian views, while Stebbing develops an insightful critique of Bergson which is all the more incisive because it avoids attacking strawmen.

I have so far discussed 'Bergsonism' in the singular. This may be partly misleading, since it was far from a unified movement, or even consistent tendency. Based on selective readings of Bergson's work, popular forms of Bergsonism invoked the authority of the Maitre in support of multifarious conflicting views and attitudes. It may thus be preferable, following Susan Guerlac (2006, 1–13), to talk in the plural of multiple Bergsonisms. These would include, as Donna Jones has recently noted, cultural tendencies as disparate as 'anarchosyndicalism, mysticism and occultism, aesthetic modernism,9 fascism, pacifism, literary subjectivism, environmentalism, scientism and antiscientism' (2010, 78), as well as the Négritude movement (129–178). Some of these multiple manifestations of Bergsonism are diametrically opposed to others. As this book will show, analytic responses to Bergson developed in opposition to specific Bergsonist variants, particularly those associated with fascism, mysticism, and attitudes critical towards science.

Bergson not only failed to counter popular Bergsonisms as misinterpretations of his work, but was also unwilling to engage in debate with some of his academic critics who had inadvertently accepted such misinterpretations. He did not answer any of the analytic criticisms discussed in this book. It is thus difficult to determine which positions, if any, defended by Bergson can be salvaged from the barrage of analytic objections against them. Bergson would make matters even worse by explicitly endorsing a reply to Russell by Herbert Wildon Carr (1913) that, as Chap. 5 shows, not

only failed to dispel popular misunderstandings of Bergson, but also was easily answerable by Russell. By contrast to Carr's flawed reply, neither Russell nor Bergson responded to Costelloe-Stephen's incisive answer to Russell. This book will not systematically attempt to imagine how Bergson should have responded to his critics. It will, however, look to the contemporary work of Costelloe-Stephen and Stebbing for some potential answers. This helps dispel the impression that there was nothing to say in reply to Bergson's analytic critics, which led some to conclude that they had 'vanquished' (Lakatos 1970a, 100) their foe.

Bergson's silence could be construed as confirming his critics' claim that his work did not rely on argument and remained indifferent to objections. This claim would pave the path for a series of subsequent polemics in which opponents of analytic philosophy are relegated to the domain of poetry. As this book will show, this early indictment of Bergsonism eventually found its way into Oxford philosophers' presentations, during the 1940s and 1950s, of 'continental philosophy' as under the dominion of Masters, 'Pontiffs' (Ayer 1949; cf. Russell 1992a, 292, 315), or 'Fuehrers' (Ryle [1962] 2009, 189).

Rather than developing an apologetics for Bergson, this book is primarily concerned with the role that responses to Bergsonism played in the history of analytic philosophy. It demonstrates that criticising Bergson was a formative exercise that shaped what, in the process, came to be called 'analytic philosophy'.

Perhaps due to the aforementioned decline in Bergson's philosophical influence, the role that criticisms of his position played for the development of analytic philosophy has hitherto largely been ignored by scholarship. By contrast, traditional accounts of the emergence of analytic philosophy have often assigned a central role to Russell's and Moore's attempts to refute idealism. The received view takes idealism to have been defeated in 1903—from then onwards analytic philosophers saw 'that grass is green, that the sun and stars would exist if no one was aware of them' (Russell 1946b, 12). Scholarship in the history of analytic philosophy has questioned and revised this simplistic account.

By Russell's (1928) own admission, he and Moore were not alone in challenging the Idealistic schools that had dominated fin-de-siècle academic philosophy across the

world. Outside professional philosophical circles, it was Bergson that was seen as posing the chief challenge to the Idealist establishment. Shortly before his death in 1910, William James (1910) summarised the predicament faced by his contemporary philosophy as a choice between F.H. Bradley and Bergson. Chapter 4 explains why James thought the obvious choice was Bergson, whom he portrayed as an ally to the Pragmatist critique of idealism. Russell (e.g. 1912a, 322, 1914c, 11) too upheld a version of James's depiction of Bergson and Pragmatism as allies opposed to idealism, only to add that their opposition was inadequate. Like Stebbing (1914, 2), Russell (1928, 57) thought that Bergson's popular appeal was to a large extent built upon the jargon- free imagistic language in which it was framed. Russell (1928, 68–69) distinguished such popular criticisms of idealism from a series of more effective academic criticisms that came from 'a severely technical standpoint' (69), and which included, among others, Russell and Moore's refutations. Seen from Russell's perspective, once idealism had been refuted, there remained a rivalry between the popularisers and the technicians. And so, as we shall see in Chap. 5, Russell would attempt to combine the two worlds: he set out on the first steps in his career as a public intellectual by relying on some of his more technical work in criticising Bergson in a public forum.

Not all the philosophers engaged with the analytic criticisms of Bergsonism saw their position in the same light as Russell. Chapters 6 and 7 show that both Costelloe-Stephen and Stebbing challenged the types of over-arching generalisations involved in Russell's claims about the battles between contenting 'isms'. Stebbing's (1914) work, which I explore in Chap. 7, paints a detailed picture of the differences between Pragmatism and the French Voluntarist tradition in which she shows Bergson to belong. She thus criticises the vagueness involved in all-encompassing pronouncements concerning the alliance between Bergson and the Pragmatists. While Stebbing, writing before Russell, looks to the history of philosophy to understand Bergson's thought, Costelloe-Stephen responds specifically to Russell's criticisms. She demonstrates how Russell's and Bergson's outlooks are in agreement concerning immediate acquaintance as the source of knowledge. She also sharpens their disagreement by diverting attention away from vague controversies about 'anti-intellectualism', focussing instead on a debate concerning the nature of sense-data.

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This book has examined an array of critical reactions directed against Bergsonism by central figures in the history of analytic philosophy. During the height of Bergsonism's international popularity, a progression of philosophers, beginning with Stebbing and Russell, and followed by Schlick and Carnap, raised their objections to certain views they attributed to Bergson. The book has endeavoured to reconstruct these philosophers' dialogues with interlocutors defending Bergson's outlook. Russell and Stebbing were largely responding to the enthusiastic reception of Bergson's work by William James, who saw it as part of American Pragmatism. Russell's criticisms were answered by Costelloe-Stephen, whose indirect dialogue with Stebbing this book has reconstructed. The Vienna Circle were partly reacting to Max Scheler's selective appropriation of Bergson into the current he called 'Lebensphilosophie'. Between 1913 and 1931, Schlick's early attack against Bergsonism, in the broader context of his critique of intuition, became transformed into the Vienna Circle's project of overcoming metaphysics. By 1931, Carnap's attack against metaphysics was redirected away from Bergsonism and against a new target: Martin Heidegger's pseudo-statements about 'the Nothing'. The Logical Empiricist project of 'overcoming' (translated by Ayer as 'eliminating') metaphysics set the agenda for subsequent debates within Anglophone analytic philosophy. In the mid-1940s, Ayer combined elements from Russell's reaction to Bergsonism with Carnap's attack on Heidegger's pseudo-statements in criticising the newly fashionable existentialism that had replaced the earlier Bergsonist fad. Some of Ayer's views would soon be repeated by Ryle and Hare in their generalised proclamations concerning the division between 'analytic' and 'continental' philosophy.

The responses to Bergsonism examined by this book have played a significant, and hitherto neglected, role within the history of analytic philosophy. Traditional accounts of the emergence of Anglophone analytic philosophy have accorded pride of place to Moore's and Russell's early criticisms of the British idealist tradition. Without questioning the central significance of this episode for the development of analytic philosophy, this book has shown that it was coupled with a strategic move against the rival criticisms of idealism developed by Bergson and James. As Russell (1928) himself

acknowledges, in the Anglophone world prior to the First World War, Bergson and the Pragmatists were widely perceived as leading the anti-idealist charge. As shown in Chap. 5, Russell accused Bergson of being inadequately critical of idealism in accounting for the role played by the subject-object distinction in perception. Russell thus implies that, by contrast to Bergson, the objections put forth by himself and Moore successfully and irrevocably refuted the basic tenets of idealism. A variety of reasons underlie the demise of British idealism, including, for example, the wartime controversy discussed in Chap. 8, which had been instigated by Bergson. By the time the war was over, Moore's and Russell's approaches were taking the leading reign in British academic philosophy. Chapter 8 shows things to have been quite different in the Germanophone context. There, Bergsonism was received as an ally of certain forms of idealism (such as Eucken's). In parallel, Bergson was interpreted, especially by Eucken's student Scheler, as reinstating intuition as a method for philosophy, and thereby opposing the NeoKantian schools that had dominated academic philosophy in Germany before the end of the war. Schlick's, and later Carnap's, attacks against Bergson took Scheler at his word: they saw Bergson as an ally of Lebensphilosophie who opposed the scientific world-conception by reinstating idealist tendencies.

Thus, for different reasons (some in tension with others), Bergson came to be in the cross-sight of representatives of very different philosophical tendencies that would eventually be bundled together under the banner of 'analytic philosophy'. There were substantial disagreements over a broad range of issues between Russell's 'logical atomism' (accompanied by a metaphysics of acquaintance), Stebbing's later development of 'Cambridge analysis', and the Vienna Circle's Logical Empiricism. Yet, despite the significant divergences between their position, Russell, Stebbing, and the Logical Empiricists all agreed in rejecting Bergsonism.

In each case, the divergence between their approaches is reflected in the details of their objections to Bergsonism. Russell, Stebbing, Schlick, and Carnap all disagree with Bergson's view that there is a special type of knowledge afforded by 'intuition'. Nevertheless, in each case, 'intuition' is understood somewhat differently. Russell and Stebbing have conflicting interpretations of the specific role played by 'intuition' in Bergson's epistemology. Due to James's influence, Russell assumes that Bergson is an

'anti-intellectualist' who appeals to intuitive knowledge in rejecting intellectual knowledge. Stebbing corrects Russell's Jamesian misinterpretation, dispelling the claim that Bergson is an 'anti-intellectualist', and showing instead that he sees the completion of knowledge as involving a combination of intuition with intellect. Russell's criticism of Bergson's 'intuition' focuses specifically on its misidentification with instinct. By contrast, Schlick's and Carnap's criticisms cover over any claim that acquaintance may result in knowledge, including eventually even Russell's sense-data theory. Schlick agrees with Stebbing in upholding the Lotzean thesis that knowledge necessarily involves two-term relations. Yet the conclusions reached from this commonly held thesis are modified by their divergent attitudes towards metaphysics. Schlick and Carnap develop an overall criticism of metaphysical pseudo-statements, which they take to be nonsensical. Stebbing, who does not take all metaphysics to be nonsense, resists such conclusions, warning against prematurely rejecting what is valuable in metaphysical systems like Bergson's without the necessary detailed critical scrutiny of the entire system. Thus, in general, while Russell, Stebbing, Schlick, and Carnap agree that Bergson's positions are subject to serious objections, their criticisms involve substantial disagreements.

Despite these disagreements, in the course of the abovementioned critical reaction to Bergsonism, we find the earliest emergence of the view that there exists a movement or tradition that goes under the banner of 'analytic philosophy', and which is somehow distinct from other 'continental' philosophical traditions. As shown in Chap. 6, this view was first developed in the context of Russell's confrontation with Costelloe-Stephen and Bergson. In this context, Russell makes use of the term 'analytic philosophy' in a sense that is at least partly commensurable with how the term is used nowadays. Russell opposes 'analytic philosophy' to continental 'synthetic' philosophy. It would take some time for his pronouncements concerning 'analytic philosophy' and its opposition to 'continental' currents to become, as Glendinning puts it, 'the everyday currency of English-language metaphilosophy' (2006, 70). Though the term 'analytic philosophy' was sometimes used in the relevant sense within Anglophone (but not Germanophone) debates during the 1930s, its use became widespread after the Second World War.1 At around this time, Ayer's polemics against existentialism eventually led

to his, Hare's, and Ryle's various proclamations concerning 'analytic philosophy's' division from some 'continental' counterpart.

One of the central themes that re-emerge throughout analytic criticisms of Bergsonism is the question of the relation between philosophy and poetry (or, more broadly, the arts). In 1912, Stebbing objects to Bergson's methodological appeal to intuition, arguing that its results are incommunicable. In the same year, Russell charges Bergson for charming his reader through his literary style, rather than attempting to convince them through argument. Russell famously concludes that Bergson is thus more akin to a poet (or an advertiser) than to a philosopher. Responding to Costelloe-Stephen, Russell further applies this line of thinking to his distinction between 'analytic' and continental 'synthetic' philosophers, when he claims that the latter care little for argumentation, relying instead on their literary powers of conviction. Neurath's 1921 polemic against Spengler redeploys Russell's strategy in accusing his opponent of 'pseudorationalism'. A similar strategy is soon used in Schlick's 1926 critique of metaphysical appeals to intuition (exemplified, among others, by Bergson's oeuvre), which he relegates to the domain of art and poetry, rather than philosophy. With some important modifications, Carnap's 1928 Aufbau repeats a variant of Schlick's 1926 claim against intuitive metaphysics, taking Bergson as his exemplary target. A year later, Heidegger's 1929 'Was ist Metaphysik?' gives the Vienna Circle a more apt target, with Carnap's and Neurath's responses to Heidegger's pseudostatements appearing in print in 1931. Carnap famously compares metaphysicians to bad poets or 'musicians without musical ability' ([1931] 1959, 80). Ayer later claims that 'irrationalist' (1948, 13) metaphysicians like Bergson, Heidegger, and the existentialists create 'imaginative literature' (1949, 56) posing as philosophy. Stereotypical depiction of 'continental' philosophy as a kind of literary exercise will persist in various ways of imagining the supposed analytic-continental divide.

In the historical trajectory this book examines, we find a tendency to convert an objection that was initially directed specifically against Bergson into a strategy deployed against an increasingly broadening range of targets. A significant exception is found in Stebbing's work, which explicitly resists this tendency. Her 1912 objections specifically addressed a particular type of methodological appeal to intuition. Stebbing

(1937) directly criticises the use of such arguments as excuses for not engaging with metaphysicians like Bergson. With the exception of Stebbing, the tendency towards generalisation is widespread throughout analytic responses to Bergsonism. Though Russell's (1912a) initial objections specifically targeted Bergson (albeit a strawman of his views), he already associated Bergson's position with a wide variety of cultural phenomena, from Pragmatism to imperialism. By 1922, his response to Costelloe-Stephen overgeneralises his 1912 strategy as applicable to the vaguely defined category of continental 'synthetic' philosophy as a whole. A similar tendency towards generalisation applies to Schlick's critique of intuition: while in 1913 Schlick specifically targeted Bergson, James, and Husserl (even if already overgeneralising by mistakenly equating their positions), in later work he would acquire a very wide range of targets, including eventually Russell himself. Carnap's qualified acceptance of Schlick's critique of 'intuitive metaphysics' in the Aufbau subsequently became transformed into a broader criticism of metaphysical nonsense. Ayer would eventually overgeneralise his polemic against Heidegger and Sartre into a dichotomy between 'journeymen' and 'pontiffs'. Some of Ayer's overgeneralisations were then applied by Ryle and Hare in criticising their 'continental' colleagues. (Indeed, this book can be read as tracing, through such overgeneralisations, a genealogy of such polemical proclamations by Oxford philosophers during the 1950s.)

As the early criticisms initially directed against Bergson became overgeneralised, it would become more and more difficult to find a way of dialogically resolving the resulting controversies. In large measure, the breakdown of dialogue was due to Bergson's unwillingness to respond to his critics. As we have seen throughout the book, Bergson did not reply to a single criticism by either Russell (who, like Bergson, failed to appreciate the significance of Costelloe-Stephen's answer to his criticisms), Stebbing, Schlick, or Carnap. (Neither did Sartre, while Heidegger's dismissive polemical mentions of the Vienna Circle fail to directly address any of their specific criticisms.)2 Bergson's unwillingness to respond does not entail that there was no possible dialogue to be had. This book has shown that early critical discussions of Bergson's views by analytic philosophers were directed towards specific philosophical questions. They involved taking a stance on, among other issues, the definition of number, the nature of

sense-data, the use of 'analytic' and 'synthetic' methods in philosophy, the epistemic status of intuition, the epistemological role of memory and recognition, the relation between concepts and images, and even the significance of negation and the meaning of propositions about 'nothing'. This book has reconstructed a dialogue on these topics between a series of philosophers that are in many ways unlikely interlocutors, and tend to be studied independently from each other (if they are studied at all), namely Bergson, James, Russell, Costelloe-Stephen, Stebbing, Scheler, Neurath, Schlick, and Carnap. As this book has shown, despite some excessive polemics, communication, and even dialogue, among the figures in this list is not unattainable. An attempt to extend the conversation could include Heidegger, Sartre, Ayer, Hare, and Ryle. In Chap. 11, I looked back to Bergson's account of negation and nothingness in an attempt to push some of these philosophers into conversing with each other. Nevertheless, with these later developments from Heidegger onwards, communication became more rare and difficult, while polemics and overgeneralisations multiplied.

Unlike the exercises in polemical aggression and overgeneralisation of many of their colleagues, it was the work of both Costelloe-Stephen and Stebbing that guided this book's effort to reconstruct a dialogue between some of Bergsonism's analytic critics and their interlocutors. Costelloe-Stephen issued a challenging objection to Russell's thinking. It was clearly underestimated by Russell, who did not publish a response. Costelloe-Stephen employed the terminology of her contemporary analytic philosophy (especially as found in Russell's work) in putting forth her original, and indeed compelling, arguments in defence of variants of Bergson's positions. While Bergson's stylistic and methodological preferences do often put him at odds with some analytic critics, there is little analogous justification for the fact that Costelloe-Stephen's voice remained unheeded. This book has shown that, apart from her direct response to Russell, Costelloe-Stephen's positions can be brought into dialogue with some of the criticisms directed against Bergson by Stebbing and Schlick. Stebbing's work is another viewpoint from which various analytic misunderstandings of Bergson can be corrected. Stebbing's lucid and erudite exposition of Bergson's positioning within the history of French philosophy, as well as her clarification of the differences between his views and those of the Pragmatists, can counterbalance Russell's misunderstandings of Bergson,

as this book has shown. Yet, like Costelloe-Stephen's work, Stebbing's account of Bergson has been largely ignored until recently. Neither Costelloe-Stephen nor Stebbing were 'disciples' defending some orthodox Bergsonian viewpoint. Their defences and criticisms of Bergson's positions stand on their own as original contributions to philosophy. As this book has shown, they can be brought into fruitful dialogue with the positions developed by Russell, Schlick, and Carnap, often answering several of their polemical claims. As Chap. 7 has shown, Stebbing and Costelloe-Stephen are also engaged in an indirect dialogue with each other that remains unhindered by the usual misunderstandings involved in later controversies between 'analytic' and 'continental' philosophers. These two philosophers' significant contributions to the early twentieth-century debates surrounding Bergson's work can thus help us avoid the connected polemics and controversies, finding the way back to a circumspect philosophical conversation. <>

HENRI BERGSON AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION by Matyáš Moravec [Routledge Studies in Twentieth-Century Philosophy, Routledge, ISBN 9781032392530]

This book connects the philosophy of Henri Bergson to contemporary debates in metaphysics and analytic philosophy of religion. More specifically, the book demonstrates how Bergson's philosophy of time can respond to the problem of foreknowledge and free will.

The question of how humans can be free if God knows everything has been a perennial issue of debate in analytic philosophy of religion. The solution to this problem relies heavily on what one thinks about time. The problem of time is central to Bergson's philosophical system. In this book, the author offers a systematic application of Bergson's thought to the freedom and foreknowledge problem. The first chapter presents a discussion of Bergson's central concept of la durée (duration). The subsequent two chapters link la durée to the relation of time and space. Here the author provides a Bergsonian response to McTaggart's argument for the unreality of time and develops a novel theory of time connected to Bergson's analysis of temporal experience. The last three chapters explore the relation between free will, determinism, and divine foreknowledge. The author reconstructs Bergson's theory of freedom and shows how it undermines the underlying dogmas of contemporary free-will theories. The author then argues that Bergson's philosophy can be used to resolve the free will and foreknowledge problem in the philosophy of religion. The monograph concludes by opening avenues

for new research into Bergson and analytic philosophy of religion, such as the philosophy of religious language, the relation between God and modality, religious experience, and religious pluralism.

Henri Bergson and the Philosophy of Religion will be of interest to scholars and advanced students working on Bergson, 20th-century continental philosophy, philosophy of religion, and philosophy of time.

Review

"This is an ambitious and persuasive appropriation of Bergson's thinking aiming to address one of the perennial problems of theism: the relation of divine foreknowledge to human freedom. Moravec's ground-breaking and barrier-breaking book will be required reading for all those interested in the philosophy of religion." **Mark Sinclair**, *Queen's University Belfast*

"This is a unique contribution to the field bringing together analytic and continental philosophical reflections on God, time, and free will. Moravec offers a fascinating and lucid reconstruction of Bergson's thought, and creatively draws out the implications for contemporary debates within the philosophy of religion." **R.T. Mullins**, *University of Lucerne*

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In 2020, Elie During and Paul-Antoine Miguel published a text titled "We Bergsonians: The Kyoto Manifesto," commenting on what they think should be the future of work on the philosophy of the French thinker Henri Bergson (1859-1941). They declare:

> We, Bergsonians, have read and re-read Bergson; we have studied the complex ways in which his philosophy has been received. ... Bergson-ism has been interpreted in various ways: the point is to change it and put it to work in the context which is manifestly very different from Bergson's own. ... What we need is not a new commentary, it is a new research programme ...

which permits derivation from methodological orthodoxy if and when the need arises. ... To re-iterate: the task at hand is not to read or re-read Bergson, it is a matter of translating him. Translating Bergson requires us to escape the stranglehold of his own words.

This book puts Bergson into one such new "context which is manifestly very different from Bergson's own": the classical problem of human freedom and divine foreknowledge. The thesis of this book is simple: Bergson's philosophy, when properly "translated," as During and Miguel would say, can offer a new solution to this classical problem.

The problem of human freedom and divine foreknowledge is typically construed as the following question: how can humans be free if God knows everything? It has been a problem for the major monotheistic religions for hundreds of years. In the 20th and 21st centuries, it has been taken up by analytic philosophy. The core of the problem can be expressed in simple terms: does God know today what I am going to do tomorrow? If He does, could I not do it? The solution one goes for relies heavily on one's views about time. For example, if the future does not exist, then there is nothing for God to know. Or, if God exists outside of time, then, strictly speaking, He does not know anything today. As we will see, the freedom and foreknowledge problem is also connected to a cluster of other related questions: what is the relation between time and the human mind? Is time an illusion? Are we free?

Time is central to Bergson's philosophical system. Unfortunately, due to various contingent historical factors, his work has largely been excluded from mainstream analytic philosophy, the philosophical tradition which has come to dominate philosophy departments in the English-speaking world. He has usually been read as a "continental" thinker. Recently, this has begun to change. Philosophers in the analytic tradition have appealed to Bergson's insights within the philosophy of biology, the philosophy of temporal experience, or the philosophy of time. This monograph offers another context into which Bergson's thought can be placed by using his insights within the philosophy of religion.

The interlocutors with whose thoughts Bergson's philosophy will be put into dialogue here may seem highly eclectic. On the pages that follow, the reader will encounter Bertrand Russell, Thomas Aquinas, J. M. E. McTaggart, Hilda Oakeley, or contemporary

analytic philosophers of religion. In a sense, the key objective of the book is a "creative synthesis," understood as an attempt to bring together hitherto unconnected strands of thinking about several aspects of the foreknowledge problem. The problem itself is primarily an occasion to bring together three philosophical traditions: Bergsonians, analytic philosophers, and Thomists, the last of whom have been especially concerned with the problem at hand. I think that each of these traditions (complicated as their exact delineation might be) has discovered something fundamentally true about the nature of reality. Nevertheless, they have traditionally been extremely sceptical of one another. The superficial impressions one gets from the history of philosophy are the following: analytic philosophers and Bergsonians have been enemies ever since Russell's critique of Bergsonism. Thomism is fundamentally incompatible with Bergsonian thought.' And translating medieval philosophy into the language of analytic philosophy is inherently fraught with difficulty.' This book will try to show that all three traditions have something important to contribute to the resolution of the freedom and foreknowledge problem and that each can benefit from a dialogue with the others.

History

This is not a book in the history of philosophy. It is not, in the words of During and Miguel, "a new commentary." Nevertheless, a few extremely brief words about the history of the traditions or thinkers that it is trying to bring together are in order.

Often, when asked at philosophy conferences, what one's field of research is, Bergson scholars have to explain to other philosophers (unless the latter are historians of philosophy) who Bergson was. If you transported any academic European philosopher from the 1910s or 1920s into the present day in a time-travel machine, they would likely have been shocked by this. A recently published monograph by Andreas Vrahimis opens with the following sentence: "During the first quarter of the twentieth century, Henri-Louis Bergson ... was probably the most famous living philosopher in the world." Bergson published widely on topics including time, memory, laughter, biology, or religion. He received the Nobel Prize in literature in 1927, travelled the world giving lectures, and contributed to the foundation of the League of Nations. His thought has had a lasting influence on literature, especially modernism and the work of Marcel Proust. His philosophy has also had a global impact: a recent project titled "Global

Bergsonism" run by the Societe des antis de Bergson is currently mapping the worldwide influence of Bergson's philosophy, which has sadly been overshadowed by Bergson scholarship in Europe.

This book is published in the Routledge Series in Twentieth-Century Philosophy. There is one key phenomenon that characterises the history of 20th-century European philosophy (if there is such a thing): the division between the analytic and the continental traditions. Mountains of books have been written on this distinction and what needs to be done to overcome it. Adrian Moore, in the Preface to his monumental Evolution of Modern Metaphysics, calls these divisions "customary but equally absurd."" In the case of Bergson, this is particularly true. Classifying him in either of the two camps is incredibly difficult, perhaps impossible. Nevertheless, due to various historical contingencies (some of which I address in this book and elsewhere") and his huge influence on Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, or Deleuze, he is usually associated with the continental tradition. And analytic philosophers have, for the most part, been highly sceptical of him.

But the early analytic tradition was also highly sceptical of the philosophy of religion. Analysing religion was not one of the disciplines present, at the cradle of analytic philosophy. The first sentence of William Hasker's excellent overview of the history of analytic philosophy of religion puts it as follows:

> Analytic philosophy of religion was gestated in the 1940s, born in the early 1950s, spent its childhood in the 1960s and its adolescence in the 1970s and early 1980s.

However, as soon as analytic philosophy of religion left high school, so to speak, it turned itself to the problems regarding the relationship between God and time, including the question of how we could be free if God is omniscient and is, therefore, supposed to know the future.

I said above that the third tradition that this book will appeal to is Thomism, very broadly interpreted as a way of thinking about God that takes inspiration or derives from the thought of Thomas Aquinas. Analytic philosophy has a long history of appealing to historical thinkers and incorporating them into contemporary frameworks, as attested, for example, by Humeanism in the philosophy of science or

Aristotelianism in ethics. Analytic philosophy of religion soon created a fusion of its method with the thought of Aquinas, generating what has come to be known as "Analytical Thomism." This book will draw on several thinkers who have become associated with this movement.

Caveats

The "creative synthesis" approach brings with it several caveats. The first of these is slightly cowardly but necessary. This book grew out of a doctoral dissertation, a book chapter, and several peer-reviewed papers. The purpose of the dissertation and the papers was to defend several sub-arguments that this book relies on. The purpose of this book itself, however, is different: it is to paint a much more general picture of how divine omniscience, Bergsonian time, and human freedom might fit together. As a result, much of the technical scaffolding that features in the peer-reviewed papers has been discarded to make this book more accessible to a wider readership. The absence of this scaffolding might at times make it look like the construction is hanging in midair. I think that the construction does collapse with the scaffolding removed. However, I also hope that the picture painted here is interesting enough to motivate research into more sophisticated ways in which such technical scaffolding could be reconstructed if the construction begins to wobble.

Examples of presuppositions that this book relies on but that are not defended here could be classified under several headings or "Hypotheses:"

> Hypothesis 1: God is timeless.
> Hypothesis 2: God is omniscient.
> Hypothesis 3: God is the source of being.

Theologically, the God this book works with has fairly minimal contours. I do not appeal to the vast majority of attributes postulated by classical theism, such as divine omnibenevolence or the key tenets of trinitarian theology. But the three hypotheses above are assumed. By Hypothesis 1, I mean the claim that there is no succession in the life of God. Many theologians have recently moved away from Hypothesis 1. Ryan Mullins, in his seminal book on the topic, argues that "there are no successful Christian research programs that promote divine timelessness because divine timelessness is not compatible with any existent theory of time." The first half of this book tries to offer

such a compatible theory. By Hypothesis 2, I primarily mean omniscience as it pertains to human actions: God knows human actions that happen in time. He knows what you are doing now, what you did yesterday, and what you will do tomorrow. True enough, there are problems inherent to the doctrine of omniscience as such: whether God knows what it is like to be evil is just one example of this. These problems might make omniscience incoherent (and responses to them might make it coherent), but they do so independently of what I argue for here. The focus of this book is only on the types of problems generated for omniscience by the existence of human freedom. Hypothesis 3 simply affirms that all reality depends for its being on God. More details on what exactly this is supposed to mean are provided in Chapter 4.

Hypothesis 4: There are irreducibly mental facts.
Due to reasons that will become obvious from the picture of the self-articulated by Bergson, this is not equivalent to a simple dualism (of the property, predicate, or substance variety). This hypothesis simply states that there are at least some mental facts that are not reducible to or supervenient on physical ones. It does not mean that all mental facts are such. In fact, as Chapter 5 will demonstrate, the mental facts that are not reducible to purely physical phenomena are few and far between. It might be possible that all mental facts or properties are irreducible in this way. It might also be possible that some varieties of theism affirming the reality of the soul require that all mental facts are so. I leave both of these questions undiscussed.

Hypothesis 5: Process ontology
This hypothesis states that changes and processes (as opposed to substances) are the fundamental stuff of reality. "Objects," "things," and "events" are treated in more or less the same way in what follows. Process philosophy has been a live option in the history of philosophy from Heraclitus through Bergson and James into 20th-century philosophy, but it tends to raise eyebrows among analytic philosophers. It is frequently dismissed on the grounds that a process view of reality goes against our basic intuitions. Look around you: you see plenty of individual objects and substances: a cup of coffee, a tree, and a wooden desk. To say that these are processes seems counterintuitive. But look deeper (or slower): die coffee is gradually cooling down, the

tree has a blossom on it that it did not have earlier today, and the paint on the table is slowly peeling off and turning into dust that will eventually become part of the carpet.

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Russell presented the critique of Bergson discussed in Chapter 1 to The Heretics Society in Cambridge in March 1912. In the published version of the talk, he made the following claim:

> One of the bad effects of an anti-intellectual philosophy, such as that of Bergson, is that it thrives upon the errors and confusions of the intellect. Hence it is led to prefer bad thinking to good, to declare every momentary difficulty insoluble, and to regard every foolish mistake as revealing the bankruptcy of intellect and the triumph of intuition.

Over a hundred years after Russell made these remarks, in September 2019, Bergson and analytic philosophy met in Cambridge again, at a two-day workshop which attempted to undo the rejection of Bergson by the early analytic philosophers. In his paper presented at the event, Frédéric Worms joked that Henri Bergson actually "invented analytic philosophy" but only to criticise it. According to Bergson, the division of knowledge attainable by particular immediate experience (what Bergson called "intuition") and that accessible by general abstract reasoning ("analysis") offered two ways of thinking about reality. The first path was Bergson's own, the second was opted for by Russell and the analytic tradition.

One of the aims of this study was to bring these two paths together again on the turf of the philosophy of religion. This book has provided a new model of God's relation to time based on Bergson's philosophy and showed that such a model is consonant with the core of the Thomistic solution to the problem of divine foreknowledge and human free will. The human present turned out to be the key intersection between God, freedom, and duration. I would like to close this book with two more general speculative remarks: the first about the future of interactions between Bergson and analytic philosophy of religion, the second about the freedom and foreknowledge problem as such.

The first point has to do with Bergson and analytic philosophy. In the Introduction to this book, I mentioned that translating Aquinas into the language of analytic

philosophy is fraught with difficulties. Despite this, "Analytical Thomism" is very much alive in contemporary academia. It seems that there is currently a similar movement towards "Analytic Berg-sonism," that is, towards a general way of thinking along Bergsonian lines but at the same time using the methods and stylistic precision of analytic philosophy. As a matter of fact, this is already postulated by the Kyoto Manifesto.

We need to imagine—why not?—an analytic Bergson, a philosophically clean-shaven Bergson, as Deleuze said about Marx. Such experiments are not intended for the perverse pleasure of watching Bergson turn in his grave.

If such a movement of "Analytic Bergsonism" were to arise, I very much hope that this book is not the last contribution to it from a philosopher of religion.6 Since analytic philosophy of religion is a thriving area of research, the avenues where Bergson could be relevant are innumerable. The first topic that comes to mind is the philosophy of religious language. In the talk mentioned at the opening of this Conclusion, Worms observed an inherent tension in the original French title of Bergson's seminal La Pensee et le mouvant from 1934. The title is enormously difficult to translate (hence the rather strange English title Creative Mind). There is an intentional ambiguity inherent in the French term "pensée" between "thought" (i.e., the noun la penee) and "that which has been thought" (i.e., the past participle of "penser"). The second of these contrasts radically with "le mouvant" (the present participle of "mouver"). The most accurate translation of the French original would thus be something like "That Which Has Been Thought and That Which Is Moving." Bergson repeatedly insisted that reality is always, in a sense, confined to the present, and thought and language to the past. Therefore, he concluded, concepts and words cannot adequately capture reality. Where I defined the 1910s and 1920s as crucial moments in analytic philosophy of time for its engagement with Bergson, one could look further beyond the 1960s and 1970s as key moments in analytic philosophy of language and explore whether a fully worked-out Bergsonian philosophy of religious language is possible. This exploration could prove particularly fruitful considering the fondness Bergson had for the usage of metaphors and the existence of a long tradition of thinking about religious language along metaphorical lines.

But there are other sub-fields of philosophy of religion where Bergson's thought is highly relevant. For example, an enormous amount of work could be undertaken on modality and its role in the philosophy of religion. If Berg-son's thought on actuality being prior to possibility is correct, how does this reposition the frequently iterated claim that God creates the best possible

world or at least from among the best? There have already been several belief attempts at relating Bergson's thinking to possible-world semantics.' Rut exploring a full Bergsonian account of possibility, contingency, necessity, and their relation to God would provide new and exciting ways of thinking about modal questions in analytic philosophy. Similarly, analytic philosophers could be interested in the potential of Bergson's writings on mysticism for the philosophy of religious experience or religious pluralism. A particular focus here should be given to Bergson's final book, The Two Sources of Morality and Religion, which did not feature in this monograph at all.

The second general point is about the topic of the monograph: the freedom and foreknowledge problem. It might surprise the reader to find out on the final pages of this book that its author is an agnostic. Why, then, did I become so fascinated by the freedom and foreknowledge problem? There are several reasons for this. The first is that although I do not know whether God exists, I feel pretty certain that the purported incompatibility of freedom and foreknowledge cannot be used as an argument against His existence in the way that, for example, the problem of evil is sometimes used to demonstrate the internal incoherence of the notion of God. The second is the puzzling simplicity of the problem: the riddle can pretty much get going with fairly minimal and purely philosophical presuppositions about the nature of God and free will. (Whether the problem can be resolved without more specific doctrinal or theological commitments is less obvious to me.) The third reason why philosophers should be interested in the foreknowledge question (even if they disbelieve in the existence of God or if it is not the case that they believe in the existence of God) is that the problem lies at the intersection of various non-theological questions about the nature of time, freedom, or persistence. The non-theist may thus learn a great deal from addressing it, just like students—in the words of one magazine article published when I was starting my undergraduate studies in theology—should study theology even if they do not

believe in God." The fourth, and main reason, why I have decided to write about this problem is that by its very nature, God-talk exposes the limitations of human language and the tools used to reason about reality. It has always seemed to me that the philosophy of religion was one of the few areas where the sometimes rather suffocating strictures of analytic philosophy permit and require loosening. Some think that such a loosening is an argument against the legitimacy of God-talk. I think, by contrast, that this loosening should be exploited for the introduction of new voices, like that of Bergson, into analytic methodology. <>

VESTIGES OF A PHILOSOPHY: MATTER, THE META-SPIRITUAL, AND THE FORGOTTEN BERGSON by John Ó Maoilearca [Oxford Studies of Western Esotericism Series, Oxford University Press, 9780197613917]

VESTIGES OF A PHILOSOPHY: MATTER, THE META-SPIRITUAL, AND THE FORGOTTEN BERGSON covers a fascinating yet little known moment in history. At the turn of the twentieth century, Henri Bergson and his sister, Mina Bergson (also known as Moina Mathers), were both living in Paris and working on seemingly very different but nonetheless complementary and even correlated approaches to questions about the nature of matter, spirit, and their interaction. He was a leading professor within the French academy, soon to become the most renowned philosopher in Europe. She was his estranged sister, already celebrated in her own right as a feminist and occultist performing on theatre stages around Paris while also leading one of the most important occult societies of that era, the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. One was a respectable if controversial intellectual, the other was a notorious mystic-artist who, together with her husband and fellow-occultist Samuel MacGregor Mathers, have been described as the "neo-pagan power couple" of the Belle Époque.

Neither Henri nor Mina left any record of their feelings and attitudes towards the work of the other, but their views on time, mysticism, spirit, and art converge on many fronts, even as they emerged from very different forms of cultural practice. In VESTIGES OF A PHILOSOPHY, John Ó Maoilearca examines this convergence of ideas and uses the

Bergsons' strange correlation to tackle contemporary themes in new materialist philosophy, as well as the relationship between mysticism and philosophy.

Review

"In this revelatory study of the intersecting interests of mystic Mina Bergson and her brother, philosopher Henri Bergson, Ó Maoilearca meticulously and cautiously tracks philosophical developments from nineteenth-century spiritualism to recent new materialism. In the process, he does no less than uncover occulture's and analytical philosophy's correlated investments in both spiritualism and materialism during the modernist period. This book will prove foundational to the study of modern mysticism as philosophical engagement and materialist analysis." -- Dennis Denisoff, author of *Decadent Ecology in British Literature and Art, 1860-1910: Decay, Desire, and the Pagan Revival*

"Henri and Mina Bergson form one of the most enigmatic sibling duos of the *fin-de-siècle*. The unfamiliar reader might assume little common ground between the two—the former a highly respected philosopher, the latter a feminist occult leader largely unknown outside of specialist circles today. Exploring both siblings' thought in relation to the other and demonstrating their converging areas of interest, Ó Maoilearca offers a sophisticated, provocative, and beautifully crafted reconsideration of the relationship between Western esotericism and philosophy. A must-read for anyone seeking to understand the ambiguous position of mysticism and magic in the Western intellectual tradition." -- Manon Hedenborg White, author of *The Eloquent Blood: The Goddess Babalon and the Construction of Femininities in Western Esotericism*

"VESTIGES OF A PHILOSOPHY performs its ideas with visionary urgency, as Ó Maoilearca sustains a diffractive reading of a vast array of sources—canonical works alongside obscure archival texts exhumed through meticulous archeology—that proposes conspicuous concordances between the thought of siblings Mina and Henri Bergson. The complex and exhilarating investigation significantly reconfigures the parallel

Bergsonisms, contending with their strangeness and poetics, while aligning them with ideas of contemporary philosophy from Karen Barad and François Laruelle among others, in this volume's immaculate consideration of matter, memory, movement, and spirit." -- Matthew Goulish, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago

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Prologue: A Reciprocity of Acceleration

Among the many challenging ideas found in the works of Henri Bergson, one of the strangest, and most difficult, concerns what he called "complete relativity." This concept appears in his penultimate monograph, Duration and

Simultaneity. This text gathered ideas concerning Bergson's infamous clash with Albert Einstein at the Société française de philosophie in 1922. At the center of their disagreement lies a difference in attitude toward "Langevin's paradox," or the "twin's

paradox," first put forward in 1911 by the physicist Paul Langevin in his own exploration of Einstein's special theory of relativity (STR). This paradox concerns a thought experiment where one "voyager," Paul, sends his twin brother, Peter, off in a rocket at a speed just less than that of light. After a year, the rocket turns around and heads back to earth at the exact same velocity. Peter gets out after what has now been a two-year journey in the rocket only to discover that Paul has "aged" two hundred years "and has long been in his grave."

This is a predicted result from STR due to Peter traveling close to the speed of light, which retards the aging process (following Einstein's theory). Understood as two (biological) clocks, Peter's velocity relative to Paul allows him to age more slowly than Paul. Peter cannot reverse time, but he does retard it, at least relative to Paul. Yet it might still be asked: why is it Paul's aging alone that quickens relative to Peter? After all, in a consistent relativism of time, surely Paul could be seen as traveling at near to the speed of light relative to Peter— their speeds are reciprocal and covary— in which case, there would be no age difference between the two at all. So here is the paradox: the answer to whose aging slows down and whose speeds up all depends on which frame of reference you decide to treat as immobile (and take your measurements from), and which is taken as being in motion relative to this frame. And, as this decision is entirely contingent, it leaves STR looking somewhat perverse as a theory.

Moreover, for Bergson, separated twin siblings are more than interchangeable clocks; they are living beings that cannot be substituted for each other without losing something in the process. From this vantage point, a clock is an impersonal abstraction of our lived experience of time (durée). Indeed, it

is one that privileges only one frame of reference at a time in what Bergson dubs a "single" or "half- relativity" (la demi-relativité)— the frame of reference of the immobile measuring the mobile. In contrast to this seemingly flawed approach, Bergson proposed a "double" or "complete relativity" (la relativité complete) where there are no privileged reference frames and where no perspective can be completely represented by another in an act of substitution.

Every frame or perspective is equalized as completely individual. It is impossible for Paul to represent the personal experience of Peter fully, because experience is more than the representation of experience. For one to represent fully another's lived time, one must experience it in every detail, in person.

But this is impossible without actually being that other person: "if I want to actually measure Peter's time, I must enter Peter's frame of reference; I must become Peter. If I want to actually measure Paul's time, I must take Paul's place." Otherwise, all I am left with is my virtual image of Paul, not his actuality. Ultimately, STR is predicated fallaciously on "a time or a space [that is] always virtual and merely imagined, never real and experienced." Its "essence" is to "rank the real vision with the virtual visions" or to hide "the difference between the real and the virtual."

Let's pause for a moment to think this through, because, in one way or another, it is crucial for everything that follows in this book. Fulfilling the counterfactual, "if I had been you . . ." entails me being all that you are, and hence not I- being- you (which would only bring along non- you baggage with it), but you- being- you (which even includes all of your kinds of self- alterity, auto- differentiation, etc.). We need a complete history (material, psychological, and social) to "transform" one person genuinely into a real other person (rather than merely an abstraction of that other): this would be an exhaustive factual analysis of that person- there- and- then that only that person-there-and- then can embody.

This emphasis on haecceity, on the thisness of this temporal perspective (a real time that is always lived by an actual someone, somewhere) is not to reinstate a totalizing logic of self- identity, hermetically sealed off from all alterity, however. Indeed, to circumvent the dichotomies associated with STR, it is precisely the logic of separation (Peter or Paul) that must be overcome.

The scene is thereby set for alternative logics, logics based on objects that are not only solid, hard bodies impervious to substitution with each other, but also fluid ones, watery and gaseous ones, or even sonic ones. This will involve performative, imagistic, and diagrammatic thinking, where some things can indeed be this and that, here and there, but not through a transcendent act of substitution (my representation of you

standing in for you), so much as an immanent act of partial self- expansion, alteration, or bifurcation. To follow this work, we will need different logics that come from different kinds of things. Some of these logics will appear standardly "philosophical" or rigorous in a "hard" material sense; but some others will appear (or will be named) "mystical," "occult," or "spiritual." As if that's a bad thing.

Therefore, the stipulation that this is not that (that Peter is not Paul) need not be seen as an immovable obstacle but a creative constraint, because to voyage or travel— be it in time or space— is not a matter of mere representation between solid bodies. Transport involves a transfer of being, too— a qualitative change subtends (and "supertends") every quantitative one. If the voyaging siblings could be ontologically interchangeable, it would not be as wholes, but as moving, fluid, and luminous parts, within other "wholes" that are themselves mutating. They would be alter egos altering each other mutually within "larger" processes. These "parts" are not separate, impenetrable things, but lines of moving continuity which flow heterogeneously.

And, finally, these "heterogeneous continuities" would embody the thisness or thatness of each partial perspective— nonsubstitutable from the outside precisely because they are mobile, moving inside duration (at various foliated levels). Following an alternative way of thinking, this logic might also be called a "Tattwa Vision," the hermetic practice of perceiving "thatness" in order to undertake another kind of cosmic voyage.

This book is dedicated to the strange voyages taken by two figures from history whose reciprocal accelerations took them far apart from each other on one level, and yet who also remained within an ongoing, "covarying" change, a continuous movement of alteration.

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Epilogue: The Whole of the Moon
According to Bergson (Henri), "the truth is that we shall never reach the past unless we frankly place ourselves within it." One aim of this work has been to ask how literally we should take this statement. A little over twenty years ago,

I published an introduction to Henri Bergson's philosophy that had, as one of its declared aims, to retrieve his ideas from what I described then as the "philosophical ghettos of 'vitalism,' 'spiritualism' and 'psychologism.' " Perhaps, in attempting to model a nonstandard philosophy using spiritualism as its source material, all I have achieved here is a certain gentrification of those ghettos, replacing their original residents with new, respectable types: Didn't you know that Plato was a mystic, too, as were these physicists? And what these modern materialists say over there is very similar to this nonsense over here (heck, even a Wykeham Professor of Logic at Oxford University, the late Michael Dummet, wrote about the Tarot).

Understandably, I hope that such interpretations of this experiment will be rare (though I do not delude myself into thinking that they will be nonexistent). The purpose of supernormalization is to show hetero- continuities between the ordinary and the extraordinary, to show that something supposedly unearthly is found in plain sight by looking at the earth (and even its most disreputable denizens) with far more attention than it is usually given. In the pairing of Henri and Mina, we see two allied attempts to naturalize spirit and spiritualize matter at work, two inverse, yet covarying ways of rethinking naturalism and spiritualism beyond deflation or inflation (they are, in their different ways, both supernormal). The work of one of them was well-acknowledged at the time and subsequently (Henri's); the other, Mina's, has been lost to contemporary view for a good while, even as its performative, mystical, and artistic approach to spirit and matter has become all the more timely.

Mina Bergson came from a respectable family and had a very famous, and very respectable, brother. She did not lead a respectable life, however. Yet her ideas and practices matched those of her closest relative both in breadth and depth. Possibly even more so— there is still so much more to research and for future scholars to unearth about both the Bergsons and their strange ideas about spirit, matter, and, of course, time— especially the past and memory.

One might even say that Henri gave us the "special theory of the past and memory" while Mina left us the "general theory." Perhaps Henri knew this, too. There is an odd

passage near the middle of his 1911 essay on William James's pragmatism that, in retrospect, can be read in the light of much more than its ostensible subject:

> According to James, we bathe in an atmosphere traversed by great spiritual currents. If many of us resist, others allow themselves to be carried along.
>
> And there are certain souls which open wide to the beneficent breeze. Those are the mystical souls. [. . .] The truth is that James leaned out upon the mystic soul as, on a spring day, we lean out to feel the caress of the breeze on our cheek, or as, at the seaside, we watch the coming and going of sail- boats to know how the wind blows. Souls filled with religious enthusiasm are truly uplifted and carried away: why could they not enable us to experience directly, as in a scientific experiment, this uplifting and exalting force?

The vestiges of Mina's mystic philosophy comprise occult training techniques, Hermetic worldviews, and a spiritual performance art that, set side by side with the more usual tropes of her brother's philosophy (intuition, empirical evidence, deduction, argument), unveil nothing less in comparison. All the same, both the philosopher and the mystic only ever glimpsed something "wider" from each of their vantage points, hers incarnated through forms of dance and ritualized movements, his governed by philosophical codes and experiments. If she did see more than he, though, she undoubtedly suffered more as a result.

* * *

There is a song by The Waterboys that now seems appropriate to mention by way of a final remark. "The Whole of the Moon" may, or may not, have been playing at that house party in March 1990 when I tried to explain the Bergsonian philosophy of time and memory— or at least Henri's version of it— to my interlocutor. Yet when Mike Scott sings "I was grounded / While you filled the skies / I was dumbfounded by truth / You cut through lies," it seems like he must have been in the room, too. The lyrics continue to resonate with the story of Mina and Henri, especially when the protagonist describes how "I spoke about wings / You just flew / I wondered, I guessed, and I tried / You just knew," before ending with the perfectly astral conceit: "I saw the crescent / You saw the whole of the moon." The philosopher- mystic and the mystic- philosopher, the part and the whole. <>

Louis Massignon Et La Mystique Musulmane: Analyse D'une Contribution À L'islamologie by Florence Ollivry [History of Oriental Studies, Brill Academic, ISBN : 9789004548169] French

Cet ouvrage offre une analyse approfondie de l'œuvre pionnière consacrée par Louis Massignon (1883-1962) à la mystique musulmane. Il interroge sa vision de la réalité étudiée et en vient à énoncer la question de la subjectivité en sciences des religions.

This book offers an in-depth analysis of the pioneering work devoted by Louis Massignon (1883-1962) to Muslim mysticism. It questions his vision of the reality he studied and opens up the question of subjectivity in the study of religion.

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...

Le chercheur et l'ineffable

Peut-être plus qu'une autre discipline, étude de la mystique musulmane requiert l'engagement de la subjectivité du chercheur. Comme le rappelle Alexander Knysh, la tradition mystique de Pislam se rapporte a un aspect très personnel et insaisissable de la vie'. Au sein de l'historiographie des études consacrées a cette tradition, la figure de l'islamologue francais Louis Massignon (1883-1962) illustre une difficulté liée a cet aspect : chez ce savant, la subjectivité est a la fois l'outil qui lui permet d'appréhender son champ d'étude et le voile qui obstrue l'accès a une vision transparente de la réalité étudiée. Incarnant une contradiction inhérente a un métier, Louis Massignon se trouve tantot eclairé et guidé par son intuition, tantot égaré et trompé par ses « lunettes » déformantes. En considérant son oeuvre, on peut s'interroger sur sa vision de ce champ du savoir : est-il parvenu a s'approcher de la réalité étudiée ? a en rendre compte fidèlement ? justement ?

Le présent ouvrage vise a mettre en lumière les caractéristiques de sa vision de la mystique musulmane a travers l'analyse de sa posture vis-à-vis de son champ d'étude. Mais afin de Bien souligner l'importance dune telle entreprise, prenons le temps de la situer au sein du vaste questionnement epistemologique qui la suscite : selon Michel de Certeau (1925-1986), « it n'y a pas de considérations, si générales qu'elles soient, ni de lectures, si loin qu'on les étende, capables d'effacer la particularité de la place d'ou je parle et du domaine ou je poursuis une investigation. Cette marque est indélébile ». Se référant a Raymond Aron (1905-1983), le jésuite rappelle que « toute interprétation historique dépend d'un système de référence ; que ce système demeure une philosophie implicite particulière ; que, s'infiltrant dans le travail d'analyse, l'organisant à son insu, il renvoie à la subjectivité de l'auteur ». Pour l'historien de la mystique, l'un des mérites de Raymond Aron est d'avoir enseigné à des générations d'historiens l'« art de pointer les décisions philosophiques en fonction desquelles s'organisent les

découpages d'un matériau, les codes de son déchiffrement et l'ordonnance de l'exposé ».

À la lumière de cette réflexion, que peut-on dire de la pratique du ou de la chercheur·e en sciences des religions, plus précisément en islamologie, et tout particulièrement concernant l'étude de la mystique musulmane ? comment étudier ce champ de l'histoire religieuse musulmane sans le recréer inconsciemment à l'aune de nos propres catégories ou présupposés philosophiques inconscients ? Ce problème a été posé dans un article par Omid Safi, spécialiste de la mystique musulmane, qui observe que le cadre théorique véhiculé par certains islamologues relègue bien souvent la mystique à la sphère privée, ce qui les conduit à mettre l'emphase sur la notion d'expériences. Cette vision découlerait, selon lui, d'une certaine vision du monde, qu'il qualifie de «post-Lumières et protestante », dans laquelle la sphère de la religion et de la mystique aurait été privatisée et définie en opposition à la philosophie rationnelle. Il note l'influence sur les esprits de l'ouvrage de William James (1842-1910), The Varieties of the Religious Experience (1902), et de la conception de l'expérience mystique qu'il véhicule. Il observe que plusieurs auteurs tendent, dans leur présentation des mystiques musulmans, à créer une opposition radicale entre les affaires spirituelles et le monde visible, bien que de nombreux musulmans considèrent qu'assumer la responsabilité de vivre en cet univers visible soit également une activité spirituelle. Par ailleurs, il s'interroge sur la pertinence d'un découpage de l'histoire en périodes appelées « âge classique » puis «déclin », qui dénote une perspective triomphaliste occidentale. Ce découpage lui semble calqué sur le modèle historiographique occidental d'une période ancienne (médiévale), suivie par une époque moderne. Pour ce professeur, la plupart des chercheurs qui étudient la mystique musulmane continuent d'employer des modèles désuets et problématiques de «mystique » qui déforment notre compréhension des mystiques musulmans et de leur enseignement.

L'article d'Omid Safi soulève un problème important : l'idée que la philosophie, la vision du monde, le système de référence, les implicites présents dans la conscience du ou de la chercheure l'amènent à reconstruire une certaine représentation de la mystique musulmane, à établir certaines oppositions, à mettre l'emphase sur tel ou tel aspect, à opérer tel ou tel découpage de l'histoire. Safi affirme que les présupposés

inconscients, philosophiques ou théologiques de chaque chercheur auront une influence certaine sur sa perception de la spiritualité des mystiques musulmans. Souscrivant à ces vues, nous pensons également que la manière dont la définition de la mystique musulmane va être élaborée par un chercheur dépend largement de catégories ou de présupposés philosophiques implicites. Comment, dès lors, une recherche consciente d'elle-même, va-t-elle s'énoncer et s'organiser afin d'aborder son champ d'étude de façon clairvoyante ? Le présent ouvrage interroge la manière dont les concepts véhiculés par la recherche découpent le réel. Il interroge la place de la subjectivité du ou de la chercheure en sciences des religions dans sa rencontre avec l'autre, la place du « sujet » en « sciences des religions » : comment la personne qui entreprend une recherche peut-elle, depuis la place particulière qui est la sienne, devenir davantage consciente de sa philosophie implicite, des caractéristiques de son propre cadre de référence ? Comment élaborer un cadre conceptuel adéquat afin d'étudier l'histoire de la mystique musulmane ?

Une oeuvre pionnière et controverséeIl y a de cela ioo ans, en 1922, Louis Massignon publiait la Passion d'al-Hosayn-Ibn-Mansour al-Hallaj et l'Essai sur les origines du lexique technique de la mystique musulmane, deux monuments de l'histoire de l'islamologie. L'oeuvre du savant, qui avait découvert au printemps 1907 l'oeuvre d'al-Husayn b. Mansur al-Hallaj (m. 309/922), sera saluée par ses pairs comme fondatrice d'un nouveau champ d'étude : la mystique musulmane. Pour Hans Heinrich Schaeder (1896-1957), la Passion est « l'oeuvre la plus profonde et la plus significative qui ait été consacrée à la formation religieuse de l'islam » ; elle compte parmi « les plus grandes réalisations en sciences des religions ». Schaeder est d'avis que Massignon, qui a utilisé un nombre considérable de manuscrits inusités ou inconnus, manifeste une connaissance supérieure de la littérature religieuse musulmane. D'après lui, cette oeuvre est d'une importance capitale car elle introduit une nouvelle phase de l'islamologie. Duncan Black Macdonald (1863-1943), qui estime que cette contribution est la plus considérable qui ait paru après les Muhammedische Studien (1889) d'Ignàc Goldziher (1850-1921), écrit à son tour :

> C'est la biographie d'un mystique sans pareil, thaumaturge et extatique, qui était une énigme
> pour ses contemporains, pour toutes les générations successives de théologiens canonistes et

mystiques musulmans, et pour tous les chercheurs occidentaux qui ont étudié l'Islam. Mais M. Massignon a traité ce sujet de telle façon, qu'il en fait une étude élaborée de toute l'évolution de l'histoire religieuse de l'Islam au cours des premiers siècles, et des idées fondamentales des écoles mystiques jusqu'à nos jours.

Henri Laoust (1905-1983) rend hommage à celui qui se fit « l'historien non seulement d'une âme mais de toute une époque »9. Il s'incline également devant le travail d'historien réalisé par l'auteur de l'Essai sur les origines de la mystique musulmane, oeuvre qui présente l'histoire des premières vocations mystiques en islam et les conditions qui présidèrent à la formation du sufisme. Enfin, Jacques Berque (1910-1995) considère que Louis Massignon est l'un des « rares happy few qui, venus du dehors, auront pénétré l'intimité de l'arabe, des Arabes ou de l'Islam ».

Le jésuite iraquien Paul Nwyia (1925-1980), premier titulaire de la Chaire de mystique musulmane à l'EPHE, salue la haute expertise de Massignon concernant ce champ d'étude, notamment au cours des quatre premiers siècles de l'Hégire. À son tour, il souligne le caractère pionnier de l'oeuvre de son maître, qu'il tient pour fondatrice d'un champ d'étude.

Selon Seyyed Hossein Nasr, l'un des services rendus par Massignon est d'avoir contribué à la reconnaissance de l'islamologie en tant que discipline sérieuse d'un point de vue religieux et spirituel — et non seulement philologique ou historique —, ainsi qu'à celle de l'étude de la mystique musulmane comme champ disciplinaire majeur. L'importance de cette contribution est également saluée par Marshall Hodgson (1922-1968), qui reconnait l'apport des recherches de l'islamologue a l'étude du sufisme, de la langue arabe et du mouvement shfite. Quant a Alexander Knysh, it estime que Massignon contri-bua a édifier la charpente de l'étude académique de la mystique musulmane et qu'il doit être compte au nombre des fondateurs de cette nouvelle branche de l'islamologie.

L'ceuvre de Louis Massignon va inspirer plusieurs générations de chercheur-e-s : le savant encourage Henry Corbin (1903-1978) dans ses études sur Suhrawardi al-Maqtul (m. 587/1191) ; son eleve Henri Laoust lui succède au Collège de France ; Louis Gardet (1904-1986), Georges Anawati (1905-1994) et Roger Arnaldez (1911-2006) prolongent, dans leurs travaux, son enseigne-ment. Paul Nwyia poursuit ses recherches sur le

lexique technique des mystiques musulmans, et les recherches entreprises par `UthmanYahya (1919-1997) concernant la mystique musulmane s'inspirent de l'ceuvre commencée par Massignon. Enfin, son exemple et son influence se font sentir chez Helmut Ritter (1892-1971), Fritz Meier (1912-1998) et Annemarie Schimmel (1922-2003), pour ne citer que quelques noms.

A la lumière de ces considérations portées sur oeuvre de Massignon, cette dernière apparait comme fondatrice d'un domaine : étude de la mystique musulmane. Pourtant, elle est également ciblee par de nombreuses critiques. Du vivant meme de l'auteur, certain soulignent la difficulté a y faire la part entre l'erudition objective et la pure subjectivité intuitive: Hamilton Alexander Rosskeen Gibb (1895-1971) considère que cette ceuvre pose problème car elle se fonde tantot sur le registre de étude objective d'un phénomène au moyen des outils classiques de la recherche universitaire, taut& sur celui de l'intuition et de la spiritualité personnelle, sans qu'il soit toujours possible de tracer une ligne de démarcation entre ces deux registres.

L'ceuvre est sévèrement jugée par l'orientaliste russe Vladimir Ivanow 1886-1970) qui confie a Henry Corbin: « il est bloqué dans son Hallaj, et ne fait jamais aucun progrès sérieux. Tout le problème du soufisme, son histoire, ses véritables effets et implications sociologiques, et cætera, un immense problème qui mériterait d'être traité, reste aussi sombre que jamais ».

Comme le font remarquer Raymond Aron et Michel de Certeau, précédemment cités, tout historien opère certains découpages : il est porteur d'une vision subjective de l'histoire, parfois à son insu. Ainsi l'intellectuel algérien Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi reproche à l'auteur de la Passion d'avoir mis l'emphase sur certains aspects hétérodoxes de la mystique musulmane « comme s'il voulait délibérément laisser dans l'ombre d'autres aspects de l'Islam ». À ses yeux, le regard du « Pape de l'orientalisme » n'est pas dénué d'un certain ethnocentrisme.

Nombreux sont ceux qui ont déploré la nature prismatique de ce regard, notamment concernant la place qu'il attribue à al-Hallaj dans l'histoire religieuse de l'islam : Stéphane Ruspoli estime que la vision d'al-Hallaj de Louis Massignon est subjective ; quant à `Abdu Wàzin, dans son introduction au Diwan hallajien, il s'interroge : «

Devons-nous laisser al-Hallaj aux orientalistes et y renoncer, ou bien devons-nous le défendre parce qu'il est l'un des nôtres ? ». Se référant à la thèse de Massignon, Jacques Waardenburg (1930-2015) observe que l'islamologue « voit le mystique Hallâj comme un saint supérieur à Mohammed, qui se substitue à lui et qui délivre l'Islam d'interdictions données par le Prophète ». Cette conception d'un « achèvement de l'Islam par la voie hallagienne de la substitution» pose également question à Patrick Laude qui se demande si cette vision d'al-Hallaj ne « christianise » point trop exclusivement la figure du mystique de Bagdad en restreignant la portée de son universalisme.

Dans Orientalism (1978), Edward Saïd (1935-2003) met en garde contre la recréation, la restructuration de l'Orient tel que — consciemment ou inconsciemment — recréé, redéfini, par les orientalistes. L'universitaire palestino-américain estime que dans la vision massignonienne de l'islam, Mahomet est expulsé et qu'al-Hallaj, figure christique, est porté sur le devant de la scène. Enfin, notons que le savant iranien Muhammad Qazvini (1876-1949) s'est lui aussi montré critique envers Massignon. À l'un de ses correspondants qui lui demande de lui faire parvenir les deux volumes de la Passion, il répond que cet ouvrage est inutile, futile, dénué de sens et qu'il repose sur des assomptions infondées.

Il est pourtant intéressant de se souvenir que Louis Massignon lui-même était désireux de « décoloniser » son regard, de réaliser un « décentrement mental» afin de voir l'islam non pas tel qu'il pouvait être vu de l'extérieur mais tel qu'il pouvait être vu de l'intérieur : il s'était efforcé de se placer « dans Faxe même de la doctrine musulmane », à « ce point vierge de vérité qui se trouve en son centre et qui la fait vivre ». Et pourtant, en dépit de cet effort de décentrement, en dépit d'une recherche documentaire importante et d'une érudition confondante, a-t-il réussi ? si oui, en quoi ? si non, pourquoi ?

Plusieurs travaux ont cherché à interroger les termes du débat posé par Edward Saïd en 1978 et certains savants des sociétés non occidentales ont analysé le regard élaboré par l'Europe sur leurs cultures. Le présent ouvrage continue ce même effort. Il est mû par un souci de justesse au plan méthodologique et par un souci de justice au plan éthique.

Dans cette optique, il apparaît utile de sonder ce regard posé sur l'autre, d'exhumer les implicites dont il peut être porteur et de mettre en lumière les présupposés susceptibles d'influencer, voire de biaiser l'étude académique du champ d'étude de la mystique musulmane. L'oeuvre saïdienne a fait elle-même l'objet de nombreuses critiques. Mais en dépit des généralisations ou des intempérances qu'elle recèle, elle peut prendre la forme d'un cri ou d'un appel, que nous souhaitons ici entendre de manière non polémique mais constructive. Nous croyons, avec Alain Messaoudi, qu'il est salutaire d'entendre cette invitation adressée aux chercheur·e·s à aborder «avec plus de considération et de sensibilité leurs objets de recherche et à exercer un regard critique sur leurs propres méthodes ». L'essai saïdien, qui participe d'un processus de décolonisation des savoirs, est une contribution, par la critique de la production savante passée qu'il réalise, à l'histoire de l'orientalisme savant. Il peut inspirer de nouvelles réflexions, à condition d'être entendu comme une invitation à opérer un retour réflexif sur les pratiques des chercheur·e·s travaillant sur le monde arabo-musulman.

L'oeuvre de Louis Massignon est fondatrice du champ d'étude de la mystique musulmane. Et pourtant, elle présente simultanément une vision « gauchie » de ce champ. Elle est une construction, une reconstruction. En effet, parmi les critiques adressées à Massignon, figure celle d'avoir recomposé l'histoire religieuse de l'islam en faisant d'al-Hallaj la figure centrale de cette religion au plan eschatologique. Ce savant, bien qu'il ait consciemment voulu réaliser un « décentrement mental », décoloniser son regard et le rendre fraternel, proche, et bien qu'il ait consciemment voulu appréhender la spiritualité des premiers mystiques musulmans et en rendre compte le plus fidèlement possible, s'est vu malgré tout taxé d'ethnocentrisme, s'est vu reprocher d'avoir christianisé et déformé les figures qu'il étudiait. En l'absence d'une étude analytique de la vision de la mystique musulmane selon Louis Massignon, s'agissant d'une oeuvre fondatrice d'un champ d'étude, l'oeuvre de Massignon nécessite une étude approfondie capable d'interroger sa vision de ce champ d'étude et de rendre compte de cette reconstruction de l'histoire religieuse. Afin de combler ce manque et de mener à bien ce projet, cet ouvrage s'atta- chera à mettre au jour les caractéristiques

de la vision de la mystique musul mane selon Massignon et à présenter la spécificité de son interprétation de champ de l'histoire religieuse.

Déplacer la frontière entre non-savoir et savoir

Afin d'apporter une réponse à ce questionnement, cette étude vise à dépla cer la frontière entre non-savoir et savoir : sa contribution commence là o' les travaux antérieurs se sont arrêtés. Après le décès de Louis Massignon le 31 octobre 1962, les hommages posthumes sont nombreux : bibliographies biographies, colloques, traductions, célébrations. Depuis ce temps, l'œuvre de Louis Massignon a fait l'objet de nombreuses recherches et relectures. Récemment, elle a gagné en accessibilité et en intelligibilité grâce à une réédition critique éclairante des principaux articles de Massignon, intitulée Écrits mémorables et dirigée par Christian Jambet.

Les biographes de Massignon sont nombreux à souligner l'importance de son oeuvre en faveur du dialogue islamo-chrétien ainsi que l'originalité de sa conception de l'hospitalité abrahamique. Notons l'importance du travail réalisé par l'anthropologue Manoël Pénicaud, auteur d'une biographie intitulée Louis Massignon: le « catholique musulman », qui souligne ces aspects, ainsi que l'intérêt de sa thèse consacrée au pèlerinage islamo-chrétien des Sept Dormants. Pourtant, en dépit de l'abondance des publications consacrées à ce savant, du point de vue des sciences des religions, les travaux demeurent clairsemés. Les études les plus approfondies sont celles de Jacques Waardenburg, qui analyse la méthode de Massignon32. Certaines approches comparatives éclairantes ont été développées par Denis Gril, Xavier Accart et Jean Moncelon33. Quant à la relation de Massignon au Coran et à la langue arabe, elle a fait l'objet de plusieurs études.

Pourtant, bien que les découvertes de Massignon aient profondément modifié les convictions des chercheurs concernant la mystique musulmane, très peu de travaux ont analysé la relation de l'islamologue à ce champ d'étude : quelques réflexions importantes ont été formulées à ce sujet par Henry Corbin, Louis Gardet, Pierre Lory, Christian Jambet, Mokdad Arfa-Mensia, Roger Arnaldez et Eric Ormsby. Mais aucune analyse approfondie de la contribution de l'islamologue à l'étude de la mystique

musulmane n'a encore été menée à bien : notre intention est ici de remédier à ce manque.

Jalons biographiques

Afin de bien camper le cadre de cette analyse et avant d'examiner avec soin le développement de l'engagement intellectuel de Louis Massignon, sa production scientifique ainsi que l'évolution de sa relation à son champ d'étude, il importe de préciser certains repères biographiques.

Louis Massignon vient au monde le 25 juillet 1883 à Nogent-sur-Marne, non loin de Paris. Il est le fils de Marie Ferdinande Catherine Hovyn (1858-1931) et de Pierre Henry Ferdinand Massignon (1855-1922). Son père, après avoir exercé la profession de pharmacien, s'oriente vers la voie de la sculpture monumentale et signe ses oeuvres du nom de « Pierre Roche ».

Le jeune Louis, après avoir fréquenté le lycée Montaigne puis le lycée Louis le Grand, est reçu en 1900 au baccalauréat de Lettres et de Philosophie et en 1901 à celui de Lettres et de Mathématiques. À l'âge de 18 ans, il se rend en Algérie et accomplit son premier voyage dans le monde musulman. De retour a Paris, il obtient sa licence de lettres en octobre 1902 et effectue son Service militaire. Au printemps 1904, dans le cadre de son Diplôme d'études supérieures d'histoire et géographie, ses recherches consacrées à la figure de Léon LAfricain le conduisent sur les traces de ce dernier, en Algérie et au Maroc.

Au cours de cette période d'intense questionnement existentiel, Massignon est en contact avec Joris-Karl Huysmans (1848-1907), Ernest Psichari (1883-1914) et Charles de Foucauld (1858-1916), tous les trois convertis à la foi catholique36. Peu à peu, Massignon se spécialise dans l'étude de l'arabe et de l'islamologie et fréquente à la fois l'École spéciale des langues orientales, l'École Pratique des Hautes Études et le Collège de France. S'ouvre alors une période de recherches au sein du monde musulman.

Le 23 octobre 1906, il devient pensionnaire de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie du Caire. Il découvre alors l'oeuvre d'al-Hallaj et conçoit dès le printemps 1907 l'idée de consacrer sa thèse à ce mystique musulman. Chargé, quelques mois plus tard, d'une mission archéologique en Mésopotamie, il parvient à Bagdad en décembre 1907. Là, il est

accueilli par la famille al-Àlusi qui s'intéresse à ses recherches. Au printemps 1908, il est assailli par une intense crise intérieure à l'issue de laquelle il retrouve le chemin de la foi catholique de son enfance ainsi que celui de sa terre natale, qu'il doit regagner afin de s'y reposer.

Une fois rétabli, il poursuit ses recherches à Istanbul puis au Caire. En 1912-1913, il enseigne la philosophie à l'Université égyptienne du Caire. Après avoir hésité à rejoindre Charles de Foucauld dans son ermitage du Hoggar, Louis Massignon fait le choix de la vie maritale : le 27 janvier 1914, il épouse Marcelle Dansaert Testlin (1887-1984), sa cousine lilloise. De leur union, naîtront trois enfants :Yves (1915-1935), Daniel (1919-2000) et Geneviève (1921-1966). Le 24 mai 1914, quelques semaines après son mariage, Massignon soutient sa thèse intitulée « La passion d'al-Hallaj martyr mystique de l'Islam », en Sorbonne.

Mais brusquement, la première guerre mondiale éclate et le savant doit servir sous les drapeaux. En 1915, il est affecté à l'état-major du corps expéditionnaire des Dardanelles. Quant au manuscrit de sa thèse complémentaire, l'Essai, qui se trouvait à l'imprimerie de Louvain, il est inéluctablement détruit dans le bombardement de cette ville. En 1917 et 1918, Louis Massignon est mis à la disposition du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères comme officier adjoint au Haut-Commissaire de France en Syrie-Palestine-Cilicie et il assiste en décembre 1917, avec Thomas Edward Lawrence (1888-1935) à l'entrée des troupes britanniques dans Jérusalem. De retour à Paris, il est nommé suppléant de la Chaire de sociologie et sociographie de l'Islam au Collège de France et devient, en 1926, titulaire de cette même Chaire. En 1919-1920, il est missionné en Syrie par le Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, puis au Maroc, en 1923-1924, par le Général Lyautey (1854-1934). En 1933, il devient Directeur d'études à l'École Pratique des Hautes Études, section des sciences religieuses et occupe cette fonction jusqu'en 1954. En outre, il est élu membre des Académies de langue arabe du Caire et de Damas et préside, de 1946à 1955, le jury de l'agrégation d'arabe.

En 1934, avec son amie Mary Kahil (1889-1979), il fonde la Badaliyya, une sodalité chrétienne de prière en faveur de l'islam, puis, en 1940, au Caire le centre d'études et de rencontres islamo-chrétiennes Dar el-Salam. Dans cette même cité, il est ordonné

prêtre melkite catholique, en privé, le 28 janvier 1950. En 1954, celui qui avait tenté de mettre en pratique le principe gandhien du satyâgraha (Attachement à la ferme vérité), devient président des « Amis de Gandhi ». Ses luttes nombreuses en faveur de l'accueil de l'Étranger, de la Personne déplacée et en faveur de la justice à Madagascar ou en Afrique du Nord montrent que chez lui le chrétien, le savant et l'homme d'action étaient indissociables.

C'est un pèlerin infatigable. Après avoir arpenté de nombreux cimetière et lieux de pèlerinages, après s'être rendu à Lourdes, à La Saiette, à Dülme à Damiette, à Bethléem, à Hébron, à Isé au Japon, à Mehrauli en Inde et Madawaska au Canada, il ajoute, en 1954, une dimension islamo-chrétienn au Pardon breton de Vieux Marché. Là, en juillet 1961, il lit la sourate 18 avec Shaykh Hampâté Bâ (0001-1991). Quelques mois plus tard, dans la nuit du y octobre au 1er novembre 1962, Louis Massignon rend son dernier souffle à rage de 79 ans.

Le savant laisse derrière lui une oeuvre importante pour l'histoire de l'islamologie : une oeuvre dont nous examinerons la teneur et la portée au cours des prochains chapitres.

Qu'est-ce que la mystique musulmane ?

Au seuil de cette entreprise, il convient de préciser certains concepts et de définir certains termes qui reviendront de manière récurrente au fil du texte. Les expressions « mystique musulmane », « sùfisme » et « tasawwuf islami» sont-elles équivalentes ? Comme le fait observer Hermann Landolt, il y a des milliers de définitions du sùfisme. Selon ce spécialiste, il s'agit d'un mouvement historique composé de «ses », originairement des ascètes, qui s'organisa plus tard en groupes dans différents pays du monde musulman. Au sujet du rapport entre les termes « sufi » et «mystique », il rappelle qu'un « sufi » n'est pas nécessairement un mystique et qu'un mystique musulman ne sera pas toujours appelé « sufi ». Quant à la relation entre le sùfisme et l'islam, Robert Caspar (1923-2007) rappelle que l'islam n'est pas le sùfisme, en ce sens qu'on ne peut réduire tout l'islam au sùfisme, mais que le sùfisme, c'est aussi l'islam, soulignant ainsi que tout « sufi» est aussi et avant tout un croyant musulman.

Qu'est-ce qui caractérise la mystique musulmane ? Pour Georges Anawati

Louis Gardet, elle peut être définie « comme une méthode systématique d'union intime, expérimentale, avec Dieu ». Ici, le terme « expérience » peut être rapproché du mot « gustation » (dhawg), qui se rencontre chez Abù Hamid al-Ghazali (m. 505/1111). Le mystique est celui qui vit une expérience : il s'agit d'un vécu, non d'un savoir théorique. Ghazali écrit au sujet des ses que ce qui leur est spécifiquement propre ne se peut atteindre que par le goût, les états d'âme et la mutation des attributs ». Afin d'illustrer son propos, il prend l'exemple de l'ivrogne et demande : quelle différence y a-t-il entre le fait d'être ivre et le fait de connaître la définition de l'ivresse ?

L'ivrogne ne connaît pas la définition et la science de l'ivresse : il ne s'en doute même pas. Et celui qui est sobre les connaît bien, quoiqu'il soit à jeûn. De même, un médecin malade connaît bien la définition de la santé, ses causes et les remèdes qui la rétablissent : il est pourtant malade. Eh bien, connaître la réalité de la vie ascétique, avec ses conditions et ses causes, est une chose ; mais c'en est une tout autre que d'être effectivement dans l'état d'âme de l'ascétisme et du détachement des biens de ce monde.

Pour Ghazali, les mystiques ne sont pas des discoureurs : leur apprentissage se fait sur le mode de la gustation. Cette idée que les mystiques musulmans ne sont pas des « discoureurs » est également avancée par Paul Nwyia, qui évoque leur attachement au réel et leur effort atteindre l'adéquation qu'ils réalisent entre la langue et le coeur : « S'il est un mot qui les caractérise et par lequel ils aiment désigner le sens de leur effort spirituel, c'est bien celui de tahaqquq, l'opposé même du rêve : à la fois effort pour accéder à la vérité et souci de coller au réel, en démasquant toutes les illusions ». Pour le jésuite, la vie des vrais mystiques est orientée dans la quête de l'ikhlas, c'est-à-dire la recherche de l'authenticité la plus totale, non seulement avec Dieu, mais aussi et d'abord avec soi-même et avec les autres :

> Parler un langage vrai et sincère, réaliser en soi et pour les autres l'accord de la langue et du coeur, telle est la condition primordiale pour entrer dans le royaume du réel dont la porte est le verbe. Là est précisément le signe que le mystique habite ce royaume, car si être signifie être

> présent (hudur)[...] toute l'aventure mystique est tendue vers une présence dont le poids donne au langage sa cohésion et son pouvoir d'implantation dans le réel.

Enfin, proposant une définition élargie du sûfisme, William C. Chittick suggère qu'il désigne un engagement avec les enseignements et les pratiques islamiques de telle sorte que la dimension spirituelle, intérieure, est considérée systématiquement, et leurs positions sur le colonialisme variaient. Au milieu du xxe siècle, certains orientalistes ont commencé à se dissocier de la dimension coloniale ou néocoloniale de l'orientalisme. On commença alors à parler « d'études asiatiques » ou « d'islamologie ». Maxime Rodinson (1915-2004) attribue le déclin de l'orientalisme à la fin de l'hégémonie de la philologie : l'idée selon laquelle la formation philologique pouvait suffire pour traiter avec compétence de tous les problèmes posés par un domaine d'étude défini par une limite linguistique, devint désuète. L'avancée des sciences humaines mit en évidence la complexité des problèmes que les compétences linguistiques ne pouvaient seules résoudre et révéla la nécessité d'établir des contacts avec les autres disciplines.

En 1978, la publication d'Orientalism par Edward Saïd confère au terme une connotation négative et polémique. Dans cette oeuvre, l'auteur se réfère aux conceptions prétendument simplistes, stéréotypées et dégradantes des cultures arabes et asiatiques généralement retenues par les érudits occidentaux. Depuis, le terme « orientalisme » est entaché d'ethnocentrisme occidental. Il revêt le plus souvent une connotation vieillie et péjorative. C'est l'une des raisons pour lesquelles, ici, nous préférons qualifier Louis Massignon d'« islamologue », plutôt que d'« orientaliste ». Le terme « islamologue », plus actuel et plus transversal, permettra, en se fondant sur le cas de Louis Massignon, d'étendre cette réflexion à l'époque contemporaine. Ce terme contribuera à l'établissement d'une continuité tout en permettant de souligner l'actualité d'une réflexion et la pérennité de questionnements inhérents à une profession. Quant à l'islamologie, nous la concevons comme une section des sciences des religions ayant pour but « une juste compréhension de l'Islam en tant que religion vivante ».

Vers une compréhension plus juste

Jacques Waardenburg, dans sa thèse doctorale, a comparé entre elles cinq approches de l'islam et mis au jour un certain nombre d'intentions, de présupposés, de concepts et de valeurs présents dans la conscience de cinq chercheurs et ayant joué un rôle dans leur étude de l'islam. Il a souligné l'utilité de cette analyse pour l'épistémologie de la science religieuse, qui avait selon lui « cruellement besoin d'une réflexion sur la relation entre sujet et objet ». Le présent ouvrage approfondit la réflexion critique amorcée par ce professeur néerlandais sur la méthode en sciences des religions et sur le rôle joué par les valeurs et les préjugés du chercheur. Elle répond à son injonction d'opérer un retour réflexif sur la pratique du chercheur en sciences des religions. Elle s'inscrit dans un même effort de compréhension du phénomène religieux au moyen d'une démarche phénoménologique qui vise à sonder le regard porté par le chercheur sur son champ d'étude. Elle se fonde sur le postulat selon lequel les implicites, intentions ou présupposés présents dans la conscience du ou de la chercheure jouent un rôle déterminant dans sa manière d'aborder son champ d'étude. L'oeuvre de Massignon ayant influencé la manière de voir la mystique musulmane de générations de chercheure.s, il nous a semblé essentiel d'interroger ce cadre conceptuel afin de «renouveler notre regard » et de prendre conscience du fait qu'il s'agit d'une certaine vision qui ne va pas de soi et qui doit être questionnée.

Notre entreprise s'origine au coeur du questionment epistemologique

suivant : comment étudier la mystique musulmane en étant consciente de ce dont notre regard est porteur, de nos présupposés théologiques ou philosophiques, du paradigme dans lequel nous nous situons ? Nous espérons qu'elle enrichira la réflexion sur le regard porté sur la mystique musulmane et qu'elle permettra de mieux débusquer les intentions, présupposés, concepts et valeurs implicites ; qu'elle permettra de mieux comprendre comment consciemment regarder cet objet d'étude pour mieux le voir apparaître dans toute sa réalité. Bien qu'il soit impossible d'atteindre cet objet « en soi», bien que sa réalité soit à tout jamais inaccessible, cette étude vise à nous permettre de nous en approcher : elle vise à nous conduire vers une compréhension plusjuste de ce champ d'étude.

Translation

The color of the water is the color of its container. ABU AL-QASIM AL-JUNAYD (d. 298/910)

...

The Seeker and the Ineffable

Perhaps more than any other discipline, the study of Muslim mysticism requires the commitment of the researcher's subjectivity. As Alexander Knysh reminds us, the mystical tradition of Pislam relates to a very personal and elusive aspect of life. Within the historiography of studies devoted to this tradition, the figure of the French Islamologist Louis Massignon (1883-1962) illustrates a difficulty linked to this aspect: for this scholar, subjectivity is both the tool that allows him to apprehend his field of study and the veil that obstructs access to a transparent vision of the reality studied. Embodying a contradiction inherent in a profession, Louis Massignon is sometimes enlightened and guided by his intuition, sometimes led astray and deceived by his distorting "glasses". Looking at his work, we can wonder about his vision of this field of knowledge: did he manage to get closer to the reality studied? To give a faithful account of it? exactly?

The present book aims to shed light on the characteristics of his vision of Muslim mysticism through the analysis of his posture vis-à-vis his field of study. But in order to emphasize the importance of such an undertaking, let us take the time to situate it within the vast epistemological questioning that gives rise to it: according to Michel de Certeau (1925-1986), "there are no considerations, however general they may be, nor readings, however far they may be extended, capable of erasing the particularity of the place from which I speak and the field in which I pursue an investigation. This mark is indelible." Referring to Raymond Aron (1905-1983), the Jesuit reminds us that "every historical interpretation depends on a system of reference; that this system remains a particular implicit philosophy; that, by infiltrating the work of analysis, organizing it without its knowledge, it refers to the subjectivity of the author." For the historian of mysticism, one of Raymond Aron's merits is to have taught generations of historians the "art of pointing out the philosophical decisions according to which the divisions of a material, the codes of its decipherment and the order of the exposition are organized".

In the light of this reflection, what can be said about the researcher's practice in religious studies, more specifically in Islamic studies, and especially concerning the study of Muslim mysticism? How can we study this field of Muslim religious history without unconsciously recreating it in the light of our own unconscious philosophical categories or presuppositions? This problem has been raised in an article by Omid Safi, a specialist in Muslim mysticism, who observes that the theoretical framework conveyed by some Islamologists often relegates mysticism to the private sphere, which leads them to emphasize the notion of experiences. According to him, this vision stems from a certain worldview, which he describes as "post-Enlightenment and Protestant", in which the sphere of religion and mysticism has been privatized and defined in opposition to rational philosophy. He notes the influence on minds of William James' (1842-1910) book, The Varieties of the Religious Experience (1902), and the conception of mystical experience that it conveys. He observes that several authors tend, in their presentation of Muslim mystics, to create a radical opposition between spiritual affairs and the visible world, although many Muslims consider taking on the responsibility of living in this visible universe to be also a spiritual activity. In addition, he questions the relevance of dividing history into periods called the "classical age" and then the "decline", which denotes a Western triumphalist perspective. This division seems to him to be modelled on the Western historiographical model of an ancient (medieval) period, followed by a modern one. For this professor, most scholars who study Muslim mysticism continue to employ outdated and problematic models of "mysticism" that distort our understanding of Muslim mystics and their teachings.

Omid Safi's article raises an important problem: the idea that philosophy, the vision of the world, the system of reference, the implicit elements present in the consciousness of the researcher lead him or her to reconstruct a certain representation of Muslim mysticism, to establish certain oppositions, to emphasize this or that aspect, to operate this or that division of history. Safi argues that the unconscious, philosophical or theological presuppositions of each researcher will have a definite influence on his perception of the spirituality of Muslim mystics. Subscribing to these views, we also believe that the way in which the definition of Muslim mysticism is elaborated by a scholar depends largely on implicit philosophical categories or presuppositions. How,

then, will a self-conscious search be articulated and organized in order to approach its field of study in a clear-sighted way? This book examines the way in which the concepts conveyed by research cut up reality. It questions the place of the subjectivity of the researcher in religious studies in his or her encounter with the other, the place of the "subject" in "religious studies": how can the person who undertakes a research project, from his or her particular position, become more aware of his or her implicit philosophy, of the characteristics of his or her own frame of reference? How can an adequate conceptual framework be developed to study the history of Muslim mysticism?

A pioneering and controversial workIoo years ago, in 1922, Louis Massignon published the Passion of al-Hosayn-Ibn-Mansour al-Hallaj and the Essay on the Origins of the Technical Lexicon of Muslim Mysticism, two monuments in the history of Islamology. The work of the scholar, who had discovered the work of al-Husayn b. Mansur al-Hallaj (d. 309/922) was hailed by her peers as the founder of a new field of study: Muslim mysticism. For Hans Heinrich Schaeder (1896-1957), the Passion is "the most profound and significant work that has been devoted to the religious formation of Islam"; It is one of "the greatest achievements in religious studies." Schaeder is of the opinion that Massignon, who used a considerable number of unusual or unknown manuscripts, manifests a superior knowledge of Muslim religious literature. According to him, this work is of paramount importance because it introduces a new phase of Islamology. Duncan Black Macdonald (1863-1943), who considers this contribution to be the most important that has appeared after the Muhammedische Studien (1889) by Ignàc Goldziher (1850-1921), writes in turn:

> It is the biography of an unparalleled mystic, wonderworker and ecstatic, who was an enigma to his contemporaries, to all successive generations of Muslim canonist and mystical theologians, and to all Western scholars who have studied Islam. But M. Massignon has treated this subject in such a way that he makes of it an elaborate study of the whole evolution of the religious history of Islam during the first centuries, and of the fundamental ideas of the mystical schools down to the present day.

Henri Laoust (1905-1983) paid tribute to the man who became "the historian not only of a soul but of an entire era"9. He also bows to the work of the historian carried out by the author of the Essay on the Origins of Muslim Mysticism, a work which presents the

history of the first mystical vocations in Islam and the conditions that presided over the formation of Sufism. Finally, Jacques Berque (1910-1995) considered Louis Massignon to be one of the "rare happy few who, coming from outside, will have penetrated the intimacy of the Arab, the Arabs or Islam".

The Iraqi Jesuit Paul Nwyia (1925-1980), the first holder of the Chair of Muslim Mysticism at the EPHE, praised Massignon's high expertise in this field of study, particularly during the first four centuries of the Hijra. In turn, he emphasizes the pioneering nature of his master's work, which he considers to be the founder of a field of study.

According to Seyyed Hossein Nasr, one of the services rendered by Massignon is to have contributed to the recognition of Islamology as a serious discipline from a religious and spiritual point of view—and not only from a philological or historical point of view—as well as to that of the study of Muslim mysticism as a major disciplinary field. The importance of this contribution was also praised by Marshall Hodgson (1922-1968), who recognized the contribution of the Islamologist's research to the study of Sufism, the Arabic language and the Shfit movement. As for Alexander Knysh, he believes that Massignon contributed to building the framework of the academic study of Muslim mysticism and that he should be counted among the founders of this new branch of Islamic studies.

Louis Massignon's work inspired several generations of researchers: the scholar encouraged Henry Corbin (1903-1978) in his studies of Suhrawardi al-Maqtul (d. 587/1191); his pupil Henri Laoust succeeded him at the Collège de France; Louis Gardet (1904-1986), Georges Anawati (1905-1994) and Roger Arnaldez (1911-2006) continued his teaching in their work. Paul Nwyia continued his research on the technical lexicon of Muslim mystics, and the research undertaken by 'Uthman Yahya (1919-1997) concerning Muslim mysticism was inspired by the work begun by Massignon. Finally, his example and influence can be felt in Helmut Ritter (1892-1971), Fritz Meier (1912-1998) and Annemarie Schimmel (1922-2003), to name but a few.

In the light of these considerations on Massignon's work, the latter appears to be the founder of a field: the study of Muslim mysticism. Yet, it is also targeted by many critics.

During the author's own lifetime, some have pointed out the difficulty of distinguishing between objective erudition and pure intuitive subjectivity: Hamilton Alexander Rosskeen Gibb (1895-1971) considers this work to be problematic because it is sometimes based on the register of objective study of a phenomenon by means of the classical tools of academic research, and on that of intuition and personal spirituality. It is not always possible to draw a line of demarcation between these two registers.

The work was harshly judged by the Russian orientalist Vladimir Ivanow (1886-1970), who confided to Henry Corbin: "He is stuck in his Hallaj, and never makes any serious progress. The whole problem of Sufism, its history, its true sociological effects and implications, et cetera, an immense problem that deserves to be dealt with, remains as dark as ever."

As Raymond Aron and Michel de Certeau, mentioned above, point out, every historian makes certain divisions: he is the bearer of a subjective vision of history, sometimes without his knowledge. For example, the Algerian intellectual Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi reproaches the author of the Passion for having emphasized certain heterodox aspects of Muslim mysticism "as if he deliberately wanted to leave other aspects of Islam in the shadows." In his eyes, the gaze of the "Pope of Orientalism" is not devoid of a certain ethnocentrism.

Many have deplored the prismatic nature of this view, particularly with regard to the place it attributes to al-Hallaj in the religious history of Islam: Stéphane Ruspoli believes that Louis Massignon's view of al-Hallaj is subjective; 'Abdu Wázin, in his introduction to the Hallajian Diwan, asks: "Should we leave al-Hallaj to the Orientalists and renounce him, or should we defend him because he is one of us?" Referring to Massignon's thesis, Jacques Waardenburg (1930-2015) observes that the Islamologist "sees the mystic Hallâj as a superior saint to Muhammad, who replaces him and delivers Islam from prohibitions given by the Prophet". This conception of a "completion of Islam by the Hallagian way of substitution" also raises questions for Patrick Laude, who wonders whether this vision of al-Hallaj does not "Christianize" the figure of the mystic of Baghdad too exclusively by restricting the scope of his universalism.

In Orientalism (1978), Edward Said (1935-2003) warns against the re-creation, the restructuring of the Orient as — consciously or unconsciously — recreated, redefined, by Orientalists. The Palestinian-American scholar believes that in Massignon's vision of Islam, Muhammad is expelled and al-Hallaj, a Christ-like figure, is brought to the forefront. Finally, it should be noted that the Iranian scholar Muhammad Qazvini (1876-1949) was also critical of Massignon. To one of his correspondents, who asked him to send him the two volumes of the Passion, he replied that this work was useless, futile, meaningless, and that it was based on unfounded assumptions.

It is interesting, however, to remember that Louis Massignon himself was eager to "decolonize" his gaze, to achieve a "mental decentering" in order to see Islam not as it could be seen from the outside but as it could be seen from the inside: he had striven to place himself "in the very axis of Muslim doctrine." to "that virgin point of truth which lies at its centre and which gives it life". And yet, in spite of this effort to decenter, in spite of extensive documentary research and confounding erudition, has it succeeded? If so, how? If not, why not?

Several studies have sought to question the terms of the debate raised by Edward Said in 1978, and some scholars from non-Western societies have analysed the way Europe looks at their cultures. This book continues this same effort. It is driven by a concern for methodological accuracy and by a concern for ethical justice. With this in mind, it seems useful to probe this gaze on the other, to exhume the implicit elements that it may carry and to highlight the presuppositions likely to influence or even bias the academic study of the field of study of Muslim mysticism. Saïd's work has itself been the subject of much criticism. But in spite of the generalizations or intemperances it contains, it can take the form of a cry or an appeal, which we wish to hear here in a non-polemical but constructive way. We believe, with Alain Messaoudi, that it is salutary to hear this invitation addressed to researchers to approach "their research objects with more consideration and sensitivity and to take a critical look at their own methods". The Saïdian essay, which is part of a process of decolonization of knowledge, is a contribution, through the critique of past scholarly production that it produces, to the history of scholarly Orientalism. It can inspire new reflections, provided that it is

understood as an invitation to reflect on the practices of researchers working on the Arab-Muslim world.

Louis Massignon's work is the foundation of the field of study of Muslim mysticism. And yet, at the same time, it presents a "warped" vision of this field. It is a construction, a reconstruction. Indeed, among the criticisms levelled at Massignon is that of having recomposed the religious history of Islam by making al-Hallaj the central figure of this religion at the eschatological level. This scholar, although he consciously wanted to achieve a "mental decentring", to decolonize his gaze and make it fraternal, close, and although he consciously wanted to apprehend the spirituality of the first Muslim mystics and to give an account of it as faithfully as possible, was nevertheless accused of ethnocentrism, was reproached for having Christianized and distorted the figures he studied. In the absence of an analytical study of Louis Massignon's vision of Muslim mysticism, since it is a founding work of a field of study, Massignon's work requires an in-depth study capable of questioning his vision of this field of study and of giving an account of this reconstruction of religious history. In order to fill this gap and to carry out this project, this book will attempt to bring to light the characteristics of Massignon's vision of musul mane mysticism and to present the specificity of its interpretation of the field of religious history.

Shifting the boundary between not-knowing and knowing-

In order to provide an answer to this question, this study aims to shift the boundary between non-knowledge and knowledge: its contribution begins where previous work has left off. After Louis Massignon's death on 31 October 1962, there were many posthumous tributes: bibliographies, biographies, conferences, translations, celebrations. Since then, Louis Massignon's work has been the subject of numerous research and rereadings. Recently, it has gained accessibility and intelligibility thanks to an illuminating critical reprint of Massignon's main articles, entitled Memorable Writings and edited by Christian Jambet.

Many of Massignon's biographers emphasize the importance of his work in favor of Muslim-Christian dialogue as well as the originality of his conception of Abrahamic hospitality. It is worth noting the importance of the work carried out by the anthropologist Manoël Pénicaud, author of a biography entitled Louis Massignon: the

"Muslim Catholic", who highlights these aspects, as well as the interest of his thesis devoted to the Muslim-Christian pilgrimage of the Seven Sleepers. Yet, despite the abundance of publications devoted to this scholar, from the point of view of religious studies, the work remains sparse. The most in-depth studies are those of Jacques Waardenburg, who analyzes Massignon's method32. Some enlightening comparative approaches have been developed by Denis Gril, Xavier Accart and Jean Moncelon33. Massignon's relationship to the Qur'an and the Arabic language has been the subject of several studies.

Yet, although Massignon's discoveries have profoundly modified the convictions of scholars concerning Muslim mysticism, very few works have analysed the relationship of the Islamologist to this field of study: some important reflections have been formulated on this subject by Henry Corbin, Louis Gardet, Pierre Lory, Christian Jambet, Mokdad Arfa-Mensia, Roger Arnaldez and Eric Ormsby. But no in-depth analysis of the Islamologist's contribution to the study of Muslim mysticism has yet been completed: our intention here is to remedy this gap.

Biographical Milestones

In order to properly set the framework for this analysis, and before carefully examining the development of Louis Massignon's intellectual commitment, his scientific production and the evolution of his relationship to his field of study, it is important to specify certain biographical references.

Louis Massignon was born on 25 July 1883 in Nogent-sur-Marne, not far from Paris. He was the son of Marie Ferdinande Catherine Hovyn (1858-1931) and Pierre Henry Ferdinand Massignon (1855-1922). His father, after having worked as a pharmacist, turned to the path of monumental sculpture and signed his works with the name "Pierre Roche".

The young Louis, after attending the Lycée Montaigne and then the Lycée Louis le Grand, was admitted in 1900 to the baccalaureate in Literature and Philosophy and in 1901 to that of Literature and Mathematics. At the age of 18, he went to Algeria and made his first trip to the Muslim world. Back in Paris, he obtained his degree in literature in October 1902 and did his military service. In the spring of 1904, as part of

his Diplôme d'études supérieures d'histoire et géographie, his research on the figure of Léon LAfricain led him in the footsteps of the latter, in Algeria and Morocco.

During this period of intense existential questioning, Massignon was in contact with Joris-Karl Huysmans (1848-1907), Ernest Psichari (1883-1914) and Charles de Foucauld (1858-1916), all three of whom had converted to the Catholic faith36. Gradually, Massignon specialized in the study of Arabic and Islamic studies and attended the École Spéciale des Langues Orientales, the École Pratique des Hautes Études and the Collège de France. This was the beginning of a period of research in the Muslim world.

On 23 October 1906, he became a resident of the French Institute of Archaeology in Cairo. He then discovered the work of al-Hallaj and in the spring of 1907 conceived the idea of dedicating his thesis to this Muslim mystic. A few months later, he was entrusted with an archaeological mission to Mesopotamia, arriving in Baghdad in December 1907. There, he was welcomed by the al-Àlusi family, who were interested in his research. In the spring of 1908, he was assailed by an intense inner crisis, at the end of which he found the path of the Catholic faith of his childhood as well as that of his native land, which he had to return to in order to rest.

Once he had recovered, he continued his research in Istanbul and then Cairo. In 1912-1913, he taught philosophy at the Egyptian University in Cairo. After hesitating to join Charles de Foucauld in his hermitage at Le Hoggar, Louis Massignon chose married life: on 27 January 1914, he married Marcelle Dansaert Testlin (1887-1984), his cousin from Lille. They had three children: Yves (1915-1935), Daniel (1919-2000) and Geneviève (1921-1966). On May 24, 1914, a few weeks after his marriage, Massignon defended his thesis entitled "The Passion of al-Hallaj Mystical Martyr of Islam" at the Sorbonne.

But suddenly, the First World War broke out and the scientist had to serve in the army. In 1915, he was assigned to the staff of the Dardanelles Expeditionary Force. As for the manuscript of his complementary thesis, the Essay, which was in the printing press of Louvain, it was inevitably destroyed in the bombardment of that city. In 1917 and 1918, Louis Massignon was placed at the disposal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as deputy officer to the High Commissioner of France in Syria-Palestine-Cilicia and he assisted in December 1917, with Thomas Edward Lawrence (1888-1935) at the entry of British

troops into Jerusalem. Back in Paris, he was appointed substitute of the Chair of Sociology and Sociology of Islam at the Collège de France and became, in 1926, holder of the same Chair. In 1919-1920, he was sent to Syria by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, then to Morocco, in 1923-1924, by General Lyautey (1854-1934). In 1933, he became Director of Studies at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, religious sciences section, a position he held until 1954. In addition, he was elected a member of the Arabic Language Academies of Cairo and Damascus and from 1946 to 1955 chaired the jury for the agrégation in Arabic.

In 1934, with his friend Mary Kahil (1889-1979), he founded the Badaliyya, a Christian sodality of prayer in favor of Islam, then, in 1940, in Cairo, the Dar el-Salam Center for Muslim-Christian Studies and Encounters. In the same city, he was ordained a Melkite Catholic priest, in private, on January 28, 1950. In 1954, the man who had tried to put into practice the Gandhian principle of satyagraha (Attachment to the Firm Truth), became president of the "Friends of Gandhi". His numerous struggles in favor of the reception of the foreigner, of the displaced person and in favor of justice in Madagascar or in North Africa show that for him the Christian, the scholar and the man of action were inseparable.

He is a tireless pilgrim. After visiting numerous cemeteries and places of pilgrimage, after visiting Lourdes, La Saiette, Dülme in Damietta, Bethlehem, Hebron, Ise in Japan, Mehrauli in India and Madawaska in Canada, in 1954 he added an Islamo-Christian dimension to the Breton Pardon of Vieux Marché. There, in July 1961, he read Surah 18 with Shaykh Hampâté Bâ (0001-1991). A few months later, on the night of October 1, 1962, Louis Massignon breathed his last at the age of 79.

The scholar leaves behind him an important work for the history of Islamology: a work whose content and scope we will examine in the following chapters.

What is Muslim mysticism?
At the outset of this undertaking, it is necessary to clarify certain concepts and define certain terms that will recur repeatedly throughout the text. Are the terms "Muslim mysticism", "Sufism" and "tasawwuf islami" equivalent? As Hermann Landolt points out, there are thousands of definitions of Sufism. According to this specialist, it is a

historical movement composed of "his", originally ascetics, which later organized itself into groups in different countries of the Muslim world. Regarding the relationship between the terms "Sufi" and "mystic", he recalled that a "Sufi" was not necessarily a mystic and that a Muslim mystic would not always be called a "Sufi". As for the relationship between Sufism and Islam, Robert Caspar (1923-2007) reminds us that Islam is not Sufism, in the sense that one cannot reduce all Islam to Sufism, but that Sufism is also Islam, thus emphasizing that every "Sufi" is also and above all a Muslim believer.

What characterizes Muslim mysticism? For Georges Anawati

According to Louis Gardet, it can be defined "as a systematic method of intimate, experimental union with God." Here, the term "experience" can be compared to the word "tasting" (dhawg), which is found in Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 505/1111). The mystic is one who has an experience: it is a matter of experience, not of theoretical knowledge. Ghazali writes about his that what is specifically peculiar to them can only be attained through taste, moods, and the mutation of attributes." To illustrate his point, he takes the example of the drunkard and asks: What is the difference between being drunk and knowing the definition of drunkenness?

The drunkard does not know the definition and science of drunkenness: he does not even suspect it. And he who is sober knows them well, even though he is fasting. In the same way, a sick doctor is well acquainted with the definition of health, its causes, and the remedies that restore it: he is nevertheless ill. Well, to know the reality of the ascetic life, with its conditions and causes, is one thing; But it is quite another thing to actually be in the state of mind of asceticism and detachment from the goods of this world.

For Ghazali, mystics are not talkers: their learning takes place in the mode of tasting. This idea that Muslim mystics are not "talkers" is also put forward by Paul Nwyia, who evokes their attachment to reality and their effort to achieve the adequacy they achieve between language and heart: "If there is one word that characterizes them and by which they like to designate the meaning of their spiritual effort, it is that of tahaqquq, the very opposite of dreams: both an effort to access the truth and a concern to stick to reality, by unmasking all illusions." For the Jesuit, the life of true mystics is oriented

towards the quest for ikhlas, that is, the search for the most total authenticity, not only with God, but also and first and foremost with oneself and with others:

> To speak a true and sincere language, to realize in oneself and for others the harmony of the tongue and the heart, such is the primordial condition for entering the realm of the real, the door of which is the word. This is precisely the sign that the mystic inhabits this realm, for if to be means to be present (hudur)[...] the whole mystical adventure is directed towards a presence whose weight gives language its cohesion and its power to implant itself in reality.

Finally, proposing an expanded definition of Sufism, William C. Chittick suggests that it designates an engagement with Islamic teachings and practices in such a way that the spiritual, inner dimension is considered systematically, and their positions on colonialism varied. In the mid-twentieth century, some Orientalists began to dissociate themselves from the colonial or neocolonial dimension of Orientalism. People began to talk about "Asian studies" or "Islamic studies." Maxime Rodinson (1915-2004) attributes the decline of Orientalism to the end of the hegemony of philology: the idea that philological training could suffice to deal competently with all the problems posed by a field of study defined by a linguistic limit became obsolete. The advance of the humanities highlighted the complexity of problems that language skills alone could not solve and revealed the need to establish contacts with other disciplines.

In 1978, the publication of Orientalism by Edward Said gave the term a negative and polemical connotation. In this work, the author refers to the supposedly simplistic, stereotypical, and degrading conceptions of Arab and Asian cultures generally held by Western scholars. Since then, the term "Orientalism" has been tainted by Western ethnocentrism. It most often has an old-fashioned and pejorative connotation. This is one of the reasons why, here, we prefer to describe Louis Massignon as an "Islamologist" rather than an "orientalist". The term "Islamologist", which is more topical and more transversal, will make it possible, based on the case of Louis Massignon, to extend this reflection to the contemporary era. This term will contribute to the establishment of continuity while making it possible to emphasize the topicality of a reflection and the durability of questions inherent to a profession. As for Islamology, we conceive of it as a section of religious studies whose aim is "a correct understanding of Islam as a living religion".

Towards a fairer understanding

Jacques Waardenburg, in his doctoral thesis, compared five approaches to Islam and brought to light a number of intentions, presuppositions, concepts and values present in the consciousness of five researchers and who played a role in their study of Islam. He stressed the usefulness of this analysis for the epistemology of religious science, which he said was "in dire need of a reflection on the relationship between subject and object." This book deepens the critical reflection initiated by this Dutch professor on the method of religious studies and on the role played by the values and prejudices of the researcher. It responds to his injunction to make a reflexive return on the practice of the researcher in religious studies. It is part of the same effort to understand the phenomenon of religion by means of a phenomenological approach that aims to probe the researcher's view of his or her field of study. It is based on the premise that the implicits, intentions or presuppositions present in the researcher's consciousness play a determining role in the way he or she approaches his or her field of study. Since Massignon's work has influenced the way generations of researchers see Muslim mysticism, it seemed essential to us to question this conceptual framework in order to "renew our gaze" and to become aware of the fact that it is a certain vision that is not self-evident and that must be questioned.

Our company is at the heart of epistemological questioning

Next: How can we study Muslim mysticism while being aware of what our gaze carries, of our theological or philosophical presuppositions, of the paradigm in which we situate ourselves? We hope that it will enrich the reflection on the way we look at Muslim mysticism and that it will allow us to better flush out implicit intentions, presuppositions, concepts and values; that it will allow us to better understand how to consciously look at this object of study in order to better see it appear in all its reality. Although it is impossible to reach this object "in itself", although its reality is forever inaccessible, this study aims to allow us to approach it: it aims to lead us towards a more accurate understanding of this field of study.

> L'interprétation n'a pas plus à être vraie que fausse. Elle a à être juste JACQUES LACAN

Le présent ouvrage, soucieux de mettre en lumière la spécificité de la vision de la mystique musulmane de Louis Massignon, s'est attaché à préciser la particularité de sa posture herméneutique vis-à-vis de son champ d'étude. L'analyse contextuelle a permis de recenser certains éléments ayant orienté le regard du chercheur sur la mystique musulmane : l'intérêt croissant que suscite l'étude de la mystique, l'attention accrue portée au sentiment religieux, l'avènement d'une religion plus personnelle, intérieure, ainsi que l'attrait pour les entreprises comparatistes, sont quelques-uns des traits de la réalité française contemporaine de l'islamologue. Replacer cette oeuvre dans le contexte catholique pré-conciliaire a permis d'en saisir la modernité et de saisir la portée de textes au sein desquels la possibilité de grâces surnaturelles en islam se trouve énoncée.

Du vivant du chercheur, on assiste par ailleurs à l'institutionnalisation des sciences des religions qui s'émancipent du socle de la théologie et s'inspirent, dans leur redéfinition et dans leur méthodologie, de l'histoire des religions. Massignon est également témoin de l'institutionnalisation de l'islamologie et de la création d'un champ d'étude consacré à la mystique musulmane. L'internationalisation d'une communauté savante à la mobilité géographique croissante ayant « l'Orient » puis plus précisément «l'islam», pour champ d'étude, la tenue de congrès scientifiques internationaux permettant l'intensification de collaborations entre experts et la réalisation de projets éditoriaux d'envergure internationale telle l'Encyclopédie de l'Islam, dessinent les contours de l'univers au sein duquel s'inscrit le travail de Massignon.

L'impact de l'expansion coloniale sur le développement des études arabes et islamiques a été étudié. À ce titre, plusieurs arguments énoncés dans le cadre de la critique de l'orientalisme ont été rappelés : indéniablement, le monde des arabisants est traversé par une tension entre logique savante et logique politique, entre académisme et mission civilisatrice. Pourtant, il convient aussi de souligner la force d'une tradition savante qui conserve son autonomie par rapport aux demandes politiques suscitées par l'expansion coloniale. Massignon, en qualité de savant arabisant, se trouve dans une posture à la fois privilégiée et incommode au sein du monde musulman : témoin de prédilection des mutations intellectuelles en cours, proche des élites musulmanes, il est au demeurant accusé d'espionnage et inspire régulièrement la méfiance.

L'époque de la Nahda, que nous comprenons comme une relecture créative de la tradition à partir d'une nouvelle posture herméneutique ancrée dans le paradigme de la modernité, comme un temps de réflexion sur la langue arabe et de libération de la parole, voit l'avènement de la figure de l'intellectuel au Moyen-Orient : au vu de l'intensité des liens tissés entre l'islamologue et plusieurs intellectuels du monde arabo-musulman, prendre en compte son ancrage au sein de ce « moment » de l'histoire apparaît essentiel.

L'analyse biographique a mis en valeur plusieurs éléments ayant façonné son regard sur la mystique musulmane. À l'EPHE, Hartwig Derenbourg lui transmet une certaine attention philologique aux textes. Puis à l'IFAO du Caire, naît une passion pour l'archéologie et la topographie. En Iraq, son approche opère de plus en plus sur un mode sociologique et anthropologique. Chercheur, observateur, Massignon est aussi un « pèlerin scientifique» fasciné par les sépultures des premiers mystiques de l'islam. Il s'intéresse alors à l'histoire d'al-Hallaj et choisit de lui consacrer sa thèse doctorale : une relation passionnée se noue entre le chercheur et cette figure oblative. En 1908, un événement intérieur intense le bouleverse profondément, montrant que loin d'être un observateur impassible face à un objet d'étude, il est un sujet affecté par la réalité qu'il explore et cherche à comprendre. À Bagdad, il est accueilli par la famille al-Alùsi, qui lui donne accès aux manuscrits de la ville et le met en contact avec le damascène Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi. Les échanges avec ces lettrés levantins lui font notamment comprendre qu'il est vain d'aborder le tasawwuf islami avec des catégories préconçues ou d'opposer systématiquement mystique musulmane et réforme salafie.

Massignon se rend régulièrement en Égypte où il fonde la Badaliyya, l'association des Ikhwân al-safa' ainsi que Dar el-Salam, autant d'initiatives en faveur du dialogue entre religions abrahamiques. Au Caire, les cours qu'il donne sur l'origine des termes philosophiques arabes témoignent de la centralité de la question lexicale dans son approche des textes des mystiques musulmans. Membre des Académies de Langue Arabe du Caire et de Damas, il s'engage pour la défense de la langue arabe, qu'il considère comme réellement propice à l'expression des états mystiques et de la transcendance divine. Parmi les savants ayant influencé sa vision de la mystique

musulmane, ses relations avec `Abd al-Ràziq, Goldziher et Corbin méritent d'être mentionnées.

Ces éléments contextuels et biographiques ont permis de définir la posture herméneutique de ce chercheur vis-à-vis de son champ d'étude : ils façonnent un regard personnel, historicisé et unique. C'est à un moment particulier de l'Histoire, et porteur d'une histoire personnelle, qu'il déchiffre son champ d'étude. Il s'agit donc d'un « point de vue » sur le réel et de ce regard interprétatif résulte une vision unique et subjective de la mystique musulmane.

Originale et novatrice, la méthode de Massignon se fonde à la fois sur une lecture scrupuleuse des termes techniques et méditative des textes, lus de façon intérioriste : le chercheur s'efforce de les comprendre du dedans, d'en avoir une vision globale, non de les disséquer. Cette méthode invite le chercheur à opérer un décentrement, à se défaire de ses préjugés, à redresser son regard, à se mettre à la place de l'autre. Ici, le religiologue participe au monde qu'il étudie et peut s'en trouver lui-même transformé. La recherche devient une expérimentation quasi-religieuse. Massignon part de ce qui fait sens pour le croyant, il se propose de Comprendre (Verstehen), plutôt que d'expliquer (Erklären).

Concernant les origines de la mystique musulmane, tandis que la plupart des thèses de ses contemporains insistent sur les origines exogènes de la mystique musulmane, il démontre dans son Essai l'importance de la source coranique au plan lexical et souligne le caractère foncièrement islamique de la mystique musulmane. Analysant la manière dont les premiers sufis se sont approprié l'idiome arabe, il souligne le rôle axial joué par le Coran dans la formation du langage mystique. Son intérêt pour la période formative de la mystique musulmane, proche de la pureté originelle, issue d'une arabité vierge de toute influence étrangère, n'a d'égal que son mépris pour la mystique plus tardive, qui reçoit l'influence du néoplatonisme, ce qui altéra, selon lui, la pureté coranique et la sincérité ascétique des premiers siècles de l'Hégire.

Sa conception de la sainteté d'al-Hallaj se comprend à la lumière du débat qui, de son vivant, porte sur l'existence de grâces spirituelles en dehors de l'Église et grâce à

l'évocation des modèles de saints et de saintes chrétiens, figures d'intercession, de compassion et de souffrance, qui le fascinèrent dans sa jeunesse.

Al-Hallaj peut-il, selon Massignon être qualifié de saint 'isawi? Comment interprète-t-il la mort d'al-Hallaj ? L'étude a permis de montrer que l'union mystique spirituelle et corporelle d'al-Hallaj se réalise d'après lui sur un mode christique. Le procès de ce martyr devient le procès de l'amour divin, le procès de la mystique authentique. Massignon lit l'histoire de ce mystique à partir d'une conception chrétienne de la sainteté et choisit, comme paradigme de la sainteté, une figure marginale, non représentative de l'ensemble des vocations mystiques en islam : en ce sens, la vision de son champ d'étude apparait comme gauchie, déformée.

Ici apparaît l'intention de l'oeuvre : il s'agit de faire connaître al-Hallaj et de faire reconnaître sa sainteté. Il apparaît donc que sa posture n'est pas seulement scientifique : elle est aussi religieuse, théologique. L'historiographie est ici un moyen au service d'une quête religieuse, existentielle, non une fin. D'où un certain flottement méthodologique, qui résulte possiblement du fait que l'étude elle-même a nourri la spiritualité du chercheur, l'a conduit à cheminer, qu'elle a été le lieu même d'une quête religieuse.

Ultimement, la mystique en islâm, dans l'oeuvre de Massignon, se distingue par son caractère profondément coranique, foncièrement islamique. Elle est une méthode expérimentale d'union à Dieu, un effort d'intégration, d'intériorisation du vocabulaire coranique, une interprétation « anagogique » des textes sacrés. Elle comporte une dimension expérientielle qui consiste à « rejouer » les choses en soi (le récit du mi'raj, par exemple). Elle est une thérapeutique, une science de la guérison des coeurs. Elle a une valeur médicale ; elle est une règle de vie.

Cette vision se fonde sur une opposition qu'il construit entre la voie de la wahdat al-shuhüd, dont al-Hallaj est à ses yeux le sommet, et celle de la wahdat al-wujûd, synonyme selon lui de décadence, portée par Ibn 'Arabi.

Concernant la mystique hallajienne, il la présente comme une voie d'ascèse, d'endurance, de purification par la souffrance. C'est une voie de ferveur, une mystique toute en actes d'adoration, fondée sur l'analyse expérimentale, l'introspection de la

pratique cultuelle. Il s'agit humblement de subir la transcendance de Dieu, de se prosterner devant Lui. Au coeur de l'union mystique transformante et personnalisante, le mystique devient le témoin de Dieu. C'est une mystique de l'amour, une mystique oblative dans laquelle la mort supprime le dernier obstacle à l'union parfaite avec Dieu : le « moi » propre. Dieu se donne dans la consommation de la souffrance, clé du dépassement de soi. Le mystique ne peut se conjoindre à Dieu que dans le sacrifice, l'amour, la déréliction. Ici, l'épreuve est acceptée, toute médiation est refusée, la transcendance est absolue.

À cette voie, il oppose celle de la wahdat al-wujûd, qui a subi selon lui, l'influence de la philosophie grecque néoplatonicienne, influence qu'il regarde comme une cause d'altération de la pureté des premiers siècles de l'Hégire. Figure emblématique de cette voie, Ibn `Arabi est vivement critiqué par Massignon. Il reproche au Shaykh al-Akbar de supprimer la radicalité de la transcendance au profit d'une vision émanationniste, d'atteindre à une sérénité quiétiste indifférente à l'égard des injustices de ce monde, de réduire la mystique à une esthétique formelle, d'emprunter son vocabulaire au syncrétisme hellénique, d'intellectualiser l'idée de Dieu. Il tend à opposer mystique et philosophie, ascétisme et abstraction.

L'exemple de Massignon, qui, dans sa description des deux voies, construit certaines dichotomies simplificatrices et refuse de prendre en compte les lignes de continuité existantes entre ces voies, montre combien il importe, afin d'appréhender avec justesse l'histoire religieuse de l'islam, de bien penser l'élaboration de catégories conceptuelles adéquates.

Le rejet d'Ibn 'Arabi par Massignon a pour corollaire un refus de la médiation, de la théophanie. Tandis que le Shaykh al-Akbar soutient les droits de l'homme face à Dieu, Massignon prône l'« auto-destruction ascétique » des saints. S'il se passionne essentiellement pour la mystique des premiers siècles de l'Hégire c'est parce qu'elle accentue l'idée musulmane de l'inaccessibilité divine, y voyant la source théologique d'une mystique de l'aridité. Chez lui, l'union de l'âme avec Dieu coïncide avec un dépouillement ou plutôt un écorchement: il s'agit d'une mystique du fane L'état de baqa' (subsistance) n'apparaît pas dans sa vision de la spiritualité hallâjienne. Cette

quête trahit selon nous une hantise de la damnation : l'humilité du mystique devient sous la plume de Massignon, une indignité, un désir d'anéantissement. L'être humain semble indigne d'endosser les attributs divins. Rien ne subsiste après l'union et Massignon paraît réduire la mystique musulmane à une voie de mort en islam. Son étude de la mystique apparaît in fine comme le lieu d'une quête personnelle, théologique : c'est habité par ces questionnements qu'il aborde la mystique musulmane, c'est porteur d'un certain regard qu'il la sonde.

Comme l'écrit Josef van Ess, Massignon a eu le mérite de donner du sens à un « ensemble culturel qui, sous la loupe de la spécialisation moderne » risquait de perdre sa cohérence ; sa vision «peut nous aider à ouvrir nous-même les yeux ». Il convient également de souligner l'importance de l'impact de l'oeuvre de Louis Massignon sur les études islamiques. Ce professeur du Collège de France et de L'EPHE a mis en place le champ d'étude « mystique musulmane » au sein de l'Université française et a orienté les travaux de plusieurs spécialistes de la mystique musulmane : notamment ceux d'Henry Corbin, d'Amélie-Marie Goichon (1894-1977), de Louis Gardet, de Roger Arnaldez, d'Henri Laoust, de Jean Mohammad Abdel Jalil, de Paul Nwyia, de Robert Caspar, de Serge Laugier de Beaurecueil, d"UthmanYahya, Ibrahim Madkùr (1902-1996), d'Abd al-Halim Mahmùd, d'Abu al-Wafd al-Taftazanï. Son influence et son exemple se sont fait sentir chez Helmut Ritter, Fritz Meier, Annemarie Schimmel pour ne citer que quelques noms. L'impact de cette oeuvre est perceptible jusqu'à nos jours et la multiplication de traductions des oeuvres des Rumi, Ansari, Suhrawardi al-Maqtul, Ibn Arabi, Nur al-Din Abd al-Rahman Jami (m. 817/1414), 'Abd al-Karim Jili (m. v. 815/1412), Ahmad Ibn `MW Allah (m. 709/1309) et des études qui leur sont consacrées a été suscitée par l'oeuvre de Massignon : incontestablement, l'oeuvre de ce savant a contribué à la fondation d'un champ d'étude et elle a inspiré durablement le monde des études islamiques.

Cependant, au sein du présent ouvrage, on a pu vérifier l'hypothèse heuristique selon laquelle la posture herméneutique du chercheur, sa philosophie implicite, ses catégories conceptuelles, son vécu expérientiel pendant la recherche, sa quête existentielle, sa subjectivité, influencent la manière dont le chercheur comprend et interprète la réalité étudiée. L'analyse a révélé que différents éléments tels le contexte,

la biographie, la méthode, l'intention, la spiritualité, la quête existentielle, ou encore le fait de cheminer au fil de l'étude étaient susceptibles de « gauchir » la manière dont un chercheur aborde et perçoit son champ d'étude. La vision de l'histoire des vocations mystiques en islam, selon Massignon, apparaît comme une interprétation subjective de cette réalité : une vision qui n'est ni neutre, ni universelle, mais située et unique.

Et de la même manière, reconnaissons ici que notre lecture de l'oeuvre de Massignon est fonction de notre propre posture herméneutique, car, comme l'écrit Gadamer : « Le lecteur peut, et bien plus, doit s'avouer à lui-même que les générations à venir comprendront différemment ce qu'il a lu dans ce texte ».

Vers plus de justesse, vers plus de justice

La présente réflexion est née d'un questionnement épistémologique sur la manière dont les concepts véhiculés par la recherche découpent le réel, sur la place de la subjectivité du chercheur en sciences des religions. En définitive, quels éléments peuvent être apportés à ce vaste questionnement ?

À l'article « Mawsu'a » (encyclopédie) de l'En, Emeri van Donzel (1925-2017) cite Theodor Houtsma, le rédacteur de l'En, qui se félicitait de ce que presque tous les contributeurs de ce projet éditorial soient « Chrétiens ». Cette remarque montre qu'au début du siècle, prévalait l'idée qu'être extérieur à l'islam était perçu comme garantissant une certaine objectivité. On croyait alors que la non-affiliation à une religion permettait d'en avoir une vision « neutre ».

Pourtant, depuis 1978, la critique saïdienne a montré que les islamologues « occidentaux» (les « orientalistes ») étaient susceptibles de représentations erronées de l'islam et a encouragé les chercheurs à réévaluer constamment leur démarche. Au cours des dernières décennies, certaines prises de conscience ont vu le jour. Dans le présent ouvrage, on a voulu montrer que l'idée selon laquelle une encyclopédie était « universelle » ou que la « science des religions » était « scientifique » et donc « neutre », n'allait pas de soi. L'idée selon laquelle tout savoir est situé a été avancée et nous avons montré que le chercheur ne peut se défaire de sa subjectivité. C'est pourquoi nous affirmons la nécessité d'interroger la prétention à l'universalité de la méthode scientifique. Dès qu'il y a regard porté sur, il y a perspective et donc point de vue

subjectif, partial, situé. Réaliser qu'une recherche est tributaire de la particularité d'une posture herméneutique conduit à prendre conscience de ses propres préjugés, de sa philosophie implicite personnelle, à interroger son cadre conceptuel.

Des affirmations comparables ont été énoncées dans le cadre des études postcoloniales. La critique occidentaliste de l'universalisme abstrait rappelle que beaucoup d'études prétendant à l'universalisme sont en réalité eurocen-trées. Ramón Grosfoguel appuie, par exemple, l'idée que les chercheurs doivent reconnaître qu'ils parlent toujours à partir d'un emplacement spécifique. L'idée selon laquelle nous pouvons produire des connaissances non positionnées, non localisées, neutres et universalistes, selon lui, est un mythe : les conceptions universelles, globales sont toujours déjà situées dans les histoires locales.

Comme l'écrit l'historien Raymond Aron, les savants sont des hommes qui évoluent au sein d'une société particulière, d'une époque donnée. « L'orientation et le style des recherches sont marqués par le caractère des hommes et non pas des seuls savants, car les uns ne sont jamais rigoureusement séparables des autres ».

Afin d'éviter de plaquer certains cadres conceptuels sur une réalité, interroger les catégories au moyen desquelles le chercheur réalise une lecture de l'islam est un geste méthodologique que recommande Waardenburg. Il fait remarquer que du point de vue des sciences des religions, il convient, en abordant l'islam en tant que religion, de s'interroger sur les modalités d'une recherche qui reconnaît l'islâm comme un objet d'étude à part entière et ne l'aborde pas en fonction de critères sociaux, moraux, spirituels ou esthétiques occidentaux. Il convient de se demander comment parer à la tentation de lire les données islamiques à travers une grille positiviste ou idéaliste, purement matérielle ou purement spirituelle9. Waardenburg souligne combien la recherche peut être tributaire des présupposés et du contexte culturel du chercheur. Il pointe notamment le risque d'un recours à « des modèles comparatifs ethnocentriques ou apologétiques, sources d'images totalement déformées de tout ce qui se trouve hors de leur propre monde ».

Comme l'écrit Gadamer dans Vérité et Méthode, il n'y a pas « de compréhension qui soit libre de tout préjugé, bien que la volonté de notre connaissance doive s'appliquer à

échapper aux chaînes de ceux qui sont les nôtres ». C'est pourquoi «il faut un effort critique particulier pour se libérer du préjugé en faveur de ce qui est écrit et, ici comme en toute affirmation orale, pour distinguer l'opinion de la vérité ». Cet effort est nécessaire et « l'horizon du présent est en formation perpétuelle dans la mesure où il nous faut constamment mettre à l'épreuve nos préjugés ». Interroger les catégories conceptuelles, prendre conscience de ses préjugés, sont donc deux précautions méthodologiques à la faveur desquelles il est possible de construire les conditions d'une compréhension plus juste, d'une écoute plus transparente du réel. Notre réflexion a été guidée par un souci de justesse au plan méthodologique et portée par un désir de justice au plan éthique : la méthodologie est ici service de l'éthique, la justesse au service de la justice. Subordonner le discours sur l'autre à l'exigence de la justesse, c'est déjà lui rendre justice, le reconnaître dans ce qu'il ou elle est.

Une autre question centrale est celle de la subjectivité : c'est-à-dire la question du sujet, de l'humain. Dans L'intelligence émotionnelle du savoir, Françoise Waquet déplore le fait que bien souvent les scientifiques « apparaissent donc comme des idées, des découvertes et des livres, des machines à penser, des profils de carrière, des agents rationnels» et que l'on oublie qu'ils sont aussi des êtres de chair et d'os. En réalité, pour cette auteure, l'homo academicus n'est pas émotionnellement neutre. Le sujet qui mène la recherche peut être lui-même porteur d'émotions. « Le savant n'est pas un parangon de rationalité et la pensée scientifique pure d'émotions ». Cette auteure observe que l'objectivité scientifique est d'abord et surtout un effacement du moi, visant à éliminer toute idiosyncrasie chez le chercheur. « Cet effacement porte à l'instauration d'un moi scientifique, d'un moi de travail, d'un moi sans subjectivité ». Longtemps, la subjectivité a été présentée comme un ennemi intérieur devant être combattu, comme si l'objectivité scientifique passait par une répression de la subjectivité. Une telle perspective établit l'objectivité et la subjectivité en un couple antithétique et occulte le fait que le savant est un être humain. En tant que sujet, le savant est subjectif. Conséquemment, son regard, particulier, situé, ne saurait être qualifié d'« universel » ou de « neutre »Al s'agit donc de prendre acte des émotions, de ne pas les rejeter mais de les intégrer pleinement dans le travail". Au plan méthodologique, aller vers une compréhension plus juste de la réalité étudiée implique

ainsi de prendre en compte la dimension humaine du chercheur-sujet, qui n'est pas un être abstrait.

Cette idée a également été avancée par Raymond Aron qui estime « qu'il est vain de recommander l'objectivité, si l'on entend par là l'indifférence aux valeurs, quand il s'agit des hommes, d'aujourd'hui ou d'hier, et de leurs oeuvres, bénies ou maudites ». Cela ne permettrait pas, selon lui, de saisir «l'âme profonde de ces êtres disparus si l'on éprouvait à leur égard des sentiments comparables à ceux qu'éveillent les vivants »: pour ce philosophe, l'amour et la haine sont les vrais ressorts de la compréhension.

Dans l'étude de la mystique, le discours du chercheur n'est pas neutre. Il est toujours situé. Ce discours, bien qu'il prenne l'Absolu pour objet, ne peut prétendre à l'universalité. C'est depuis une posture herméneutique particulière que l'on observe, que l'on écrit. Nous croyons que la subjectivité n'est pas le contraire de l'objectivité et qu'en revanche, il est possible de prendre conscience de sa subjectivité pour s'approcher de la réalité de l'objet étudié. La subjectivité n'est pas l'ennemi du discours scientifique : elle est un outil que l'on peut apprendre à manier et qui peut favoriser l'accès à la réalité de l'objet étudié. Elle peut servir la recherche ou l'entraver.

Cette recherche sur un aspect de la production intellectuelle de Louis Massignon nous a encore permis d'observer qu'au cours de l'étude, il se passe quelque chose. Comme l'écrit Raymond Aron : «La réciprocité entre la rencontre avec l'autre et la découverte de soi est donnée dans l'activité même de l'historien ». La compréhension se fait au moyen d'un engagement. Cela se vérifie surtout en sciences des religions, où comme l'écrit Carl Albert Keller (1920-2008), l'entreprise menée afin de comprendre la communication religieuse, exige que le religiologue « s'engage lui-même dans cette communication, qu'il la vive — ou essaie de la vivre — du dedans, à la place du pratiquant, comme le pratiquant. Entreprise dangereuse, assurément ! Mais unique moyen d'évaluer correctement ce qui se passe »20. Massignon a lui-même pressenti et éprouvé ce risque : il s'agit d'une étude qui engage tout l'être et dont on ne sort pas indemne. Au cours de cette recherche, nous avons observé que le chercheur se transformait mi fil de leude, qu'il cheminait, qu'il était mu par une

quête existentielle et que l'analyse de son champ d'étude le   : qu'il n'en sortait pas indemne. Alors qu'il étudie la mystique, sa propre quête religieuse ou existentielle peut affecter son regard. D'où l'importance, particulièrement en sciences des religions, d'analyser ce que l'on vit, de savoir d'où l'on parle, afin de ne pas se laisser happer ou aveugler, et d'opérer un retour réflexif sur sa pratique.

Gadamer a montré que l'une des particularités des sciences de l'esprit était que le recours à la méthodologie scientifique ne suffisait pas à garantir la vérité. Pourtant, cette caractéristique n'altère pas leur caractère scientifique. Il s'agit

> au contraire de la justification de la prétention qu'elles élèvent depuis toujours, d'avoir une importance humaine particulière. Le fait que l'être propre de celui qui connaît y entre également en jeu dans la connaissance, marque bien la limite de la « méthode » mais non celle de la science. Ce que l'on ne peut pas demander à l'instrument de la méthode, il faut au contraire et on peut aussi l'atteindre, grâce à une discipline de l'interrogation et de la recherche qui garantissent la vérité.

Affermie par la conviction que toute recherche académique ou scientifique devrait se fonder sur une acceptation de la réalité, et que, dans le cadre d'un travail académique, le ou la chercheuse devrait tendre à voir les choses telles qu'elles sont et non pas telles qu'il ou elle voudrait qu'elles soient, la présente exploration a permis de mettre au jour l'importance de la mise en place d'une discipline de l'interrogation et de la recherche, et de l'adoption d'une posture humble : elle nous a permis de comprendre la nécessité de cultiver ce que Wael Hallaq appelle l'« humilité épistémique ». Cette recherche nous a permis, à partir de l'exemple de Louis Massignon, de comprendre la nécessité de la mise en place de certaines conditions favorables à une compréhension plus juste de la réalité étudiée en sciences des religions : la prise de conscience de la particularité de sa posture herméneutique, l'énonciation de son intention de recherche, l'interrogation de ses catégories conceptuelles, l'explicitation de sa philosophie implicite, le maintien d'une distance critique vis-à-vis de son sujet d'étude, la réflexivité sur sa pratique, le dialogue avec d'autres collègues dans un esprit de collégialité et d'écoute des critiques d'autrui, sont quelques-unes des précautions méthodologiques permettant possiblement de construire les conditions du Comprendre, d'aller vers une interprétation plus juste du réel. <>

Translation

The interpretation does not have to be true any more than it is false. She has to be right
JACQUES LACAN

The present book, concerned with highlighting the specificity of Louis Massignon's vision of Muslim mysticism, has endeavoured to specify the particularity of his hermeneutic stance vis-à-vis his field of study. The contextual analysis has made it possible to identify certain elements that have oriented the researcher's gaze on Muslim mysticism: the growing interest in the study of mysticism, the increased attention paid to religious sentiment, the advent of a more personal, inner religion, as well as the attraction for comparative enterprises, are some of the features of the contemporary French reality of the Islamologist. Placing this work in the pre-conciliar Catholic context has made it possible to grasp its modernity and to grasp the scope of texts in which the possibility of supernatural graces in Islam is stated.

During the researcher's lifetime, we also witnessed the institutionalization of religious studies, which emancipated themselves from the foundation of theology and were inspired, in their redefinition and methodology, by the history of religions. Massignon also witnessed the institutionalization of Islamology and the creation of a field of study devoted to Muslim mysticism. The internationalization of a scholarly community with increasing geographical mobility with "the Orient" and more precisely "Islam" as its field of study, the holding of international scientific congresses allowing the intensification of collaborations between experts and the realization of editorial projects of international scope such as the Encyclopedia of Islam, draw the contours of the universe within which Massignon's work is inscribed.

The impact of colonial expansion on the development of Arabic and Islamic studies was studied. In this respect, several arguments put forward in the context of the critique of Orientalism have been recalled: undeniably, the world of the Arabists is permeated by a tension between scholarly logic and political logic, between academicism and civilizing mission. Yet, it is also worth emphasizing the strength of a scholarly tradition that retains its autonomy from the political demands of colonial expansion. Massignon, as an Arabizing scholar, found himself in a position that was both privileged and uncomfortable within the Muslim world: a privileged witness of the

intellectual changes underway, close to the Muslim elites, he was moreover accused of espionage and regularly inspired suspicion.

The era of the Nahda, which we understand as a creative rereading of tradition based on a new hermeneutic stance anchored in the paradigm of modernity, as a time of reflection on the Arabic language and of liberation of speech, saw the advent of the figure of the intellectual in the Middle East: in view of the intensity of the links woven between the Islamologist and several intellectuals of the Arab-Muslim world, It is essential to take into account its anchoring in this "moment" in history.

The biographical analysis highlighted several elements that shaped his view of Muslim mysticism. At the EPHE, Hartwig Derenbourg gave him a certain philological attention to the texts. Then, at the IFAO in Cairo, a passion for archaeology and topography was born. In Iraq, its approach is increasingly sociological and anthropological. A researcher and observer, Massignon is also a "scientific pilgrim" fascinated by the tombs of the first mystics of Islam. He then became interested in the history of al-Hallaj and chose to dedicate his doctoral thesis to him: a passionate relationship was forged between the researcher and this oblative figure. In 1908, an intense inner event profoundly upset him, showing that far from being an impassive observer in the face of an object of study, he was a subject affected by the reality he explored and sought to understand. In Baghdad, he was welcomed by the al-Alùsi family, who gave him access to the city's manuscripts and put him in contact with the Damascene Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi. The exchanges with these Levantine scholars made him understand that it was futile to approach the Islamic tasawwuf with preconceived categories or to systematically oppose Muslim mysticism and Salafi reform.

Massignon regularly travels to Egypt where he founded the Badaliyya, the association of Ikhwân al-safa' and Dar el-Salam, all initiatives in favor of dialogue between Abrahamic religions. In Cairo, the lectures he gave on the origin of Arabic philosophical terms testify to the centrality of the lexical question in his approach to the texts of Muslim mystics. A member of the Academies of Arabic Language in Cairo and Damascus, he is committed to the defense of the Arabic language, which he considers to be truly conducive to the expression of mystical states and divine transcendence.

Among the scholars who influenced his view of Muslim mysticism, his relations with 'Abd al-Ráziq, Goldziher and Corbin are worth mentioning.

These contextual and biographical elements have made it possible to define the hermeneutic posture of this researcher with regard to his field of study: they shape a personal, historicized and unique perspective. It is at a particular moment in history, and with a personal history, that he deciphers his field of study. It is therefore a "point of view" on reality, and this interpretive view results in a unique and subjective vision of Muslim mysticism.

Original and innovative, Massignon's method is based on both a scrupulous reading of the technical terms and a meditative reading of the texts, read in an internalist way: the researcher strives to understand them from within, to have a global vision of them, not to dissect them. This method invites the researcher to defocus, to get rid of his prejudices, to straighten his gaze, to put himself in the place of the other. Here, the religiologist participates in the world he studies and can find himself transformed by it. The research became a quasi-religious experiment. Massignon starts from what makes sense for the believer, he proposes to understand (Verstehen), rather than to explain (Erklären).

Concerning the origins of Muslim mysticism, while most of the theses of his contemporaries insist on the exogenous origins of Muslim mysticism, he demonstrates in his Essay the importance of the Qur'anic source at the lexical level and emphasizes the fundamentally Islamic character of Muslim mysticism. Analyzing the way in which the early Sufi appropriated the Arabic idiom, he emphasizes the axial role played by the Qur'an in the formation of the mystical language. His interest in the formative period of Muslim mysticism, close to the original purity, coming from an Arabness free from any foreign influence, is equalled only by his contempt for later mysticism, which received the influence of Neoplatonism, which altered, according to him, the Qur'anic purity and ascetic sincerity of the first centuries of the Hijra.

His conception of al-Hallaj's holiness can be understood in the light of the debate that, during his lifetime, focused on the existence of spiritual graces outside the Church and

thanks to the evocation of the models of Christian saints, figures of intercession, compassion and suffering, who fascinated him in his youth.

Can Al-Hallaj, according to Massignon, be called a holy 'Isawi? How does he interpret al-Hallaj's death? The study has shown that al-Hallaj's mystical, spiritual and bodily union is realized, according to him, in a Christ-like mode. The trial of this martyr becomes the trial of divine love, the trial of authentic mysticism. Massignon reads the history of this mystic from a Christian conception of holiness and chooses, as a paradigm of holiness, a marginal figure, not representative of all mystical vocations in Islam: in this sense, the vision of his field of study appears to be warped, distorted.

Here the intention of the work appears: to make al-Hallaj known and to have his holiness recognized. It thus appears that his position is not only scientific: it is also religious, theological. Historiography is here a means to a religious, existential quest, not an end. Hence a certain methodological hesitation, which may result from the fact that the study itself nourished the spirituality of the researcher, led him to path, that it was the very place of a religious quest.

Ultimately, the mysticism in Islâm, in Massignon's work, is distinguished by its profoundly Qur'anic, fundamentally Islamic character. It is an experimental method of union with God, an effort to integrate, to internalize the Qur'anic vocabulary, an "anagogical" interpretation of sacred texts. It has an experiential dimension that consists of "replaying" things in themselves (the mi'raj story, for example). It is a therapeutic, a science of healing the heart. It has medical value; it is a rule of life.

This vision is based on an opposition that he constructs between the path of wahdat al-shuhüd, of which al-Hallaj is in his eyes the summit, and that of wahdat al-wujûd, synonymous according to him with decadence, carried by Ibn 'Arabi.

Concerning Hallajian mysticism, he presents it as a path of asceticism, endurance, purification through suffering. It is a path of fervour, a mysticism full of acts of adoration, based on experimental analysis, the introspection of cultic practice. It is a matter of humbly submitting to the transcendence of God, of prostrating oneself before Him. At the heart of the transforming and personalizing mystical union, the mystic becomes God's witness. It is a mysticism of love, an oblative mysticism in which death

removes the last obstacle to perfect union with God: one's own "self." God gives himself in the consummation of suffering, the key to surpassing oneself. The mystic can only be joined to God in sacrifice, love, and dereliction. Here, the test is accepted, all mediation is refused, transcendence is absolute.

To this path, he contrasts that of the wahdat al-wujûd, which, according to him, was influenced by the Greek Neoplatonic philosophy, an influence which he regards as a cause of alteration of the purity of the first centuries of the Hijra. An emblematic figure of this path, Ibn 'Arabi was strongly criticized by Massignon. He reproaches Shaykh al-Akbar for suppressing the radicality of transcendence in favor of an emanationist vision, for achieving a quietist serenity indifferent to the injustices of this world, for reducing mysticism to a formal aesthetic, for borrowing his vocabulary from Hellenic syncretism, for intellectualizing the idea of God. He tends to oppose mysticism and philosophy, asceticism and abstraction.

The example of Massignon, who, in his description of the two paths, constructs certain simplifying dichotomies and refuses to take into account the existing lines of continuity between these paths, shows how important it is, in order to accurately apprehend the religious history of Islam, to think carefully about the elaboration of adequate conceptual categories.

Massignon's rejection of Ibn 'Arabi had as a corollary a rejection of mediation, of theophany. While Shaykh al-Akbar upholds human rights before God, Massignon advocates the "ascetic self-destruction" of the saints. If he is essentially passionate about the mysticism of the first centuries of the Hijra, it is because it accentuates the Muslim idea of divine inaccessibility, seeing in it the theological source of a mysticism of aridity. For him, the union of the soul with God coincides with a stripping, or rather a flaying: it is a mysticism of the fane The state of baqa' (subsistence) does not appear in his vision of Hallajian spirituality. In our opinion, this quest betrays a fear of damnation: the humility of the mystic becomes, under the pen of Massignon, an indignity, a desire for annihilation. Human beings seem unworthy of assuming the attributes of God. Nothing remains after the union, and Massignon seems to reduce Muslim mysticism to a death path in Islam. His study of mysticism ultimately appears

to be the site of a personal, theological quest: it is inhabited by these questions that he approaches Muslim mysticism, it is from a certain point of view that he probes it.

As Josef van Ess writes, Massignon had the merit of giving meaning to a "cultural ensemble which, under the magnifying glass of modern specialization" was in danger of losing its coherence; His vision "can help us open our own eyes." It is also worth emphasizing the importance of the impact of Louis Massignon's work on Islamic studies. This professor at the Collège de France and the EPHE set up the field of study "Muslim mysticism" within the French University and guided the work of several specialists in Muslim mysticism: including those of Henry Corbin, Amélie-Marie Goichon (1894-1977), Louis Gardet, Roger Arnaldez, Henri Laoust, Jean Mohammad Abdel Jalil, Paul Nwyia, Robert Caspar, Serge Laugier de Beaurecueil, Uthman Yahya, Ibrahim Madkùr (1902-1996), Abd al-Halim Mahmùd, Abu al-Wafd al-Taftazanï. His influence and example were felt in the work of Helmut Ritter, Fritz Meier, Annemarie Schimmel to name but a few. The impact of this work is perceptible to the present day and the multiplication of translations of the works of Rumi, Ansari, Suhrawardi al-Maqtul, Ibn Arabi, Nur al-Din Abd al-Rahman Jami (d. 817/1414), 'Abd al-Karim Jili (d. c. 815/1412), Ahmad Ibn 'MW Allah (d. 709/1309) and studies devoted to them has been prompted by Massignon's work: Undoubtedly, the work of this scholar contributed to the foundation of a field of study and it inspired the world of Islamic studies for a long time.

However, in this book, we have been able to verify the heuristic hypothesis according to which the hermeneutic posture of the researcher, his implicit philosophy, his conceptual categories, his experiential experience during the research, his existential quest, his subjectivity, influence the way in which the researcher understands and interprets the reality studied. The analysis revealed that various elements such as context, biography, method, intention, spirituality, existential quest, or the fact of progressing through the study were likely to "warp" the way a researcher approaches and perceives his or her field of study. The vision of the history of mystical vocations in Islam, according to Massignon, appears as a subjective interpretation of this reality: a vision that is neither neutral nor universal, but situated and unique.

And in the same way, let us recognize here that our reading of Massignon's work is a function of our own hermeneutic posture, because, as Gadamer writes: "The reader can, and much more, must admit to himself that future generations will understand differently what he has read in this text."

Towards more justice, towards more justice

The present reflection was born out of an epistemological questioning of the way in which the concepts conveyed by research cut up reality, on the place of the subjectivity of the researcher in religious studies. In short, what elements can be contributed to this vast questioning?

In the article "Mawsu'a" (encyclopedia) of the En, Emeri van Donzel (1925-2017) quotes Theodor Houtsma, the editor of the En, who welcomed the fact that almost all the contributors to this editorial project were "Christians". This remark shows that at the beginning of the century, the idea prevailed that being outside Islam was perceived as guaranteeing a certain objectivity. At the time, it was believed that non-affiliation with a religion allowed for a "neutral" view of it.

Yet, since 1978, Said's criticism has shown that "Western" Islamologists (the "Orientalists") are susceptible to misrepresentations of Islam and has encouraged scholars to constantly re-evaluate their approach. Over the past few decades, there have been some realizations. In the present work, we wanted to show that the idea that an encyclopedia was "universal" or that the "science of religions" was "scientific" and therefore "neutral" was not self-evident. The idea that all knowledge is situated has been put forward and we have shown that the researcher cannot get rid of his subjectivity. This is why we affirm the need to question the claim to universality of the scientific method. As soon as there is a look at it, there is perspective and therefore a subjective, partial, situated point of view. Realizing that research depends on the particularity of a hermeneutic posture leads to becoming aware of one's own prejudices, of one's own implicit philosophy, to question one's conceptual framework.

Similar claims have been made in the context of postcolonial studies. The Westernist critique of abstract universalism reminds us that many studies claiming universalism are in fact Eurocentric. Ramón Grosfoguel supports, for example, the idea that

researchers need to recognize that they are always speaking from a specific location. The idea that we can produce knowledge that is not positioned, non-localized, neutral, and universalist, according to him, is a myth: universal, global conceptions are always already located in local histories.

As the historian Raymond Aron writes, scientists are men who evolve within a particular society, of a given era. "The orientation and style of research are marked by the character of men and not only of scientists, for the one is never rigorously separable from the other."

In order to avoid imposing certain conceptual frameworks on a reality, questioning the categories by means of which the researcher makes a reading of Islam is a methodological gesture that Waardenburg recommends. He points out that from the point of view of religious studies, it is necessary, in approaching Islam as a religion, to question the modalities of a research that recognizes Islâm as an object of study in its own right and does not approach it according to Western social, moral, spiritual or aesthetic criteria. It is worth asking how to counter the temptation to read Islamic data through a positivist or idealistic, purely material or purely spiritual grid9. Waardenburg emphasizes how research can depend on the researcher's presuppositions and cultural context. In particular, he points to the risk of resorting to "ethnocentric or apologetic comparative models, sources of totally distorted images of everything outside their own world".

As Gadamer writes in Truth and Method, there is "no understanding that is free from prejudice, although the will of our knowledge must apply itself to escaping from the chains of those who are ours." This is why "it requires a special critical effort to free oneself from prejudice in favor of what is written and, here as in any oral statement, to distinguish opinion from truth." This effort is necessary, and "the horizon of the present is in perpetual formation to the extent that we must constantly test our prejudices." Questioning conceptual categories and becoming aware of one's prejudices are therefore two methodological precautions by means of which it is possible to construct the conditions for a more accurate understanding and a more transparent listening to reality. Our reflection has been guided by a concern for methodological accuracy and

driven by a desire for justice at the ethical level: methodology here is the service of ethics, accuracy at the service of justice. To subordinate the discourse on the other to the requirement of accuracy is already to do him or her justice, to recognize him or her in what he or she is.

Another central question is that of subjectivity: that is, the question of the subject, of the human. In The Emotional Intelligence of Knowledge, Françoise Waquet deplores the fact that scientists often "appear as ideas, discoveries and books, thinking machines, career profiles, rational agents" and that we forget that they are also flesh and blood beings. In reality, for this author, homo academicus is not emotionally neutral. The subject conducting the research may be an emotional person himself. "The scientist is not a paragon of rationality and scientific thought is not pure of emotions." This author observes that scientific objectivity is first and foremost an erasure of the ego, aiming to eliminate any idiosyncrasy in the researcher. "This erasure leads to the establishment of a scientific self, a working self, a self without subjectivity." For a long time, subjectivity was presented as an internal enemy that had to be fought, as if scientific objectivity required a repression of subjectivity. Such a perspective establishes objectivity and subjectivity in an antithetical couple and obscures the fact that the scientist is a human being. As a subject, the scholar is subjective. Consequently, his particular and situated gaze cannot be described as "universal" or "neutral"Al is therefore a question of taking note of emotions, of not rejecting them but of integrating them fully into the work". From a methodological point of view, moving towards a more accurate understanding of the reality studied thus implies taking into account the human dimension of the researcher-subject, who is not an abstract being.

This idea has also been put forward by Raymond Aron, who believes that "it is futile to recommend objectivity, if by this we mean indifference to values, when it comes to men, today or yesterday, and their works, blessed or cursed". According to him, this would not make it possible to grasp "the deep soul of these departed beings if one felt towards them feelings comparable to those awakened by the living": for this philosopher, love and hate are the true springs of understanding.

In the study of mysticism, the discourse of the seeker is not neutral. It is still located. This discourse, although it takes the Absolute as its object, cannot claim universality. It is from a particular hermeneutic posture that we observe, that we write. We believe that subjectivity is not the opposite of objectivity and that, on the other hand, it is possible to become aware of one's subjectivity in order to approach the reality of the object studied. Subjectivity is not the enemy of scientific discourse: it is a tool that can be learned to use and that can promote access to the reality of the object studied. It can help or hinder research.

This research on an aspect of Louis Massignon's intellectual production has also allowed us to observe that in the course of the study, something happens. As Raymond Aron writes: "The reciprocity between the encounter with the other and the discovery of oneself is given in the very activity of the historian". Understanding is achieved through commitment. This is especially true in religious studies, where, as Carl Albert Keller (1920-2008) writes, the undertaking to understand religious communication requires that the religiologist "engage himself in this communication, whether he lives it — or tries to live it — from within, in the place of the practitioner, as the practitioner. A dangerous undertaking, to be sure! But it is the only way to properly assess what is happening"20. Massignon himself sensed and experienced this risk: it is a study that involves the whole being and from which one does not emerge unscathed. In the course of this research, we observed that the researcher was transformed halfway through the thread of a study, that he was on his way, that he was moved by a

existential quest and that the analysis of its field of study   : that he did not emerge unscathed. As he studies mysticism, his own religious or existential quest can affect his outlook. Hence the importance, particularly in religious studies, of analyzing what we are experiencing, of knowing where we are talking from, so as not to let ourselves be caught up or blinded, and to make a reflexive return on our practice.

Gadamer showed that one of the peculiarities of the spiritual sciences was that recourse to scientific methodology was not enough to guarantee truth. However, this characteristic does not alter their scientific character. These are on the contrary, the justification of the claim they have always made of having a special human importance.

The fact that the knower's own being also comes into play in knowledge clearly marks the limit of "method" but not that of science. What cannot be demanded of the instrument of method, on the contrary, it is necessary and can also be attained, thanks to a discipline of questioning and research that guarantees the truth.

Strengthened by the conviction that all academic or scientific research should be based on an acceptance of reality, and that, in the context of academic work, the researcher should tend to see things as they are and not as he or she would like them to be, the present exploration has brought to light the importance of setting up a discipline of questioning and research. and the adoption of a humble posture: it allowed us to understand the need to cultivate what Wael Hallaq calls "epistemic humility". This research has allowed us, based on the example of Louis Massignon, to understand the need to set up certain conditions favourable to a more accurate understanding of the reality studied in religious studies: the awareness of the particularity of its hermeneutic posture, the enunciation of its research intention, the questioning of its conceptual categories, etc. the explicitness of one's implicit philosophy, the maintenance of a critical distance from one's subject of study, the reflexivity on one's practice, the dialogue with other colleagues in a spirit of collegiality and listening to the criticisms of others, are some of the methodological precautions that may make it possible to construct the conditions for Understanding, to move towards a more accurate interpretation of reality. <>

SHADOWS OF BEING: ENCOUNTERS WITH HEIDEGGER IN POLITICAL THEORY AND HISTORICAL REFLECTION by Jeffrey Andrew Barash, [Studies in Historical Philosophy, ibidem-Verlag, ISBN: 9783838214856]

In a review of the work of Karl Jaspers composed several years before the publication of his book *Being and Time*, Martin Heidegger suggested that the philosophical orientations of his period had made a wrong turn and skirted by the fundamental path of thought. He suggested that instead of taking up a heritage of original questions, his contemporaries had become preoccupied with secondary issues, accepting as fundamental what was in fact only incidental. In the years that followed, Heidegger's promise to reorient philosophy in terms of

the *Seinsfrage*, the question of Being, exercised a well-known influence on successive generations of thinkers on a global scale.

The present book delves into the philosophical sources of this influence and raises the question whether Heidegger indeed made good on the promise to reveal for thought what is truly fundamental. In proposing this investigation, the author assumes that it is not sufficient to take Heidegger at his word, but that it is necessary to scrutinize what is posited as fundamental in light of its broader implications–above all for ethico-political judgment and for historical reflection. After addressing this question in the first part of the book, the second part examines the significance of Heidegger's reorientation of philosophy through the prism of its critical reception in the thought of Hannah Arendt, Emmanuel Levinas, and Paul Ricœur.

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In a review of Karl Jaspers's early work, Psychology of Worldviews (Psychologie der Weltanschauungen, 1919), composed several years before the publication of his book Being and Time, Martin Heidegger suggested that the philosophical orientations of his period had made a wrong turn and skirted by the fundamental path of thought. He

claimed that instead of retrieving a heritage of original questions, his contemporaries had become preoccupied with secondary matters, positing as essential what was in fact only incidental.' During the years that followed, Heidegger's promise to reorient philosophy in terms of the Seinsfrage, the question of Being, exercised a well-known influence on successive generations of thinkers on a global scale. The present book delves into the philosophical sources of this influence and raises the question whether Heidegger indeed made good on the promise to reveal for thought what is truly fundamental. In proposing this investigation, I assume that Heidegger should not be taken at his word, but that it is necessary to scrutinize what he posits to be fundamental in light of its broader implications—above all for ethico-political judgment and for historical reflection. After addressing this question in the first part of the book, the second part examines the significance of Heidegger's reorientation of philosophy through the prism of its critical reception in the thought of Ernst Cassirer, Hannah Arendt Emmanuel Levinas, and Paul Ricoeur.

Each chapter in this book was written independently of the others and can be understood separately from them on the basis of the arguments it presents. Taken as a group, all of the chapters nonetheless fit together as a whole, since each of them examines the broader implications of Heidegger's thought from a different perspective. Although the different chapters in this book were initially written in different periods over the course of three decades of reflection, all have been reformulated and rewritten, not only in the perspective of the book as a whole, but of important analyses of Heidegger's thought and its reception that have appeared in recent years.

The chapters of the first part of this book directly interpret Heidegger's thought and its legacy, and they analyze it in the period of Being and Time (Sein and Zeit, 1927), while also extending the interpretation of his oeuvre well beyond the scope of this early period. Following interpretation of Being and Time and other contemporary writings, they focus on Heidegger's works during the period of Nazi rule in Germany and afterward. Here I take into consideration the numerous course lectures and writings that have been published for the first time in recent years, including the Contributions to Philosophy: On the Event (Beitrage zur Philosophie: Yom Ereignis, 1936-38), the different course lectures of this period, and the Black Notebooks (Schwarze Hefte),

which have substantially modified our understanding of Heidegger and of the meaning of his endeavor.

The chapters in the second part of this book deal with the critical reception of Heidegger's work by thinkers who to my mind stand among his most profound interpreters. They include analyses of Heidegger's thought by Ernst Cassirer, Hannah Arendt, Emmanuel Levinas, and Paul Ricoeur who each grappled with the ethico-political and historical implications of his philosophy, above all in Being and Time, and with the significance for its interpretation of his political engagement in favor of the Nazi regime as rector of the University of Freiburg im Breisgau in 193334.

As Heidegger often reiterated, his thought in all of its periods was centered on one principal theme: the question of Being or Seinsfrage. From different vantage points in the period of Being and Time and his later works, he posed the Seinsfrage as an essentially historical query. The fundamental significance of this question in its historical articulations had, in different ways, continually been obscured for Heidegger by the great representatives of the Western metaphysical tradition.

The ten chapters in this book will examine in detail modulations in the orientation of Heidegger's Seinsfrage and in his interpretation of the forgetfulness of Being underlying Western metaphysical traditions in the earlier and later periods of his thought. In pursuing the Seinsfrage, Heidegger presupposed in all of these periods that this question itself and its obfuscation by Western metaphysical traditions constituted the fundamental task for thought to which all other forms of historical reflection where entirely subordinate. In enunciating this assumption, he set in place a specific strategy of interpretation permitting him to identify his own endeavor as a monumental point in the movement of Western thought. In accord with this strategy in the different periods of his work, he engaged a dialogue with the towering figures of Western philosophy, from Plato and Aristotle to Leibniz, Kant, Hegel, and Nietzsche, while setting aside from consideration all forms of historical analysis and of ethico-political reflection that deviated from the path he designated.

The critical examination I propose of Heidegger's legacy, in investigating Heidegger's claim to have revealed what is truly fundamental for thought, intentionally departs

from Heidegger's own method of interpretation and of self-interpretation; it seeks to establish an independent vantage point from which to set the implications of this claim in clear relief. Only in this way, as I argue, is it possible to uncover omissions, inconsistencies, and biases that are inherent to his perspective, which his conception of thought may lead us to overlook.

The critical perspectives I have taken into consideration, the touchstone for revealing what is fundamental lies in its appropriateness for interpreting human historical experience and for revealing in it a meaningfulness that is not readily evident in view of elucidating the ethico-political conditions of human co-existence in a common world. As I conceive of it, Heidegger's claim that the Seinsfrage as he conceived of it provides an adequate basis for interpreting human historical experience proves particularly problematic in both the earlier and later periods of his thought, and this comes to light above all in its relation to ethico-political considerations. I will limit my comments in this conclusion to the central facets of what I take to be an essential shortfall in his claim in regard both to the period of Being and Time and to his later work.

In Being and Time Heidegger claimed that Dasein's manner of conferring sense on being—on what it means to be—through its finite choices of a way of being provides the foundation for all anthropological interpretation. The shortfall of his claim, as it has been subjected to analysis in the various

perspectives proposed in this book, lies in its approach to human co-existence in the public realm and in the broader context of the historical world. The problematic character of Heidegger's analysis comes most vividly to light if we recall his conception of the specifically public aspect of Dasein's being-in-the-world. According to Heidegger's well-known conception of being-in-the-world in Being and Time, Dasein's public way of being concerns first and foremost its everyday world comprising the different systems of tools and signs with which it is preoccupied, as well as co-Dasein that shares its everyday concerns. Tools draw their meaningfulness from a totality of references (Venveisungen) in which each particular tool finds its place. Like tools, the different sign systems Dasein employs fit into a totality of references from which the meaning of each individual element is drawn. The publicly interpretable character

(öffentliche Aus-gelegtheit) of Dasein's being-in-the-world lies in the generality and re-placeability of the functions of tools and signs which are the objects of its everyday preoccupations, as well as of other Dasein who are co-participants in these preoccupations. In this everyday context, Dasein's preoccupations orient its ontological self-interpretation: "Dasein finds 'itself most immediately in what it operates, needs, awaits, avoids."

Heidegger's analysis of Dasein's being-in-the-world in the framework of a publicly interpretable everyday world draws a sharp distinction between this everyday world in which the meaningfulness of each element depends on its relation to the whole and the singularity of Dasein that is incommensurable with any such system. The public interpretability of Dasein, like that of the tools and signs and of fellow Dasein, which is focused on the generality and interchangeability of its function, can only be indifferent to each Dasein's finite singularity. Unlike this finite singularity, the public realm in its generality reveals itself to everyone in the same manner. Where particular tools or signs eventually become outmoded and the Dasein that employs them dies, the way of being of public functions comprises an undying temporal continuity. According to Heidegger's famous depiction, Dasein's everyday preoccupation with things and other Dasein in the context of a publicly interpretable world provides the occasion for it to forget the finite singularity of its being and discharge the burden of its being-toward-death. Heidegger equates its publicly interpretable way of being with this quest for dissimulation and forgetfulness. This interpretation of the public realm as a way of being providing for Dasein's flight into inauthentic dissimulation led him to the conclusion I noted in chapter seven in regard to Hannah Arendt's penetrating analysis: "The public obscures everything ..." ("Die Öffentlichkeit verdunkelt alles").

The radical dichotomy Heidegger established in the early sections of Being and Time between Dasein's singular finite existence and the undying perdurability of the public realm guided his ontological analysis not only ofDasein's being in an everyday world, but of what he took to be the hidden expression of Dasein's everyday quest that tacitly oriented Western theoretical preoccupations since antiquity. The interpretation of Dasein's tacit quest to dissimulate its finitude by virtue of its participation in the undying functions of a publicly interpretable world led him to radically revise

traditional ideas of the subject which, on a theoretical level, Dasein's everyday forgetfulness of its finitude brought to expression. Whether posited in terms of the Cartesian cogito, the Kantian "consciousness in general," or the Hegelian Spirit, the traditional subject, far from situating Dasein's finite being as the basis for its grasp of truth, had discounted its finitude in identifying it with a capacity to establish absolute, universally valid criteria of truth to identify the undying permanence of what truly "is." This tendency to overlook the finitude of the subject extended the assumption of an ancient metaphysical tradition centered on the human rational capacity to glean immutable, eternal truth.

On the basis of his analysis of Dasein's being-in-the-world and of the ramifications of its publicly interpretable preoccupations in the theoretical sphere, Heidegger applied his interpretation of the public realm in the later sections of Being and Dine to the broad articulations of Dasein's temporal and historical existence. At the basis of the general functions comprising the public character of Dasein's everyday being-in-the-world, the temporality of the public realm resides in its continuity as an infinitely extendible series, a "public time," that is open to all in the same way. The time of the public realm provides the paradigmatic structure for the chronology of world-time—the time that in Heidegger's words "makes itself public" (sich veröffentlichende Zeit). Public time also provides the basis for the temporal cohesion of world-history. The dichotomy between Dasein's finite time and publicly intelligible world time served as a potent argument that Heidegger brandished to question a tradition of historical reflection inaugurated by Hegel's philosophy of history.

Hegel, as Heidegger argued, provided the epoch-making conception of the temporal cohesion of history elaborated through the deepening self-understanding of the Spirit that brings together as a unity the different moments of its experience in the movement of world-history. Hegel's identification of the meaning of history with the ongoing continuity of the Spirit was rooted for Heidegger in the tacit appropriation of the temporal paradigm of the undying permanence of world-time. Through this paradigm, Hegel conferred on Dasein's everyday quest to look away from its finite singularity a central theoretical role in the framework of a philosophy of history. Heidegger's conception of historicity sought to radically subvert Hegel's assumption

that historical meaning resides in the objective, self-sustaining cohesion of a continuous process endowed with universal significance.

A half century after Hegel's death, Wilhelm Dilthey, whose historical reflection was a focus of Heidegger's ontological interpretation in the period of Being and Time, came under the spell of Hegel's influence. Even after contesting the absolute metaphysical foundation of Hegel's philosophy of history, Dilthey centered his interpretation of human historical life on the cohesion of history (Zusammenhang der Geschichte), which he identified with the continuity of the different articulations of the historical development of the human spirit. Against this assumption, Heidegger proclaimed in his 1928-29 Freiburg course lectures, Introduction to Philosophy (Einleitung in die Philosophic), that Dilthey's concentration on objective cultural expressions as the key to understanding the historicity of human life, could only blind him to the ontological source of the cohesion of history in the fundamental structure of Dasein itself.

In opposition to these predominant currents of historical reflection, Heidegger deflected the quest for meaning in history from the objective cohesion of cultural and world-history to focus on the modes of appropriation of the past by the one who interprets it. This shift in perspective recalls an assumption that had animated Friedrich Nietzsche's historical reflection in the second of his Untimely Meditations, which Heidegger cited with admiration in Being and Time. Nietzsche stipulated that the quest for meaning in the past that is endowed with a universal validity for all to behold can only misconstrue its essential significance, which reveals itself uniquely to those who know how to interpret it. The meaning of the past, as Nietzsche wrote, "is always a dictum of the oracle: only as the architect of the future, the knower of the present will you understand

From Heidegger's standpoint in Being and Time, the approach to history as a continuous process of development endowing Dasein with a meaningfulness extending beyond its finite existence reflected nothing other than the tacit ontological subservience to the public world and to the temporal permanence of its function. By contrast, fidelity to the past and to its authentic significance depended on Dasein's way

of uncovering and repeating its possibilities through its choice of a way of being considering the finite future.

The temporal paradigm of the public world, as it runs through the different levels of Heidegger's ontological analysis in Being and Time from the depiction of Dasein's being-in-the-world to the interpretation of temporality and historicity, draws its ontological significance solely from its role as a counterpart to Dasein's singular being-toward-death. But can this reduction of all that is public to the role of a mere counterpart justify Heidegger's bold assertion that his ontology establishes the basis for interpretation of the complex ontic modalities of human co-existence in a common world?

It is here, I believe, that we uncover the principle shortfall in Heidegger's claim that analysis of Dasein's thrownness into the world in which it is preoccupied with everyday affairs and confronted with the necessity of choosing a way of being in the face of its finite future might provide an adequate basis for analysis of the intermediary space configuring the public world of human interaction and the realm of human historical existence. In view of the radicalism of the dichotomy he established between public time and the finite time of singular Dasein, how might it be possible to account for the cohesion over time of the interspace of customs, institutions, and practices? In the chapter of Being and Time on temporality and historicity Heidegger briefly evoked the possibility of an authentic group existence in the guise of contemporaneous generations and of the people (das Volk). Nonetheless, he never provided anything but a vague assertion to support this claim. He offered no clarification in Being and Time for the possible articulations of the finite temporal mode of these realms of collective authenticity in their distinction from what he took to be the darkness of the public realm... <>

THE TIMELESSNESS OF PROUST: REFLECTIONS ON IN SEARCH OF LOST TIME edited by Charles R. Embry & Glenn Hughes [St. Augustine's Press, ISBN 9781587318634]

The temporal nature of human existence and consciousness is one of the many themes explored in In Search of Lost Time, and it is this dimension of Proust's work that unifies this collection of essays that grew from a roundtable discussion entitled "The Timelessness of Proust" conducted at the 31st annual meeting of the Eric Voegelin Society.

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This book of six essays is unique in exploring Marcel Proust's novel In Search of Lost Time through the illuminative lens of the philosophical thought of Eric Voegelin. Five of these essays were originally presented at a roundtable panel entitled "The Timelessness of Proust," which I organized and chaired for the 2014 Eric Voegelin Society program at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association in Washington, D.C. The sixth essay, written by Glenn Hughes, extended his work for that panel to compare themes common in Proust's novel and T. S. Eliot's Four Quartets.

The reader may well ask: what relevance does Voegelin's philosophy have for the examination and interpretation of Proust's masterpiece?

First, Voegelin's philosophical search of order over his lifetime, expressed in the thirty-four volumes of his Collected Works, focused not only on works of philosophy, political science, law, etc., but also on numerous works that have traditionally been categorized as literature. For example, he read and analyzed classic ancient texts such as Homer, Hesiod, the Greek dramatists, the Bible, and Hindu writings. Beyond that, and importantly, he often drew on modern literary authors both to explain his philosophical vision and to develop his diagnosis and critique of modernity, with special attention paid to works of Shakespeare, Flaubert, Baudelaire, Henry James, Thomas Mann, T. S. Eliot, Robert Musil, Heimito von Doderer, Cervantes, and Proust.'

From time to time—primarily in his correspondence with fellow scholars and friends—Voegelin would write extended comments on a particular literary work. For example, he wrote a long letter to Robert B. Heilman in which he reviewed a book manuscript of Heilman's on King Lear. Some of his observations and suggestions were incorporated by Heilman into the book that grew from the manuscript reviewed by Voegelin, This Great Stage: Image and Structure in King Lear. Some time later, after Heilman had sent a copy to Voegelin of an article he'd written on Henry James's Turn of the Screw, Voegelin responded with a long letter analyzing the novella. This letter, first written in 1947, was later published together with a "Postscript" in 1971 by Southern Review.

The Postscript to his Turn of the Screw letter afforded Voegelin the opportunity to raise an important principle of his approach to literary criticism: the inclusion of "the existential structure" of a work of literature into a critical analysis of that work. One of his more extensive and explicit statements on literary criticism addressing this topic appears in a letter to Donald E. Stanford, coeditor of Southern Review when the Turn of the Screw letter and its Postscript were published. Commenting on a Wallace Stevens poem, "The Course of a Particular," that Stanford had sent him, Voegelin wrote:

> In spite of my admiration for the formal qualities of the poem I have certain misgivings about it. They are concerned with a subject matter that came up on the splendid evening of our discussion here in Stanford. On that occasion you stressed very strongly that the formal quality of a work of art is the one and only quality a literary critic has to take into account.

And, if I remember correctly, I expressed equally strongly the opinion that in a critical judgment there must also be taken into account the existential content . . . .
Most felicitously you characterize in your letter the poem as an expression of "the failure of transcendence." That is my point of resistance. The experience of a failure of transcendence-is indeed expressed by the poem, but a failure of transcendence is no less a failure if it is expressed with poetic perfection. That is not an argument directed against Stevens especially. I would have to use it exactly in the same manner against Nietzsche and Heidegger, or Hegel. A "failure of transcendence" does not mean the transcendence has failed, but that something is existentially wrong with the man who is the victim of such failure.
* * *
I do not want to go further because, I think, the point I want to make has become clear; the fundamental question of literary criticism, whether the existential structure of the poem should be included in the analysis of a work or not. Personally, I think it must be included. There is a difference of quality of existence between, say, Aeschylus and Menander.

One sees from such comments that Voegelin's philosophical mind was sharply attuned to the deepest meanings and resources of literature, and can gather why his philosophies of consciousness and human existence provide an excellent basis for its analysis.

Second, Voegelin maintained a long relationship with Proust's masterpiece that extended back to 1927 when he spent a year in Paris, at the age of 26, as a Laura Spellman Rockefeller Memorial Scholar. He reported to Ellis Sandoz, who recorded his "autobiographical reflections," that "I acquired in this year in Paris a practically complete set of the important French prose literature from La Princess de Cleves by Madame de La Fayette to the work of Marcel Proust, whose last volumes of A la recherche du temps perdu were coming out at the time."

Although in his published work Voegelin never systematically addressed Proust, at several places in his letters as well as in published essays he made tantalizing comments that indicate the continued importance he attached to Proust's novel. Shortly after his year in Paris, for example, Voegelin referenced Proust several times in a 1928 essay on the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen In a 1945 letter in which he discusses the work of his friend Alfred Schutz, he closes with a paragraph that surveys a number of interesting questions to Schutz arising from the latter's manuscript. Among these he includes: "[F]or example, how would you deal with the

certainly meaningful experiences that make up the structure of Proust's Recherche du temps perdu?"

Three years later, when he was working on Plato's Laws for Plato and Aristotle, the third volume of his magnum opus Order and History, Voegelin wrote to Willmoore Kendall that "what fascinated me particularly about this last work of Plato was the literary form which has certain resemblances to Proust's Recherche." And in 1964, thirty-seven years after he first read the last volumes of Recherche, Proust still occupied a place in Voegelin's thinking. At this time he was working on his book Anamnesis, one of his most significant contributions to the philosophy of consciousness. In a letter of that year he explained to Robert Heilman what he meant by what he had come to call "The Time of the Tale."

> There was a point in my Salzburg lecture that might interest you as an historian of literature: The basic form of myth, the "tale" in the widest sense, including the epic as well as the dramatic account of happenings, has a specific time, immanent to the tale, whose specific character consists in the ability to combine human, cosmic and divine elements into one story. I have called it, already in Order and History, the Time of the Tale. It expresses the experience of being (that embraces all sorts of reality, the cosmos) in flux. This Tale with its Time seems to me the primary literary form, peculiar to cosmological civilizations. Primary in the sense, that it precedes all literary form developed under conditions of differentiating experiences: If man becomes differentiated with any degree of autonomy from the cosmic context, then, and only then, will develop specifically human forms of literature: The story of human events, lyric, empirical history, the drama and tragedy of human action, the meditative dialogue in the Platonic sense, etc. Underlying all later, differentiated forms, however, there remains the basic Tale which expresses Being in flux. Time, then, would not be an empty container into which you can fill any content, but there would be as many times as there are types of differentiated content. Think for instance of Proust's temps perdu and temps retrouvé as times which correspond to the loss and rediscovery of self, the action of rediscovery through a monumental literary work of remembrance being the atonement for the loss of time through personal guilt—very similar to cosmological rituals of restoring order that has been lost through lapse of time."

Finally, in 1977 Voegelin contributed a new "introductory" chapter to Gerhart Niemeyer's translation of Anamnesis" and entitled it "Remembrance of Things Past," an obvious allusion to the Moncrief English translation of A la recherche du temps perdu, which remained the standard English translation until the now widely accepted

Modern Library translation, In Search of Lost Time. It is very significant that Voegelin chose this title, for it connects Voegelin's continuing interest in Proust to his late writings and meditations.

It seems clear that Voegelin's periodic comments on Proust's novel evidence an almost sixty-year concern with Proust's explorations of human consciousness; and in fact, the more I read and reflect on Voegelin's late work as well as on Proust's masterpiece, the more I am convinced that Voegelin's understanding of consciousness was greatly influenced by A la recherche du temps perdu. This is especially true, I believe, in his understanding of the importance of early childhood experiences in the developing trajectory of maturing consciousness. His "anamnetic experiments," first conducted in 1943, present evidence of

how childhood experiences "determine" the concerns of adult consciousness. He offered them for publication to the editor of Sewanee Review in 1946. In a letter to the editor, J. N. Palmer, Voegelin revealed how he thought of these experiments.

> If you would rather have something on the literary side, I have also lying around a MS entitled Anamnesis. It is an intellectual autobiography of my first ten years. The crazy thing originated in a correspondence with a friend on the question whether the Cartesian type of meditation is a legitimate approach to a philosophy of the mind. I denied the legitimacy on the ground that the life of the spirit and intellect is historical in the strict sense, and that the determinants of mature philosophical speculation have to be sought in the mythical formation of the mind in experiences of early youth. In order to prove my point, I made anamnetic experiments on myself and collected twenty-odd such early experiences which determined my later metaphysical attitudes."

By 1966, however, when these anamnetic experiments were published in the German edition of Anamnesis, Voegelin's search of order—personal and collective—led to his interest in a philosophy of consciousness. The literary nature of these experiments remained, but they had become a central element in his theory of the historical development of human consciousness.

The foregoing paragraphs have demonstrated not only Voegelin's familiarity with literature in general and the work of Proust, but also the importance of these in his philosophical search of order. But the aim of the following essays is to grapple with the masterpiece that is In Search of Lost Time, not to explain or interpret Voegelin's

thought. The contributors—all of them quite familiar with Voegelin's work—have simply relied, sometimes overtly, sometimes implicitly, and sometimes obliquely, upon various dimensions of Voegelin's philosophical corpus to approach and analyze themes in Proust's novel.

My own essay explores how the novel can be read simultaneously as both a biography of consciousness, that of Proust's narrator Marcel, and (potentially) the biography of consciousness, i.e., that of his readers and indeed of Proust himself. Glenn Hughes, in "Proust, Transcendence, and Metaxic Existence," explores the correspondences and differences between Proust's and Voegelin's "literary vision" of existence in between time and timelessness, immanence and transcendence. Thomas J. McPartland contributes a "Philosophical Meditation on Proust's In Search of Lost Time," clarifying the meaning of his title by writing: "Given the nature of this masterpiece no commentary, literary or otherwise, can come close to doing it justice. If this is the case, a philosophical commentary must humbly take the form of a philosophical meditation. And even such a philosophical meditation can but be a simple philosophical invitation to participate in the work itself." Paulette Kidder reflects on "Imprisonment and Freedom" by focusing on the "long middle stretches" of the novel, in which "Marcel's epiphanic `blessed impressions' seem all but forgotten," and wondering "how the parts of the novel" that she finds "most disquieting to read—those that chronicle Marcel's intense, controlling jealousy toward his lover Albertine and his continual mendacity toward her—can be integrated into a Voegelinian reading of the work." Michael Henry contributes another meditation- on the novel, entitled "Proust's Luminous Memory and L'Homme Eternel: The Quest for Limitless Meaning," a meditation guided by his question: "What elevates such a semi-autobiographical novel to the rank of profoundly philosophical literature?" And in the final essay of the volume, "Unsought Revelations of Eternal Reality," Glenn Hughes examines the shared visions of human existence manifest in T. S. Eliot's Four Quartets and Proust's novel, specifically focusing on how both works portray human beings as capable of experiencing unexpected, mystical revelations of eternal meaning and how such experiences of timeless reality are always mediated through the "concrete realities of space and time." <>

NATURALISM BEYOND THE LIMITS OF SCIENCE: HOW SCIENTIFIC METHODOLOGY CAN AND SHOULD SHAPE PHILOSOPHICAL THEORIZING by Nina Emery [Oxford University Press, ISBN 9780197654101]

Philosophers and scientists both ask questions about what the world is like. How do these fields interact with one another? How should they? NATURALISM BEYOND THE LIMITS OF SCIENCE investigates an approach to these questions called methodological naturalism. According to *methodological naturalism*, when coming up with theories about what the world is like, philosophers should, whenever possible, make use of the same methodology that is deployed by scientists. Although many contemporary philosophers have implicit commitments that lead straightforwardly to methodological naturalism, few have a clear understanding of how widespread and disruptive methodological naturalism promises to be for the field. By way of a series of case studies involving laws of nature, composition, time and modality, and drawing on historical and contemporary scientific developments including the discovery of the neutrino, the introduction of dark energy, and the advent of relativity theory, this book demonstrates the ways in which scientists rely on extra-empirical reasoning and how that very same extra-empirical reasoning can yield surprising results when applied to philosophical debates. Along the way, Nina Emery's investigation illuminates the complex relationship between philosophy and the sciences, and makes the case that philosophers and scientists alike would benefit from a greater understanding of the connections between the two fields.

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Almost every fall, I teach an undergraduate philosophy course called Metaphysics. On the first day of class, I tell my students that metaphysics is the study of what the world is like. I then contrast metaphysics with two other traditional sub-fields of philosophy with which they are usually familiar: ethics and epistemology. Whereas metaphysics is the study of what the world is like, ethics is the study of what the world should be like, and epistemology is the study of how we come to know things about the world. "Make sense?" I ask my students. They all nod. And off we go, investigating questions about the nature of time and space, what it means for a person to remain the same person over time, whether possible worlds exist, and more.

My own view, though, is that what I say to my students on that first day of class, both by way of a definition of metaphysics and by way of a distinction between metaphysics and other sub-fields of philosophy, is problematic. Although it is a fairly standard thing to say, once we examine it more closely, it does not actually make much sense at all. First of all, there isn't a clear distinction between metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. Epistemology and ethics are full of questions about what the world is like. (Consider one of the central questions of epistemology: "What is knowledge?" Surely that is a question about what the world is like. And the same can be said of: "Are there objective facts about what is right and wrong?") A similar observation holds for other sub-fields of philosophy that this tripartite distinction leaves out. Philosophers who study aesthetics ask questions about the nature of beauty. Political philosophers ask "What is race?" and "What is gender?" Metaphysical questions certainly aren't the only kind of philosophical question, but they are woven through pretty much every area of philosophical inquiry.

Second, and more importantly, consider again the claim that metaphysics is the study of what the world is like. Stop worrying about the distinction between different sub-fields of philosophy and focus instead on this as a definition of a distinctive area of philosophical inquiry. And notice that we already have a field of inquiry that is inquiry into what the world is like— that field is science. As I am teaching my metaphysics class, there are all sorts of chemists and biologists and geologists and physicists

elsewhere on campus, giving lectures and running labs and writing papers. What are they doing, if not trying to figure out what the world is like?

In this way, the simple definition of metaphysics that I started with raises an important question— the question of the relationship between metaphysics and science. And as it turns out— as we will see over and over again throughout what follows— this question is by no means easy to answer. (It's tough enough that I think it's worth eliding with my undergraduates, at least at first; they have an easier time grappling with questions about what is distinctive, and what is not, about metaphysical inquiry once they've actually done some metaphysics.) At the same time, however difficult it may be, the question of the relationship between metaphysics and science is not a question that professional philosophers can ignore. Until we're able to understand that relationship, we can't have a very deep understanding of what we are doing as metaphysicians, or— given the prevalence of metaphysical questions across philosophical sub- fields— as philosophers quite generally.

The relationship between science and metaphysics is especially interesting because while science is often taken to be a paradigm of successful human inquiry, many debates within metaphysics are thought to be hopelessly abstract, arcane, and poorly motivated. In my metaphysics class, for instance, one of the questions I ask my students is: Under exactly what circumstances do two (or more) things compose a further thing? Sure, we talk all the time about composite objects like coffee mugs or café tables, but are we just using a convenient shorthand for fundamental particles arranged in a coffee mug– or a café table– like way? Another question we focus on is about the nature of personal identity. People can survive dramatic changes in their physical and psychological characteristics. So what is it that makes a person the same person over time? Could you replace all of one person's memories with those of someone else without destroying the original person? These kinds of debates strike many of us— philosophers and non- philosophers alike— at least initially, as odd. But they too are questions about what the world is like. So, what is the difference, exactly, between asking, for instance, "Do possible worlds exist?" and asking "Does the Higgs boson exist?" Why does the latter strike us as vitally important while the former seems potentially misguided? It has always seemed to me that regardless of the answer,

investigating this relationship is likely to give us a better understanding not just of metaphysics, but of the nature of scientific inquiry, and its limits, as well.

At first glance, it might seem like any investigation into the relationship between metaphysics and science is likely to face a worrying dilemma. On the one hand, if metaphysicians are just trying to do the same thing that scientists are doing, then what is the point of doing metaphysics at all? Shouldn't we just leave questions about what the world is like to the scientists? What can we add from the armchair? On the other hand, if metaphysicians are doing something substantially different from what scientists are doing, then metaphysics starts to seem like a pretty mysterious enterprise. What could it mean for us to be investigating what the world is like in a sense that is distinct from the sciences? What constraints are there on this kind of investigation? What reason do we have for thinking that it is a legitimate and worthwhile pursuit?

The goal of this book is to articulate and investigate a way of thinking about the relationship between metaphysics and science that avoids this apparent dilemma. The approach I will lay out will be a version of naturalism, which is to say, it will take scientific inquiry as the paradigm of successful inquiry into what the world is like. In that way, it may sound as if I am leaning toward the first horn of the dilemma described above. But, as I will argue, there is a way of being a naturalist that still leaves space for metaphysics as a robust, interesting, and well- founded field of inquiry that goes beyond the domain of science. Indeed, unlike most naturalistic philosophers, who tend to draw a sharp distinction between metaphysical debates that are adjacent to science (which they think of as legitimate) and metaphysical debates that are farther afield (of which they are suspicious), I argue that there is a way of being a naturalist that blurs this distinction and preserves the legitimacy of even the latter kind of metaphysical question. Metaphysical inquiry, according to the approach that I will focus on, will be modeled on and respectful of scientific inquiry, but metaphysics will not be subservient to science in any worrying sense.

Of course, merely saying that the view I focus on is a version of naturalism does not give it much content. To be a naturalist is to be in some sense guided by or respectful of our best science. But there is going to be a wide range of different views that count as

naturalistic on this definition, which vary depending on what the "guiding" or "respecting" relation consists in and what its relata are. One might think, for instance, as Wilfred Sellars did, that "in the dimension of describing and explaining the world, science is the measure of all things" (1963, 173); but one need not take such a strong stance. And while it is the entities posited (or not posited) by our best science that are often the focus of philosophical attention, there are other aspects of our best science that one might take to be important as a guide to philosophical theorizing.

The specific version of naturalism that is the focus of this book is what I call methodological naturalism. According to this view, philosophers who are asking metaphysical questions should be guided by our best science in the following sense: they should, whenever possible, use the same methodology that scientists use.

On the face of it, especially for those without a background in philosophy of science, methodological naturalism might seem like a non- starter. When one considers what the physicists and geologists and biologists across campus spend their time doing on a day- to- day basis, in comparison to the ways in which I, as a philosopher, spend my time, it might seem like there is little opportunity for overlap in our methodologies. This is especially true if you focus on the aspects of science that involve the collection of data in the laboratory. Think again of the paradigm examples of metaphysical debates that I mentioned above— debates about composition, personal identity, and possible worlds. Whatever else you want to say about them, these debates just don't seem like the kinds of debates that will be settled by the kind of data that scientists collect. What kind of data could distinguish, for instance, between the hypothesis that there is a coffee mug before me and the hypothesis that there is a group of particles arranged coffee- mug- wise? So how could metaphysicians make use of the same methodology that scientists use?

I'm going to say much more about this kind of worry in Chapter 3, but in service of making methodological naturalism at least initially plausible, here is a brief preview of the reasons that the pessimistic attitude just described is unwarranted. Although the methodology of science involves the collection of data, the data that scientists collect rarely uniquely determines a particular set of scientific commitments. Instead

scientists combine the data that they have collected with some extra-empirical reasoning—some reasoning that goes beyond mere consistency with the data. In the paradigm cases that I focus on in this book, they take the data that they have collected and apply what I will call extra-empirical principles. Examples of potential extra-empirical principles are principles like "Choose the simplest theory that is consistent with the data" or "Choose the theory that provides the best explanation of the data." These principles allow us to choose between multiple theories— all of which are consistent with the data— on the basis of other features. And these kinds of extra-empirical principles are plausibly principles that metaphysicians can make use of as well. For while it is unclear how the empirical data that we collect would ultimately decide debates about composition or personal identity or possible worlds, a principle like "Choose the simplest theory that is consistent with the data" might very well do so.

The big- picture view, then, is that methodological naturalism is initially plausible because extra- empirical reasoning plays an important role in the methodology of science and the very same kind of extra- empirical reasoning has the potential to impact a wide range of metaphysical debates— including those that, on the face of it, don't have much to do with science at all. In this way, methodological naturalism holds out hope for an account of metaphysics that can be both respectful of science and yet go well beyond the domain of science. Even those of us who are full- fledged naturalists can meaningfully ask and answer questions about what the world is like that go beyond the limits of what is standardly thought of as scientific inquiry.

In the broad strokes laid down so far, methodological naturalism is not unfamiliar. It has made regular appearances in the literature, in particular at moments when metaphysics as a field has been under scrutiny of one form or another. Consider, for instance, W. V. O. Quine, writing at a time when logical positivism still held sway, who claimed:

> Our acceptance of an ontology is, I think, similar in principle to our acceptance of a scientific theory, say a system of physics: we adopt, at least insofar as we are reasonable, the simplest conceptual scheme into which the disordered fragments of raw experience can be fitted and arranged. (Quine 1953, 16)

Or consider Theodore Sider, Dean Zimmerman, and John Hawthorne, who wrote their introduction to Contemporary Debates in Metaphysics at a time when there was increasing interest in various neo- Carnapian and other deflationary approaches to metaphysics, and who noted that focusing on "continuity with science can help dispel radical pessimism about metaphysics" (Sider et al. 2008, 8). As they write:

> Scientists must regularly choose between many theories that are consistent with the observed data. Their choices are governed by criteria like simplicity, comprehensiveness, and elegance . . . Just like scientists, metaphysicians begin with observations, albeit quite mundane ones: there are objects, these objects have properties, they last over time, and so on. And just like scientists, metaphysicians go on to construct general theories based on these observations, even though the observations do not logically settle which theory is correct. In doing so, metaphysicians use standards for choosing theories that are like the standards used by scientists (simplicity, comprehensiveness, elegance, and so on). (8)

As a final example, consider the following quote from L. A. Paul's paper "Metaphysics as Modeling," writing in the aftermath of the critique of contemporary metaphysics leveled by James Ladyman and Don Ross in their book Every Thing Must Go:

> Scientific theorizing itself, even empirically- based science, relies on a priori reasoning involving simplicity, elegance and explanatory strength. Such considerations play an important role in the development of successful scientific theories, and the use of the a priori in metaphysics is similar to the use of the a priori in science. (Paul 2012, 19)

As Paul goes on to say, "The main point I want to make here is that if the method can lead us closer to the truth in science, it can lead us closer to the truth in metaphysics" (21).

All of these authors clearly have something like methodological naturalism in mind. But in my view, they do not go nearly far enough for either the continuity between metaphysical and scientific methodology to be especially convincing or that continuity to do much work in defending metaphysics from the various critiques it has faced. As we will see (and as has also been observed in the many contributions to the literature that take issue with Quine, Sider et al., Paul, and others of a similar mindset), a loose gesture toward the idea that some combination of simplicity, explanatory power, and elegance plays a role in scientific theorizing is just too quick.6 A full treatment of methodological naturalism would more carefully investigate the extra- empirical

reasoning that plays a role in scientific theorizing and the consequences that similar reasoning would have when applied to metaphysical debates. This is the project that I take up below.

One of the key contentions of this book is that once we engage in this investigation, it quickly becomes clear that the extra- empirical principles that play a role in scientific theorizing are both nuanced and surprising. Although metaphysicians might gesture to principles like "Choose the simplest theory that is compatible with the data" or "Choose the theory that best explains the data" as examples of extra- empirical principles, the role that such principles play in scientific theorizing is far from straightforward. Moreover, in cases where we can identify a clear extra- empirical principle that does play a role in scientific theory choice, it often has unexpected results for metaphysical debates. The position in these debates that is standardly assumed to be the most scientifically respectable may turn out to be ruled out by methodological naturalism, properly understood.

Methodological naturalism, therefore, is by no means as straightforward as the authors above seem to suggest. Indeed, once it is fully understood, methodological naturalism promises to have widespread and surprising consequences— both for particular first- order debates within metaphysics and also for more general approaches to how metaphysical inquiry is structured and carried out. At the same time— and this is one of the other key contentions of the book— it turns out that methodological naturalism is also quite difficult to avoid. Indeed, my view is that the vast majority of philosophers— including, almost certainly, you, dear reader!— already have commitments that lead straightforwardly to methodological naturalism. And these commitments are so ingrained in the field that contemporary metaphysics would look quite different if they were to be given up.

All of this means that once methodological naturalism and its consequences are clearly spelled out, we find ourselves in quite an interesting position. On the one hand, accepting methodological naturalism has widespread and surprising consequences. On the other hand, we can't avoid methodological naturalism unless we are willing to revise certain commitments that are central to contemporary metaphysics. Although I

ultimately leave it up to the reader to decide which of these two positions to take—accepting methodological naturalism or rejecting the commitments that lead to that view— the point is that regardless of which choice you make, the way that you think about metaphysics should change. In some ways, then, I am trading one dilemma for another. But while the dilemma we might have thought faced metaphysicians (that metaphysics is either subservient to science or misguided) is pernicious, the dilemma that I ultimately settle on (one must either accept the surprising consequences of methodological naturalism or reject and revise the central and long- standing commitments that lead to that view) is a productive one. Although I myself am inclined to accept methodological naturalism, the key result that I hope to emphasize is that either way there is a wealth of fruitful and interesting work ahead for metaphysicians.

Here is a more detailed plan for what follows. First, in Chapter 1, I argue that the vast majority of philosophers (including, almost certainly, those reading this book) already have commitments that lead straightforwardly to methodological naturalism. In Chapter 2, I give some reasons for thinking that given the choice between accepting methodological naturalism or revising the commitments that lead to methodological naturalism, the former should be the default view. I then turn to the claim that accepting methodological naturalism will have widespread and surprising consequences for metaphysical theorizing. I defend this claim first, in Chapter 3, in quite general terms, before turning, in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, to three specific case studies that demonstrate these consequences for particular first- order debates in metaphysics. These case studies include some of the metaphysical debates discussed above, including the debates over composition and possible worlds, but also range over metaphysical questions that tend to be of interest to more naturalistically inclined philosophers, including the question of what it means for something to be a law of nature, and the question of whether and how time differs from space. In Chapter 7, I take up a significant complication that I have largely avoided throughout the earlier discussion: the question of how methodological naturalism works if one thinks that scientific methodology is context dependent. (Perhaps the most obvious way in which this might happen is if one thinks that different sciences involve different methodologies.) Finally, in Chapter 8, I discuss the consequences of rejecting

methodological naturalism and give some options for what the resulting version of metaphysical inquiry might look like and how it might be justified.

As will become obvious, all of this is just the beginning of a much larger project. In the conclusion of the book, therefore, I make a plea for further research into the extra-empirical aspects of theory choice in science— research that I argue needs to be done jointly by metaphysicians and philosophers of science and needs to involve significant input from historians of science, and scientists themselves. Without this research, we cannot fully understand the potential implications of methodological naturalism on a wide range of philosophical debates. Nor can we decide, ultimately, whether to be methodological naturalists. This book, then, is by no means a definitive guide to methodological naturalism— it is a start in which I hope others can find inspiration and a foundation on which others can build.

The fact that this book is just the beginning of a larger project is a way in which my ambitions are more limited in scope than they may first appear. Here is a way in which those ambitions are more expansive than the reader may be expecting. In what follows I will often write things like "Metaphysicians are committed to . . ." or "Metaphysicians should . . ." or "Metaphysicians who . . ." It is important to keep in mind, however, that as I use the term, a metaphysician is just a philosopher who investigates questions about what the world is like. And, as I noted above, questions about what the world is like show up in nearly all areas of philosophy. So just because you don't think of yourself as a metaphysician or don't write "metaphysics" as an area of specialization on your CV doesn't mean that you can avoid the central choice that this book sets up for the reader and the surprising consequences that follow regardless of how one responds to that choice. If your philosophical investigations involve trying to determine what the world is like— and I would expect that that applies to most, if not all, philosophers— then this book is for you. <>

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