

origin to their demise, while illustrating how they are reflected in the textual and archaeological records. In doing so, it opens up broader issues for exploration and draws meaningful cross-cultural comparisons to ask, for instance, how different societies regard death and the dead, why people convert from one religion to another, and why they abandon belief in a god or gods altogether.

1. Prelude to Osiris I: Conceptions of the Afterlife in Prehistoric and Predynastic Egypt
2. Prelude to Osiris II: Conceptions of the Afterlife in the Early Dynastic Period and the First Half of the Old Kingdom
3. Unreading the Pyramid Texts. So, Who is Osiris?
4. Democratizing the Afterlife? Aspects of the Osirian Afterlife during the Transition from the Late Old Kingdom to the Middle Kingdom
5. Re Resting in Osiris, Osiris Resting in Re: Osiris, Sun God, and the Deceased in the New Kingdom
6. New Rulers, New Beliefs? Osiris and the Dead during the Transition from the Late Period to the Ptolemaic Period
7. Where is the King of the Two Lands? The End of Belief in the Osirian Afterlife
8. Summary of Results: Why Osiris?

Excerpt: In 1948, the German Egyptologist Alexander Scharff, a leading expert on the religion of ancient Egypt, published a book about the god Osiris which can still be consulted with profit today. In a note in the introduction of this work he observed 'Um wirklich etwas einigermaßen Abschließendes über Osiris zu sagen, dürfte kaum ein einziges Forscherleben ausreichen.' Thirty-one centuries earlier, the twentieth dynasty king Ramesses IV, who also knew a thing or two about ancient Egyptian religion, commented that each individual form or aspect of Osiris was more mysterious than those of the rest of the Ennead combined.' Statements like these make any attempt to write a book about Osiris seem a rather daunting prospect, especially if one has not spent a lifetime studying that god and lacks the emic knowledge of an ancient Egyptian. How does one begin to treat such a vast and multi-faceted subject? One approach is to limit the scope of the investigation by selecting a discrete feature or aspect of Osiris and focusing attention upon that. This is the approach adopted here.

This book is specifically concerned with ancient Egyptian conceptions of the relationship between Osiris and the deceased, or what we might call the Osirian afterlife. It is not a continuous or comprehensive account of Egyptian ideas on that subject. Rather, it focuses on five distinct periods in their development, spread over four millennia. The periods in question are ones in which significant changes in Egyptian ideas about Osiris and the dead are known to have occurred, or where it has been argued that they did. An important aim of this book is to investigate when and why such changes happened, and how they can be recognized in the historical and archaeological record. There will also be a focus on the causes of religious change. To what extent, for instance, did the state influence developments in the religious sphere? Finally,

there will be an emphasis on confronting problems. There are no easy solutions for some of these problems, but this does not mean that we should refrain from discussing them.

Although this book does not provide a continuous history, one should not view its individual chapters separately. It is important to look for connections among them. The same themes, the same problems, may be treated in more than one chapter, and there are advantages in looking at the broad sweep of history and not just one period in isolation. Adapting Scharff's dictum, one might argue that to really say anything reasonably definitive about Osiris one has to look at his entire history from beginning to end. One recurrent theme explored in the book has already been mentioned above: the relationship between religion and politics. How closely is religious change linked to political change? In a society like that of ancient Egypt, how much control did rulers or governments have over what people believed about the afterlife? Another is the actual nature of that afterlife. Did the Egyptians think that posthumous existence was the same for everyone, or did they envisage separate afterlives for rulers and their subjects?

A further important topic that receives discussion in virtually all chapters is the nature of the evidence at our disposal and how to use it. The most salient points arising from this discussion are: the need to take all of the available evidence into account when investigating a particular question, and not simply a part of it; the importance of dating that evidence as precisely as possible, and the problems that result when we cannot do so; and the desirability of scrutinizing regional and local developments carefully before one tries to combine the evidence pertaining to these into a bigger picture. The limitations of the evidence are explored as well. Can we infer religious belief, or more specifically, belief about the hereafter, from artefacts or material remains in the absence of written sources? What can ritual texts tell us about Egyptian aspirations for the afterlife? In this respect, the book is as much about how to study Egyptian conceptions of a god like Osiris as it is about those conceptions themselves.

The first seven chapters of this book follow a roughly chronological order, moving from the earliest evidence for belief in the Osirian afterlife to the latest. Each chapter deals with a specific period or periods in the development of Egyptian ideas concerning the relationship between Osiris and the dead. As will be seen, these periods rarely correspond to those into which we are accustomed to divide the political history of Egypt. It is not always easy to fit cultural and social trends into such a framework. More often than not, we will find ourselves tracing the particular developments in which we are interested across the boundaries separating one dynasty or kingdom from another. From our perspective, what happens during the transition between one period and the next is just as important and interesting as what happens in those periods themselves. In this respect, the book both challenges and subverts the traditional Egyptological approach whereby each individual phase of Egypt's political history is deemed to have its own distinctive religious ethos and the religious phenomena pertaining to each phase are studied in isolation.'

This book begins well before the earliest appearance of Osiris in the written record. In fact, the first evidence considered in it is approximately 55,000 years old. Of the eight chapters that make up the book, no less than two are devoted entirely to periods of Egyptian history when belief in Osiris is not yet attested. This might seem strange at first sight. However, it is clear that the Egyptians believed in a hereafter before they believed in that god. What was this hereafter like? In order to understand the background from which Osiris arose, it will be helpful to investigate what the Egyptians thought would happen to them after they died prior to the time when their posthumous fate became so closely linked with him. What roles did divine beings play in the earliest Egyptian conceptions of the afterlife, for example? Why did Osiris supplant the deities who originally fulfilled such roles? Study of pre-Osirian Egyptian ideas about the next world will provide a context for our exploration of questions like these.

As stated above, this is a book about a specific aspect of Osiris: his relationship with the deceased and how this was conceived by the ancient Egyptians. Needless to say, there are numerous other salient aspects of that god that merit study: his temple cult, his relationships with other deities, his iconography, and his association with natural phenomena like the Nile inundation, to name only a few. These other aspects will not receive attention here except when they have a direct bearing upon the god's evolving relationship with the dead. When Osiris is identified or closely associated with another deity, for instance, what is the significance of this for the deceased? How does the fact that Osiris is linked with the Nile inundation condition their expectations for the afterlife? When the image of Osiris as a king of the living who hears the pleas of his subjects and rescues them in their time of need becomes more prominent in hymns and other texts employed in the temple cult, how is this reflected in texts that relate to the dead? So other aspects of the god do receive some consideration, but only insofar as this helps to elucidate the main topic with which we are concerned.

Following the first two chapters of the book, which explore pre-Osirian conceptions of the afterlife in Egypt, 3. Unreading the Pyramid Texts. So, Who is Osiris? investigates the questions of when belief in Osiris as a god of the dead first arose, and how the nature of his relationship with the deceased is configured in the earliest sources where it is attested. Its title, 'Unreading the Pyramid Texts. So who is Osiris?', conflates elements of the titles of two influential articles that deal with these subjects, the conclusions of which are subjected to detailed scrutiny here. Chapter 4 investigates a particularly controversial idea, the theory of the democratization of the afterlife, according to which the social upheavals that occurred at the end of the Old Kingdom enabled non-royal individuals to usurp privileges in the next world which had previously been restricted to royalty, among them identification with Osiris and integration into the hierarchy of divine beings who were associated with that god.

Re Resting in Osiris, Osiris Resting in Re: Osiris, Sun God, and the Deceased in the New Kingdom

Looks at two important religious developments of the New Kingdom, both involving the solar deity, and assesses their impact upon Egyptian conceptions of the Osirian afterlife. The first is the introduction of a new theology emphasizing the Aten, the visible manifestation of the sun god, by the eighteenth dynasty king Akhenaten during the Amarna Period. The second is the increasing prominence accorded to the theme of the cyclically recurring nocturnal union of Osiris and Re in the underworld, both in the decoration of tombs, predominantly royal ones, and in other sources like the Book of the Dead. This conception is already attested prior to the Amarna Period, but reaches its peak in the nineteenth and twentieth dynasties. One way that the Egyptians expressed the union of the two deities was with the formula 'Re resting in Osiris, Osiris resting in Re'. In recognition of its value as a concise summation of an extremely complex theological construct, this formula has been incorporated in the title of the chapter.

New Rulers, New Beliefs? Osiris and the Dead during the Transition from the Late Period to the Ptolemaic Period

Investigates the transition from the Late Period to the Ptolemaic Period, with emphasis upon two particular questions. First, did the establishment of the Ptolemaic dynasty have an impact on Egyptian ideas about the afterlife, and second, did it have an impact on the way in which Egyptians conceptualized the relationship between Osiris and the deceased? In connection with the second question, the chapter also considers whether or not the rise to prominence of the god Sarapis, who was sometimes identified with Osiris, influenced Egyptian perceptions of that relationship.

The disappearance of a god, like a deity's initial appearance in the historical record, is a religious change of particular significance. Accordingly, 'Where is the King of the Two Lands? The End of Belief in the Osirian Afterlife' looks at the evidence for the end of belief in Osiris and the Osirian afterlife in Egypt. Four places are used as case studies: the Akhmim region, Philae, Abydos, and Thebes. These case studies provide a model which can be used to investigate when that belief ceased in other parts of the country. The question posed in the title of the chapter, 'Where is the king of the two lands?', has been adapted from a lament preserved in a ritual papyrus which expresses the grief felt by the devotees of Osiris as a consequence of his departure from them. The final chapter of the book, Chapter 8, summarizes the results obtained in the preceding ones and offers a few final reflections on the questions of why belief in the Osirian afterlife arose in the first place and why it came to an end when it did.

Notwithstanding the cautionary advice of Scharff quoted above, a vast number of books and articles have been written about Osiris, and the production of these shows no sign of abating. It is not my intention to provide a literature review here. Those sources which I have consulted during the writing of this book are listed in the bibliography, which will give a good idea of the breadth of material, both primary and secondary, which has been put to use. It is hoped that the chronological scope of the present volume, the range of questions that it asks,

and the methods that it employs in seeking to answer them, are sufficiently different to those of existing works on Osiris to justify its addition to the corpus of literature on that deity.

One word that recurs with particular frequency in this book is 'belief'. It has already been used seven times in this introduction alone. Above all, the book is concerned with the rise and fall of belief in the Osirian afterlife. But what precisely is meant by this term? One definition of belief is 'mental assent to a statement, proposition, or fact'. One believes that there are insect-eating mammals called aardvarks that live in Africa, or that the Triassic Period preceded the Jurassic. But the term can also be used in an extended sense to mean acceptance that a proposition is true and adoption of a particular mode of behaviour as a consequence. Those who believe that education is important make an effort to send their children to good schools. Those who believe in the values espoused by a political party may not only vote for it but campaign or do other work on its behalf during elections.

In the context of religion, the word 'belief' is normally used with this second more extended sense. One believes that a supernatural being exists and is motivated to behave in certain ways as a result. These might include worship of the being in question, adherence to a particular moral code which it is thought that being will approve, or both. But there are numerous other possible responses as well, ranging from indifference or disregard to attempts to gain mastery over a being in whom one believes and to compel that being to obey one's will. It is with this second more extended sense that the word 'belief' is used in the present book. Thus, for our purposes, the concept of belief in the Osirian afterlife encompasses not only acceptance that such an afterlife exists, but also the aspirations for the next world of those who accept its existence and the things that they do in this one in order to fulfil them.

According to a widespread Egyptian tradition, the god Osiris was born in Thebes on the first epagomenal day, the 361st day of the year, as the eldest child of Geb and Nut, although some variant accounts differ as to the day and place of his birth and his parentage.' At delivery, he measured one cubit (52.3 cm) in length.' As an adult, his full height was eight cubits, six palms, and three fingers, or approximately 4.7 m. Like other Egyptian deities, his hair was blue-black in colour. He married his younger sister Isis, with whom he had initiated a sexual relationship while both were still in their mother's womb, and was crowned king in succession to his father in Herakleopolis, adopting the fivefold titulary 'Horus powerful of arms, Two Ladies mighty in valour, Horus of Gold Osiris, King of Upper and Lower Egypt Osiris, Son of Re Wennefer the justified'. One source records that he held the offices of vizier, chief priest of Heliopolis, and royal herald before his assumption of the throne; another that he instigated a rebellion against Shu prior to his accession.

At the age of twenty-eight, Osiris was murdered by his brother Seth. According to some sources, the killer justified his act with the claim that he had acted in self-defence. According to others, he took retribution because Osiris had engaged in an illicit affair with his wife Nephthys. The offspring of this illicit

union was Anubis, who is sometimes called the eldest son of Osiris. A few texts say the god also had a daughter or daughters, without indicating who their mother was, by one of whom he fathered additional sons. After the murder of her husband, Isis searched for and discovered his corpse, which was then reconstituted through the rites of mummification. By 'playing the role of a man', she was able to arouse Osiris and conceive her son Horus by him. Thus a sexual relationship that began before either deity was actually born continued even after one of them had died.

The child Horus was raised in secret by his mother in the marshes of Khemmis in the delta, where he was safe from Seth's attempts to find and kill him. On reaching adulthood, he avenged the crime committed against Osiris. Seth was brought to justice, found guilty, and punished for his deed, while Horus was acclaimed as king and rightful successor to his father. Now vindicated against his enemy, and with the legitimacy of his heir firmly established, Osiris himself was installed as ruler of the underworld and its inhabitants.

This brief sketch is a composite assembled from a number of Egyptian sources of different dates and from different parts of the country. It illustrates one salient fact, however. Osiris is one of the few ancient Egyptian deities of whom it is possible to write even the outline of a biography. More personal details about him are extant than about any other god or goddess. This is not simply an accident of preservation. The Egyptians considered some deities important because of their impersonal attributes and powers, the roles they were believed to play in the maintenance of the cosmos. But the crucial significance of Osiris for them lay in what he personally had experienced. His life, death, and resurrection were perceived to be particularly momentous in relation to their own fates, and thus they figure more prominently in the textual record than do accounts of the exploits of other divinities. Moreover, because so much importance was invested in the fact that these were events actually experienced by a real individual, and not merely abstractions, personal detail was essential in recounting them.

To understand why the life, death, and resurrection of Osiris were so significant, one must first grasp how the ancient Egyptians conceived of the human being. Their conception was essentially a monistic one. They did not divide the person into a corruptible body and an immortal soul. They did, however, perceive each individual as having a 'corporeal self' and a 'social self'. For both, 'connectivity' was an essential prerequisite. Just as the disparate limbs of the human body could only function effectively as parts of a properly constituted whole, so too could the individual person only function as a member of a properly structured society. Death brought about a twofold rupture, severing the links between the constituent parts of the body while at the same time isolating the deceased from the company of his or her former associates. In effect, it was a form of dismemberment, both corporeal and social.

Osiris provided a model whereby the effects of this rupture could be reversed, for the god underwent a twofold process of resurrection. Just as the mummification rites restored his corporeal integrity, so too justification against Seth and the events that followed it restored his social position and

reintegrated him within the hierarchy of the gods. In the same way that Osiris was restored to life and declared free of wrongdoing, so all who died hoped to be revived and justified. It is important to stress that not all of the ideas just described were in place from the very beginning. There are references to the justified deceased in our sources as early as the fifth dynasty, for example, but we have no unequivocal evidence for belief in a general judgement of the dead before the Middle Kingdom. This indicates that the concept of justification only became important later: Clearly, Egyptian aspirations for the Osirian afterlife took time to coalesce and reach their fullest form of expression. In this book, it will be our aim to trace the key stages in the development of these aspirations and see how these are reflected in the textual and archaeological records.

Through the course of this book we have followed Osiris over a period of more than four millennia. What have we learned as a result? In this chapter, we will first briefly summarize the results obtained in each of the preceding ones. Then we will discuss the most important themes that recur throughout the book and try to identify the benefits of investigating a topic like belief in the Osirian afterlife using the approach that we have adopted here. We will conclude with some reflections on the question of why this belief arose in the first place and why it came to an end when it did.

Prelude to Osiris I: Conceptions of the Afterlife in Prehistoric and Predynastic Egypt

We began by trying to trace ideas about the afterlife in periods of Egyptian history prior to the earliest evidence that we have for Osiris. In 1. Prelude to Osiris I: Conceptions of the Afterlife in Prehistoric and Predynastic Egypt, we focused on the prehistoric and predynastic periods. We found that little can be said in concrete terms about the expectations of the earliest Egyptians for the next world. In fact, it is difficult even to ascertain when belief in an afterlife first arose in the Nile Valley. The most one can say is that by the end of the predynastic period the idea had evolved that the dead required sustenance, which could be provided by the living, and that protecting the deceased's body, for whatever reason, was deemed to be important.

Despite the meagreness of these results, three important points emerged from our investigation. The first was that one cannot make accurate inferences about religious belief, in particular beliefs about the afterlife, from artefacts alone. For this purpose, written evidence is essential. The second was that one cannot project ideas and concepts from later periods back into earlier ones where there is no textual evidence for them unless (a) an unbroken line of continuity can be traced between a concept and its hypothetical antecedent or (b) the context in which the presumed antecedent occurs is sufficiently rich to leave no doubt of the connection between it and the later concept. The third point was that in predynastic Egypt innovations in funerary belief and practice did not always originate among the higher echelons of society or make their first appearance in the most elaborate tombs. Sometimes they appeared in relatively modest or non-elite burials first. Although these points emerged from our investigation of the

earliest evidence for belief in the afterlife in ancient Egypt, they have considerable relevance for our study and interpretation of the evidence for such belief from subsequent periods of Egyptian history as well.

Prelude to Osiris II: Conceptions of the Afterlife in the Early Dynastic Period and the First Half of the Old Kingdom

We focused upon the early dynastic period and the first or pre-Osirian part of the Old Kingdom, that is to say, the fourth dynasty and the fifth dynasty prior to the time when Osiris makes his initial appearance in the historical record. Here, the evidence for belief in the afterlife is much more abundant than in the predynastic period, and includes written sources for the first time. As one might expect, given the greater amount of evidence available, there is much more that can be learned about Egyptian ideas concerning the afterlife during this period, even if many uncertainties remain. Preserving or protecting the body of the deceased continued to be an important concern, although the reasons for this are still difficult to elucidate. The persistence of the earlier practice of dismembering the corpse indicates that corporeal integrity was not yet inextricably linked with posthumous survival. But the period surveyed in Chapter 2 also yields the earliest evidence for belief that the deceased could survive in other forms like the *akh* and the *ka*.

The idea that the deceased required sustenance in the next world persisted and was elaborated in various ways. New methods of supplying their requirements were devised, including provision by means of images and the spoken and written word. To judge from items deposited or depicted in tombs, the needs of the deceased in the afterlife were not thought to be very different to those that they had in this one. The tomb itself served as a sort of base for the owner, and could mimic the design of a house. More generally, the abode of the deceased was thought to be in the west, although it is not clear whether this term designated the necropolis, or a distinct sphere of the cosmos inhabited by the dead, like the underworld in later periods of Egyptian history.

We now find unequivocal evidence for supernatural beings with whom the dead hoped to interact in the next world. Among the most important of these are Anubis and Khentimentiu, 'Foremost of the westerners'. It is not clear whether the latter is the name of a distinct god in the period surveyed or simply an epithet concealing the identity of another deity. Anubis appears as a donor in offering formulas from the fourth dynasty onwards, where he is asked to ensure burial and provide the material needs of the deceased. He also helps them to reach the west and attain the status of *imakh* in the presence of an anonymous deity designated as 'the great god'. Other deities in whose presence the deceased could enjoy this status include Re, Ptah, and, from the fifth dynasty onward, Anubis himself. When someone was *imakh* in the presence of a deity it meant that the god in question would look after him or her in the afterlife.

It is not clear whether good conduct in this world was viewed as a prerequisite for interaction with deities in the next one at this time. Although some sources refer to litigation involving the deceased, and one refers to the righteous in conjunction with

the imakhu, there is no unequivocal evidence for a general judgement of the dead in the Old Kingdom. By contrast, there is abundant evidence that the deceased's transition from this world to the next was accomplished by means of rites. Some of the rituals involved, e.g. recitation of glorification spells and the Rite of Opening the Mouth, are attested in later periods as well, while others are not.

It is evident that the Egyptian afterlife was envisaged as a communal one during this period. Our sources refer to groups like the kas and the imakhu, and some Old Kingdom inscriptions describe the cemetery as a niw.t, 'town' or 'city', thus implying that those buried there were members of a community in some sense. Nevertheless, we found no evidence of any belief that the social structure of this world would be mirrored in the hereafter. We did find evidence, however, of a wider variety of interaction between the dead and the living, in addition to the cult of offerings. Just as the living cared for the dead, the latter were thought to be able to perform services for the former, for example, interceding on their behalf before the gods. But interaction between the two groups was not always harmonious, and antagonism could arise between them on occasion.

Prelude to Osiris II: Conceptions of the Afterlife in the Early Dynastic Period and the First Half of the Old Kingdom.

First, no evidence was found to support the widely held view that royal and non-royal expectations for the afterlife differed significantly at any time during the period surveyed. Second, no evidence was found to support the view that the royal sphere was the source of all innovation as far as ideas about and preparation for the hereafter were concerned. In fact, most innovations in this realm are attested in the non-royal sphere first during the period surveyed, but this does not mean that this is where they originated, just as the fact that something is attested first in the royal sphere does not prove that it originated there. It is more likely that the boundaries between the royal and non-royal spheres were less rigidly drawn than is commonly supposed, and that there was a regular exchange of ideas between them, with innovation and borrowing on both sides. Even in non-royal burials, new ideas about and preparations for the next world do not always appear in larger and wealthier tombs first. Finally, the view that royal expectations for the afterlife were grander than non-royal ones during the period covered in this chapter was shown to be based primarily on the fact that royal tombs were more elaborate than non-royal ones. But no evidence was found for any correlation between the size and cost of a tomb and its owner's aspirations for the hereafter.

Unreading the Pyramid Texts.

So, Who is Osiris? focused on two questions. The first was: how and when did belief in Osiris originate? It was not possible to determine how belief in that god arose, but it was established that the earliest securely datable references to Osiris occur on the northern false door in the tomb of Ti at Saqqara. This object was decorated and inscribed in the reign of the ephemeral fifth dynasty ruler Renefered. The earliest reference to Osiris on a royal monument occurs somewhat later, in the pyramid temple of Djedkare Izezi. Thereafter, from the reign

of Unis onward, he is mentioned frequently in the corpus of Pyramid Text spells. In view of what we learned in Chapter 2, it is not surprising that references to Osiris appear in non-royal sources before they do in royal ones, although the significance of this should not be overestimated, for reasons explained in that chapter. From his earliest attestations, Osiris was a god associated with the dead, so it appears that belief in Osiris and belief in the Osirian afterlife arose at the same time.

The second question investigated in Chapter 3 was: what is the nature of the relationship envisaged between Osiris and the deceased in the earliest sources that associate the two? In the earliest non-royal inscriptions of this type, Osiris and the dead are clearly two distinct entities, but the latter are dependent on the former for their needs in the afterlife. This relationship is expressed by means of epithets like 'imakh before Osiris' and the htp di nswt offering formula in which the god is named as a donor. Osiris is not the only god on whom the deceased depend, however. He provides their requirements and facilitates their social reintegration in the afterlife along with other deities, some of whom, like Anubis, are attested in this role before Osiris is.

The earliest royal sources that attest to a relationship between the god and the dead are the Pyramid Texts. These make contradictory statements about that relationship. Some spells in the Pyramid Text corpus clearly treat Osiris and the deceased king as distinct entities, while others identify the two with each other. A number of spells do both. These apparent contradictions are resolved, however, when we analyse the Pyramid Texts as ritual utterances rather than expositions of theology or treatises describing what the ancient Egyptians thought would happen in the afterlife. Some statements in them were meant to be valid only in the immediate context of the rite in which they were uttered but not outside of it. Others had validity in the wider world outside that context as well, what we might call the 'world beyond the spell'. Those statements in Pyramid Text utterances that identify the deceased king with Osiris fall into the first category. Those that distinguish the two fall into the second. The deceased king's identity as Osiris was never intended to be socially permanent. Rather it was transitory and ritually contingent. Beyond the world of the spell, the permanent relationship envisaged between deceased kings and Osiris was exactly the same as that envisaged between him and their subjects. Members of both groups were distinct from, and subordinate to, the god.

Our investigation of these two questions raised an issue of broader methodological significance. How should one read and interpret ritual texts? If a spell that identifies the deceased king with Osiris was not supposed to transform him into that god, then what was it supposed to do? More generally, if the contents of a spell are not a reliable guide to its function, how can we determine what its function was? How can we discover what impact the recitation of that utterance was supposed to have in the world beyond the spell?

We found that paratextual evidence, for example, titles and colophons, provides us with a useful means of ascertaining this information. Although relatively rare in the Pyramid Texts, these tell us in a straightforward way what a given ritual utterance was supposed to do. They comment upon the function

of the spells without being embedded in their ritual context. Thus their interpretation is not subject to the same ambiguities that limit our understanding of the utterances to which they are attached. Consequently, if a specific statement about the fate of the deceased king in a Pyramid Text spell is confirmed by paratextual evidence, then we are justified in accepting it as evidence of something that the Egyptians of that time actually hoped would happen to the spell's beneficiary in the hereafter. But if that statement is contradicted by paratextual evidence, then it was probably only valid in the context of the ritual in which it was recited and had no wider reality. It emerged from our investigation that the limited amount of para-textual evidence we have from the Pyramid Texts confirms those statements in them that distinguish the king and Osiris and contradicts those that identify them.

Are there any other less ambiguous Old Kingdom sources that can help us to identify those statements in the corpus of Pyramid Text spells that are not just ritually contingent but reflect genuine Egyptian hopes for the afterlife? We saw that the wishes in offering formulas in contemporary private tombs have a major contribution to make in this endeavour, since they give us a very good idea of the things to which the non-royal deceased aspired during the period in question. Strikingly, we can find direct parallels for all of these wishes in both the paratextual evidence preserved in the Pyramid Text corpus and in actual Pyramid Text spells. Not only are the same hopes and aspirations found in private offering formulas reflected in those utterances as well, they cluster together in the same groups in the Pyramid Texts as they do in the private offering formulas, indicating that both drew upon a common source. This further supports the conclusion reached in Chapter 2 that rulers and subjects shared common aspirations for the hereafter during the Old Kingdom. It also demonstrates the importance of viewing the Pyramid Texts from a synchronic perspective, as part of a range of texts for the afterlife that were in use concurrently, each of which can help to elucidate the others.

The Pyramid Texts provide us with the earliest examples of the locution Wsir NN, in which the name of the deceased king is preceded by that of Osiris. Later in the Old Kingdom, this appears in private tombs as well. We found that, initially, the locution served to identify the dead as recipients of sustenance under the auspices of Osiris, although it soon came to be a more generic marker of the deceased's affiliation with the god. In this respect, Wsir NN is not unlike the epithet imakh before Osiris' or the htp di nswt offering formula in which Osiris is named as donor, and its pattern of distribution is complementary to theirs. Other deities provided for the deceased's needs as well. However, there was one important difference between these gods and Osiris. Unlike them, he had triumphed over death, and the ability to do likewise could be conferred upon his followers. The colophon of Pyramid Text Spell 561B states that whoever worships Osiris will live for ever, showing that already at this date those who devoted themselves to the god might expect to share in his resurrection.

Democratizing the Afterlife? Aspects of the Osirian Afterlife during the Transition from the Late Old Kingdom to the Middle Kingdom

The first question investigated in Chapter 4 was: why are no spells like those in the Pyramid Texts displayed in non-royal tombs before the First Intermediate Period? The most widely accepted answer to this question is provided by the theory of the democratization of the afterlife, the idea that in the social upheavals that followed the Old Kingdom, privileges formerly reserved for royalty, like identification with Osiris and integration into the hierarchy of the gods in the next world, were usurped by non-royal individuals who had gained access to copies of the spells and rituals that were believed to confer them. We found no evidence to support this theory. Instead, we found that not only did non-royal individuals have the same aspirations for the afterlife as their rulers during the Old Kingdom, they could and did employ the same corpus of spells to ensure their posthumous existence as their rulers, even though they did not display them in their tombs. Furthermore, we saw that the power of kings to influence or control use of burial space was limited, so it is hard to see how any restrictions on the use of such spells could have been enforced. Consequently, the initial appearance of Pyramid Text spells and related texts in private tombs after the end of the Old Kingdom did not mark a change of ritual or belief that widened access to the texts in question, but rather a change in what was selected for display in the burial context. Access and display are two very different things.

The evidence showed that the Egyptian conception of the relationship between Osiris and the deceased remained essentially the same throughout the transition from the Old to the Middle Kingdom, despite the political turmoil that characterized that period. This is significant because it shows that religious change is not necessarily linked to political change; one can happen without the other. There were nevertheless some important developments in terms of how and in what contexts ideas about the relationship of Osiris with the deceased were presented, and new sources inform us about aspects of it which are not mentioned in earlier ones. These new developments and sources were the focus of attention in the second part of 4. Democratizing the Afterlife? Aspects of the Osirian Afterlife during the Transition from the Late Old Kingdom to the Middle Kingdom.

The first new sources to be considered there were the Coffin Texts, spells for the afterlife which began to be inscribed on coffins and other items of burial equipment belonging to non-royal individuals in the First Intermediate Period. Like the Pyramid Texts, these configure the relationship between Osiris and the dead in more than one way. Some spells assert that the deceased are distinct from Osiris, others identify them with that god. Some spells do both. We found that these apparent contradictions could be explained in the same way as those that we encountered in the Pyramid Texts. The deceased's identification with Osiris was temporary and ritually contingent. It was valid at the moment of a spell's recitation but not beyond that fleeting event. Paratextual evidence in the form of titles and colophons showed that what the composers of the Coffin Text spells really envisaged was a posthumous existence

in which the dead would interact with Osiris, performing services for the god and enjoying various benefits arising from association with him in return, not one in which they would become Osiris. This evidence was confirmed by other sources contemporary with the Coffin Text corpus. As these make clear, the benefits conferred by association with Osiris were not restricted to the tiny minority of individuals who were able to afford an elaborately decorated and inscribed coffin, but could be enjoyed by others as well. Kings of this time did not have coffins inscribed with spells either, but there is sufficient evidence from other sources to show how their relationship with Osiris was envisaged. Like their subjects, rulers of the First Intermediate Period and Middle Kingdom looked forward to interaction, not identification, with that god.

An important new development of the period covered in Chapter 4 was the rise to prominence of Abydos as a cult centre of Osiris, and the importance of the annual mysteries celebrated for him there. These offered an occasion when the deceased could participate in the god's worship in this world as well as in the next. Being a follower of Osiris enabled the deceased to span both worlds, and Abydos served as an interface between them. A related development was the increasing importance of the *ba* in the relationship between Osiris and the dead. In this form, the dead could leave the underworld and travel to other spheres of the cosmos like the sky and earth, an activity known as 'going forth by day'.

In this period we found the first unambiguous evidence for the association of Osiris with two other important deities, Sokar and Khentimentiu. He is syncretized with the former and effectively absorbs the latter, so that Khentimentiu becomes nothing more than an epithet of Osiris. As far as can be judged, however, these new associations did not have any significant impact on the relationship between that god and the dead. Evidence for a syncretism between Osiris and Re is more equivocal during the period covered in Chapter 4. Nevertheless, the sun god played an important role in Egyptian hopes and aspirations for the afterlife at this time, as did the goddess Hathor. The origins of the later practice whereby deceased women could be affiliated with her rather than Osiris can be traced back as far as the late Old Kingdom.

One final new development of the period treated in this chapter was the increasing importance of justification as a prerequisite for enjoying the benefits of membership in the following of Osiris. Whereas before this goal could be attained either with the help of ritual utterances or through divine intervention, sometimes in response to the prayers of the living, now justification began to assume greater significance. This meant not simply vindication in a dispute involving a specific enemy or opponent, but the positive assessment of one's character and conduct as a whole. In some sources of this period, Osiris himself is said to be in charge of the tribunal where the deceased are judged, but just as often the sun god assumes this function, as he does in later periods as well.

The practice of mummification was by no means universal during the period covered in Chapter 4, so this was not a prerequisite for becoming a follower of Osiris. The rituals performed and the spells recited in conjunction with whatever treatment the body received were more important for this

purpose than the nature of the treatment itself. These actually incorporated an assessment of the deceased's character, which paralleled or prefigured the one conducted in the next world. By confirming that the dead were free from sin, they helped to secure their acceptance among the followers of Osiris. A further measure of the importance that posthumous justification had come to assume by this time is the fact that the living were sometimes called 'justified' proleptically in tomb inscriptions and other texts that were meant to function as permanent records. Even though they had yet to emerge successfully from the divine tribunal, the aspiration was that they would do so, and this needed to be recorded for the sake of posterity.

Re Resting in Osiris, Osiris Resting in Re: Osiris, Sun God, and the Deceased in the New Kingdom

We examined whether the relationship between Osiris and the deceased was influenced by developments in solar religion during the New Kingdom and, if so, how. The chapter was divided into two parts. In the first part we looked at the status of Osiris as god of the dead during the Amarna Period. Little evidence was found for the persecution of Osiris in the reign of Akhenaten, unlike some other deities like Amun whose names and images were deliberately effaced on his orders. A number of sources that mention Osiris or other Egyptian gods associated with the Osirian afterlife like Anubis have been dated to Akhenaten's reign by Egyptologists. Closer investigation revealed that many of these were actually earlier or later. Even when such items were removed from consideration, however, the evidence for continued belief in the Osirian afterlife during the Amarna Period proved to be more abundant than one might have expected. Nor was it confined to minor objects, a few specific geographical areas, or particular years within Akhenaten's reign. Was he aware of this survival and, if so, was it a matter of concern to him? We cannot say for certain, but if it was, then the king's ability to influence developments in the religious sphere and, in particular, the beliefs of his subjects concerning the afterlife, may have been more circumscribed than is generally supposed.

One particular theory was investigated, according to which Akhenaten neither proscribed nor ignored Osiris, but deliberately took over his functions and attributes, even retaining the god's traditional iconography, identifying himself with Osiris as the son of the Aten. The evidence cited in support of this view was chiefly iconographic, consisting of two- and three-dimensional representations allegedly depicting the king in the form of that god. But we found that there was no reason to think that any of these actually did so. Moreover, the dating of many of the representations in question to the reign of Akhenaten was questionable, if not impossible. Thus there was no real basis for thinking that he ever identified himself with Osiris.

The nature of the evidence surveyed in the first part of Chapter 5 invited us to rethink some of the commonly held assumptions about the conception of the afterlife in Amarna religion. One of these is the idea that Akhenaten thought only in terms of a single world, this one, inhabited by both the living and the dead. References to the west and to the underworld in texts of this time, some of which are found in tombs of high-

ranking officials at Amarna itself, show that this was not the case. The latter was not just a euphemism for 'tomb' or 'burial place' as some have interpreted it, but a real venue where the deceased could enjoy social interaction with others, just as it was in earlier and later periods of Egyptian history. Another idea that did not withstand close scrutiny is that Akhenaten was regarded as the sole guarantor of posthumous existence during the Amarna Period. There is abundant evidence that the Egyptians of this time looked not only to the king for fulfilment of their hopes and aspirations for the afterlife, but to the Aten as well. In fact, there is still considerable scope for further elucidation of the latter's role as a god of the hereafter.

In the second part of 5. Re Resting in Osiris, Osiris Resting in Re: Osiris, Sun God, and the Deceased in the New Kingdom, we investigated the phenomenon known as the 'solar-Osirian unity', which some have claimed characterizes the post-Amarna New Kingdom, and how this affected Egyptian ideas concerning the relationship between Osiris and the deceased. We looked first at the earlier conception of the nocturnal union of Re and Osiris in the underworld, according to which the sun god travelled through that region each night, where he encountered and temporarily united with Osiris, to the mutual benefit of both. In Egyptian sources, this was sometimes characterized as a union of ba and corpse, with Re in the role of the former and Osiris in that of the latter. It could also be described as 'Re resting in Osiris and Osiris resting in Re'. The most detailed evidence for this conception is preserved in the guides to the underworld and related sources of the New Kingdom. We were unable to document its existence in a fully developed form prior to that time, although the idea that the sun god entered the underworld at night already features in some Coffin Text spells.

Some have maintained that a change in the conception of the nocturnal union between Re and Osiris occurred in the later New Kingdom. No longer was it regarded as a cyclically recurring event of limited duration which took place at a certain point each night. Instead it was seen as a permanent union, effectively creating a new super-deity, a single entity conjoining both Re and Osiris in a way that was totally unprecedented, the 'great god' Re-Osiris. This new conception is called the solar-Osirian unity in Egyptological literature. But we found that the texts and representations cited in support of this view by its proponents clearly distinguished Re and Osiris as separate deities. Therefore they could not be used as evidence for a conception involving a permanent union between them. Thus there was no reason to think that the original conception of a temporary nightly union of Re and Osiris was ever modified or abandoned.

One point that emerged from our scrutiny of the evidence for the solar-Osirian unity is the disparity in the relationship between Re and Osiris in the underworld guides and related sources. Re is pre-eminent and Osiris subordinate to him. Osiris rules the underworld, but he exercises his power alongside and under the supervision of Re. What has sometimes been interpreted as evidence for a permanent union between the two gods is actually a reflection of this unequal relationship. Moreover, Osiris is also linked with Re in other ways in sources of this period: as the moon who replaces him in the sky at night,

or as the nocturnal sun who illumines the underworld during the hours of darkness, just as Re shines over the land of the living during the day. Osiris can even replace Re altogether, being visible in the sky at all times, as the sun during the day and as the moon at night. But we found that statements identifying him in this way only occur in hymns and other texts recited during the performance of Osiris's cult. What is said to or about the god in such texts is ritually contingent, and does not describe an objective or wider reality.

The various ways in which Osiris is associated with the sun god all have one important feature in common. They link him with Re as part of an eternally recurring cycle. For this reason, 'solar-Osirian cycle' is preferable to 'solar-Osirian unity' as a term to characterize the relationship between the two gods in all its diverse aspects. In our investigation we found that the deceased were thought to benefit from this cycle in four different ways. First, the cycle ensures that the cosmos continues to function, which is in turn a precondition for the continuity of the afterlife. Second, the ba/body relationship of Re and Osiris provides a model for that between the ba and body of every deceased person. Third, the deceased can participate in the cycle that links Re and Osiris, e.g. by travelling in the day and night barks of the sun god. Thus they are fully integrated within that cycle. Fourth and finally, knowledge of what happens in the underworld is valuable in its own right. The deceased benefit not only from the fact that Re rests in Osiris and Osiris in Re, but from knowing about it as well.

The benefits that the dead were supposed to derive from the union of these two gods did not include identification with them. We found no evidence that the Egyptians believed the deceased would be identified with either of these deities. Nor were the benefits restricted to members of a particular social group. Our investigation showed that the ideas and concepts underlying the guides to the underworld were equally relevant to both royalty and non-royalty. During the New Kingdom only a small number of non-royal individuals included these guides in the decoration of their tombs. A much larger number, however, incorporated their most salient themes and motifs in texts written on papyrus and other media so that they too could benefit from them. The evidence indicates that the Egyptians of the New Kingdom did not envisage a royal afterlife that differed radically from the non-royal one. Both kings and their subjects were admitted to the underworld on equal terms. Once there, they benefited equally from participation in the solar-Osirian cycle.

New Rulers, New Beliefs? Osiris and the Dead during the Transition from the Late Period to the Ptolemaic Period

The first question investigated in Chapter 6 was: did the change to Greek rule in the fourth century BC, in particular, the establishment of the Ptolemaic dynasty, have an impact on Egyptian ideas about the afterlife? To answer this question, three categories of evidence were considered: conceptions of the hereafter in general, the actual texts that were used to benefit the deceased in the afterlife, and funerary art. In all three categories we found that there was significant continuity between the Late Period and the ensuing Ptolemaic Period. As far as we could judge from the textual, representational, and

archaeological evidence, the change to Greek rule near the end of the fourth century did not have a significant impact on Egyptian beliefs about the afterlife. Some intermingling of Greek and Egyptian ideas about the hereafter did take place in the Roman Period, with Greeks borrowing ideas from Egyptians and vice versa. But in view of the late date of the evidence for this type of borrowing, it cannot be connected with the rise of the Ptolemaic dynasty.

The second question investigated was: did the change to Greek rule have an impact on the way in which Egyptians conceptualized the relationship between Osiris and the deceased? Our investigation showed that it did not. Some have argued that the Egyptian conception of the deceased individual and that person's relation to Osiris did undergo a substantial alteration in the Ptolemaic Period. The chief piece of evidence cited by proponents of such a view is the locution *Wsir n NN*, 'Osiris of NN', a variant form of the more common locution *Wsir NN*, conventionally translated 'Osiris NN', which was used to designate the deceased. Since the first instances of this variant form to come to scholarly attention were found in texts dating to the Graeco-Roman Period, it was assumed that it must be a development specific to that time, which reflected Greek influence on Egyptian religion. But our investigation showed that the locution *Wsir n NN* was in use long before the Greeks began arriving in Egypt. It is already attested in the Coffin Texts. Thus it was not an innovation of the Ptolemaic Period, and was not influenced in any way by Greek thought.

In fact, both *Wsir n NN* and *Wsir NN* have to be translated 'Osiris of NN'. One employs the indirect genitive, a possessive construction in which the Egyptian word corresponding to 'of' is actually written out. The other uses the direct genitive, in which it is omitted and the terms denoting the thing possessed and its possessor are simply juxtaposed. At all times, therefore, the Egyptians referred to the deceased as 'Osiris of NN' when they wished to foreground their relationship to the god of the dead. The variant of this locution with the genitival 'of' actually written out becomes more common from the twenty-first dynasty onward, reflecting a development in the Egyptian language well-attested at that time: the progressive obsolescence of the direct genitive and its replacement in various compound constructions by the indirect genitive.

Another locution which has been cited as evidence for a change in the way that the Egyptians conceptualized the relationship between Osiris and the deceased is 'Hathor of NN', which was sometimes used to denote dead women instead of 'Osiris of NN'. Since the first examples of that locution to come to scholarly attention were found in texts dating to the Graeco-Roman Period, it was assumed to have been an innovation of that time, with some claiming that its introduction was the result of Greek influence. However, our investigation revealed an example where a woman was designated as 'Hathor of NN' in a text dating to the twenty-third dynasty. Thus the locution was in use long before the first Greeks arrived in Egypt. It reflects a propensity for employing gender as a basis for classification and association: males are identified as followers of a male deity and females as followers of a female deity. As we saw in 4. Democratizing the Afterlife? Aspects of the Osirian Afterlife during the Transition from the Late Old Kingdom to

the Middle Kingdom, this practice had a long history in Egypt, and can be paralleled in numerous Egyptian sources of earlier date.

The third question investigated in 6. New Rulers, New Beliefs? Osiris and the Dead during the Transition from the Late Period to the Ptolemaic Period was: did the rise to prominence of the god Sarapis under Ptolemaic sponsorship influence Egyptian perceptions of the relationship between Osiris and the deceased? The evidence examined showed that it did not. Osiris was sometimes identified with Sarapis. In a few texts relating to the afterlife, Sarapis is used as an alternative name for Osiris. These texts portray the god as a powerful ruler, a saviour who protects his subjects and punishes their enemies. Since Sarapis was himself a royal god, sometimes explicitly designated as a saviour, we considered the possibility that this image of Osiris and what he is expected to do for the deceased might have been influenced in some way by his association with that deity. But it emerged that there were good Egyptian antecedents for this image which could be traced back well before the arrival of the first Greeks in Egypt. Thus it could not be ascribed to foreign influence or explained as a development of the Ptolemaic Period.

We used the case of Sarapis and Osiris as a further opportunity to assess the power of kings to affect developments in the sphere of religious belief, but found that the ability of the Ptolemies to influence what people actually thought about Osiris was limited. Those rulers fostered a relationship between Sarapis and Osiris as symbols of kingship. In doing so, they exploited this for political purposes, using it to enhance the prestige of their family line by association with those two royal deities. But this did not constitute a religious change. Osiris was a royal god, and Egyptian rulers had already sought to legitimize themselves by association with their divine counterparts for centuries previously. Thus the Ptolemies were simply continuing an indigenous tradition of long standing.

Our investigations in Chapter 6 highlighted three key points. The first was that when seeking to trace changes in Egyptian conceptions of the afterlife in the Graeco-Roman Period we cannot study the evidence of that period in isolation. It has to be viewed in conjunction with that of earlier periods as well. Otherwise, we might overlook important connections between the two bodies of evidence, or precedents for what appear to be new ideas in sources of much greater antiquity. The second point was the arbitrary nature of the distinction often made by Egyptologists between the Graeco-Roman Period and earlier periods of Egyptian history when studying Egyptian religion. The third and final point was that this arbitrary distinction creates the spurious impression that the Ptolemaic and Roman Periods were themselves a unity, when in fact there were some significant differences between them.

In 7. Where is the King of the Two Lands? The End of Belief in the Osirian Afterlife, we traced the end of belief in the Osirian afterlife in Egypt using four different places as case studies: the Akhmim region, Philae, Abydos, and Thebes. We found that the evidence for such belief ceased at different times in each place, ranging from the middle of the second century AD, if not earlier, to the third quarter of the fourth century. In some

of the places studied, the end of belief in the Osirian afterlife was coterminous with the end of belief in Osiris himself; in others it was not. At Philae, for instance, the evidence for a cult of Osiris continues until the middle of the fifth century AD, about 75 years after that for belief in the Osirian afterlife ceases. Furthermore, the end of belief in Osiris in a given locality did not necessarily entail the end of traditional Egyptian religion as a whole there. In some places, to judge from the evidence that we considered, other manifestations of traditional religion persisted well after belief in Osiris had stopped. Thus each of the four places that we investigated revealed its own distinct local patterns of religious change.

We found evidence for Osirian belief in both official and private religious spheres. In most instances, it appears to have persisted in the latter longer than it did in the former. Thus belief in the Osirian afterlife was not dependent on the continuation of that god's cult in temples. The gradual withdrawal of state support for Egyptian temples and other religious institutions during the second and third centuries was a serious blow to their chances of long-term survival. Temples that hosted cults of Osiris would have been no less affected by this development than any others. But we found no evidence for suppression of belief in Osiris or the Osirian afterlife by the state. Nor, in view of all that we have learned in earlier chapters about the limited power of rulers and governments to influence what ordinary people actually believed, is it easy to imagine how such a policy could have been implemented, even if a conscious decision to do so had been taken.

We went on to survey evidence for the persistence of belief in Osiris and the Osirian afterlife in cities and regions of Egypt that were not covered in our four case studies. In these other places, as in most of those treated in the case studies, belief in the Osirian afterlife gradually disappeared during the course of the second and third centuries AD. Magical texts apart, which may need to be treated as a special case, we found no direct evidence for persistence of belief in Osiris himself as late as the fourth century anywhere in Egypt other than Philae. The graffiti from that island are by far the latest witnesses that we have for the survival of such belief in an Egyptian context. The cult of Osiris may have survived longer in countries to the north and south of Egypt than it did in Egypt itself.

At the beginning of 7. Where is the King of the Two Lands? The End of Belief in the Osirian Afterlife, the existence of two different models for the end of traditional Egyptian religion was noted: the conflict and triumph model and the gradual disappearance model. Our investigation revealed no trustworthy evidence for direct conflict between Christians and adherents of traditional Egyptian religion in the places that we studied. Rather, it would appear that the former did not impinge upon the latter in any meaningful way. At the sites investigated in this chapter, moreover, the evidence for belief in the Osirian afterlife, and for the practice of traditional Egyptian religion more generally, did not cease suddenly or all at once. Instead, a gradual process of decline and contraction was observed, proceeding at different rates in each locality. In some places, this process extended over centuries. Thus the evidence of our four case studies speaks unambiguously in favour of the gradual disappearance model, not just for belief

in the Osirian afterlife, but for other manifestations of traditional Egyptian religion as well.

It will be evident from this summary that several themes recur again and again in the book. Some of these were already signalled in the introduction. One is the relationship between religion and politics. The book emphasizes the disjunction between religious change and political change. The former cannot always be explained as a consequence of the latter. Moreover, it highlights the limitations on the power of a king or government to influence religious ideas, in particular, ideas relating to the sphere of the afterlife. Most rulers probably had no interest in trying to do so. Those that did, whether Akhenaten or the Emperor Constantius II, seem to have had little success in imposing their views on their subjects. Some anthropologists distinguish 'cold' prescriptive societies from 'hot' performative ones. In the former, the existing social order is reproduced without contradiction. In the latter, social action and discourse are not so constrained by rules and norms.' From our investigation it would appear that, in terms of religion at least, ancient Egypt was not such a prescriptive society as many have thought.

A second recurrent theme is the importance of looking at the widest possible range of evidence when investigating ideas and practices relating to the afterlife. This has various ramifications. One is that we must try to contextualize evidence both diachronically and synchronically. Another is that we should refrain from dividing the evidence into arbitrary categories like 'royal' and 'non-royal' or 'elite' and 'non-elite', and then looking at each in isolation. If we do so, we are liable to miss significant connections and parallels between evidence in one category and that in another.

The Pyramid Texts, for instance, are part of a continuum of Egyptian ritual texts extending over many centuries, and need to be viewed as such if we are to interpret them correctly. But we also need to look at them as part of a range of texts dealing with the afterlife that were in use concurrently during the Old Kingdom, some royal and others not, each of which can contribute to a better understanding of the others. Likewise, we gain a better idea of how widely the benefits of spells like the ones in the Coffin Texts of the First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom were diffused when we study those utterances in conjunction with texts on contemporary objects like stelae, offering tables, and false doors made for people who did not own coffins inscribed with Coffin Text spells. In the New Kingdom, if we focus exclusively upon guides to the underworld in royal tombs, we are apt to miss important parallels to some of their contents in contemporary private tombs or in Book of the Dead manuscripts made for non-royal individuals. One serious consequence, if we fail to take all the evidence into account when analysing sources like those just described, is that we may be led to posit the existence of distinct aspirations for the afterlife based on social class or economic status which are entirely artificial. In no period of Egyptian history did we find any evidence for such distinctions. In particular, we found no evidence that the Egyptians ever envisaged separate afterlives for royalty and non-royalty.

A third theme is the importance of dating the evidence at our disposal accurately. Many of the problems and uncertainties

that we encountered in the course of this book arose because we were unable to date particular types of evidence with any degree of precision. We were faced with this challenge at the very outset of our investigations. What is the date of the earliest reference to Osiris in our sources? The earliest securely datable reference is from the reign of the fifth dynasty king Reneferef. There may be earlier ones, but because of uncertainty over the exact age of the monuments in which these occur, we cannot be sure. At the other end of our time frame, in considering the latest evidence for belief in Osiris at Abydos, our investigation was hampered by the fact that, with rare exceptions, the Greek graffiti in the temple of Seti I that attest to the final stages of this belief do not inform us when they were written, and our knowledge of the palaeography of these is insufficient to date them precisely by that means. If dating methods are ever improved, we can expect a corresponding increase in our understanding of when key developments in the history of belief in the Osirian afterlife actually took place.

A fourth theme is the desirability of scrutinizing local and regional manifestations of religious belief carefully before one tries to combine the evidence pertaining to these into a bigger picture. This theme was especially prominent in 7. Where is the King of the Two Lands? The End of Belief in the Osirian Afterlife with its four case studies, each devoted to a specific locality. But it is a feature of earlier chapters as well. We should be sensitive to the possibility that a given phenomenon may be purely local or regional. Did ideas about the afterlife vary from one locality to another in predynastic and early dynastic Egypt or were they more or less the same throughout the land? Was Osiris originally a local god? To what extent should we regard the Pyramid Texts, at least in their initial phase of use, as a local, distinctively Memphite corpus of spells? How localized was Amarna religion? What happens when we study the guides to the underworld of the New Kingdom and later as manifestations of a specifically Theban conception of the relationship between Re and Osiris? Even if we cannot provide definitive answers to questions like these, it is still of benefit to pose them.

A fifth and final recurrent theme is the limitations of the different kinds of evidence at our disposal. Here too, there are various aspects to consider. Can ritual texts actually inform us about Egyptian aspirations for the afterlife? As we discovered, the answer is yes, but only if we can distinguish between those statements in them that are ritually contingent and those that are not. We cannot simply read ritual texts as menus or blueprints detailing what the deceased hoped or expected to do in the hereafter. This applies not only to the spells in the Pyramid Texts of the Old Kingdom, but to those in the Coffin Texts and Book of the Dead of later periods as well.

Archaeological evidence, when unaccompanied by texts, also has its limitations. We saw repeatedly that one cannot infer religious belief, in particular, beliefs about the afterlife, from material remains or artefacts alone. For this purpose, written evidence is essential. We reached this conclusion as a result of our investigation of the predynastic period, a time before writing had actually been invented in Egypt. But it was reinforced by our study of evidence from later periods when

writing was in regular use. For example, various theories have been advanced which explain the pyramid as a stairway to the stars, a stylized representation of the sun's rays, or a symbol of the primeval mound. However, these lack credibility because there is no written evidence to support them. In point of fact, written evidence refutes them, showing that for the ancient Egyptians the pyramid had a totally different meaning. Likewise, we found no justification for the view that some coffins, shrouds, and mummy portraits of the Graeco-Roman Period portray the deceased in the form of the goddess Hathor. In some instances, their iconography does not resemble that of Hathor. In others, it is more characteristic of the goddess Isis. Examples like this illustrate how unreliable identifications made solely on the basis of iconography can be, irrespective of the date of the material involved.

BENEFITS OF THE INVESTIGATIVE APPROACH ADOPTED IN THIS BOOK

What are the benefits of investigating a topic like belief in the Osirian afterlife using the approach adopted in this book? In my view, there are several. First, looking at and comparing evidence for a phenomenon from several different periods rather than only one affords us a wider perspective on the problems that it raises and gives us a better chance of solving them. A good example of this is the practice of using masculine personal pronouns in conjunction with feminine ones to refer to deceased women in texts for the afterlife. According to one theory, based on the evidence from only a single period, women acquired both male and female aspects in the hereafter, and where masculine pronouns were used in such texts it was specifically their male aspects that were invoked. Masculine or feminine pronouns were chosen for particular sections of a text, depending on the magical agenda of the sections in question. But when we assemble and compare the evidence for this phenomenon from all periods of Egyptian history, it becomes clear that this theory is untenable. Masculine and feminine pronouns alternate with each other in passages where there can be no question of a change in magical agenda. We even find shifts from one type of pronoun to the other within the same sentence.

The real explanation for such variation is that the vast majority of extant Egyptian texts for the afterlife are based on models originally drafted for men. When these were adapted for women, some of the masculine personal pronouns were altered to feminine ones, but this was not always carried through consistently. Thus we find both masculine and feminine personal pronouns used side by side in the same text. Precisely the same is true where texts originally drafted for a woman were adapted for a man, so it is clear that a new gender is not being attributed to the deceased for magical reasons. But in neither case can the fact that some pronouns were left unchanged be explained as a result of carelessness or scribal errors. This is shown by the fact that several texts which display variation of pronoun gender were inscribed on expensive objects of careful workmanship made for high-ranking individuals. It emerges that, for the Egyptians, what was of paramount importance was to have one's name mentioned in or

otherwise associated with a text for the afterlife. If the gender of the personal pronouns used in that text was the same as that of the beneficiary, so much the better, but this was not absolutely essential. However, this fact only becomes apparent when one looks at the full range of available evidence.

Another advantage of comparing evidence from many periods is that a text from one period can often illuminate one from another period in a way that other texts from that period cannot. As noted, the statement in the Abydos Stela of Ramesses IV that Re and Osiris speak 'as one mouth' has been interpreted by some to mean that they are regarded as a single entity, but this ignores the idiomatic nature of the expression in question, which actually means 'of one accord, in agreement'. The correct meaning of the statement can be elucidated with the help of demotic legal texts of the Ptolemaic Period, where a cognate expression occurs and the sense is unambiguous.

Likewise, comparison of a development that took place in one period with a similar development that took place in a different period can help to elucidate both. In looking at the identification of Osiris with Sokar, attested from the First Intermediate Period onward, for example, we observed that this did not seem to have had any significant impact on the relationship between Osiris and the deceased. This view was corroborated by our study of the identification of Osiris with Sarapis, attested in the Ptolemaic Period and later. There too, the equation of the two deities did not really seem to affect how the relationship between Osiris and the dead was conceptualized. Thus the idea that this relationship was not necessarily altered when Osiris was identified with another deity is supported by evidence from two periods and not just one. In effect, the earlier identification of Osiris with Sokar provides a precedent that helps us better to understand the later one of Osiris with Sarapis. The same is true of the relationship between Osiris and Re attested in the New Kingdom underworld guides and that between Osiris and Amun as presented in Theban sources of the first millennium BC.

Furthermore, if we look at evidence from only a single period, we may be tempted to regard an idea or practice that we encounter there as an innovation of the period in question, ignoring or overlooking antecedents in earlier ones. Thus, we may be led to posit change where in fact there is continuity. Good examples of this that have emerged during the course of our investigations include the locution Wsir NN, once thought to be a development specific to the Graeco-Roman Period, but actually attested as early as the Coffin Texts; the locution 'Hathor of NN', once explained as an innovation resulting from Greek influence, but already attested in the twenty-third dynasty, centuries before the first Greek settlers arrived in Egypt; and the conception of Osiris as a strong active ruler who protects his subjects rather than a passive deity who requires protection himself. This owes nothing to his identification with Sarapis in the Ptolemaic Period, since it is already well attested centuries prior to the rise of the Ptolemaic dynasty.

More generally, an approach that utilizes the entire span of Egyptian history as a field for investigation provides scope for applying the standards of rigour normally employed in the

evaluation of evidence characteristic of one period of that history to the analysis of evidence from other periods. This not only provides a fresh way of looking at the evidence in question, it can also have the beneficial effect of exposing limitations in the approaches traditionally used to interpret it. A predynastic burial and a demotic papyrus of the Roman Period, for example, present two very different types of evidence, but there is no reason why these should not be evaluated with the same degree of rigour. In the final analysis, a fact-based argument is a fact-based argument and speculation is speculation, no matter what the date or nature of the material under scrutiny.

Finally, tracing a phenomenon like belief in the Osirian afterlife over a period of many centuries gives us a more coherent sense of it as something organic and continually developing rather than static. It allows us to distinguish between change and continuity more easily. Over time, Osiris acquired new characteristics and attributes, and the dead were thought to interact with him in new ways and in new venues. Likewise, the end of belief in the Osirian afterlife was not a sudden event, but a process of gradual contraction, with some features of that belief surviving longer than others. Which qualities or attributes of Osiris are found in all periods of Egyptian history and which are not? Which are found only rarely in some periods and more frequently in others? The broader perspective conferred by utilizing a period of millennia as our framework also gives us a better idea of the phenomenon of religious change itself, its manifold nature, and how it unfolds at different speeds and times in different places. Not least, it gives us a sense of the historic dimension, the overall span of time during which belief in Osiris as the god of the dead persisted as a powerful influence on the thoughts and actions of his devotees.

Eastspirit: Transnational Spirituality and Religious Circulation in East and West edited by Jørn Borup, Marianne Qvortrup Fibiger [(International Studies in Religion and Society, Brill Academic, 9789004350649]

Mindfulness, yoga, Tantra, Zen, martial arts, karma, *feng shui*, Ayurveda. Eastern ideas and practices associated with Asian religions and spirituality have been accommodated to a global setting as both a spiritual/religious and a broader cultural phenomenon. 'Eastern spirituality' is present in organized religions, the spiritual New Age market, arts, literature, media, therapy, and health care but also in public institutions such as schools and prisons. [Eastspirit: Transnational Spirituality and Religious Circulation in East and West](#) describes and analyses such concepts, practices and traditions in their new 'Western' and global contexts as well as in their transformed expressions and reappropriations in religious traditions and individualized spiritualities 'back in the East' within the framework of mutual interaction and circulation, regionally and globally.

Excerpt: Mindfulness and yoga are hot in the West. To judge from lifestyle magazines and commercials, so is Ayurveda, Chinese medicine and services or products branded by Zen or nirvana. Westerners convert to Buddhism, practice tantric sex or Eastern martial arts, buy Buddha figures, draw mandalas,

use dao therapy and believe in karma and reincarnation as never before. Asian soft power is part of a general “oriental globalization” or “Easternization” contributing to shaping both material and immaterial culture worldwide. Not least, elements within the fields of religion and spirituality appear to be globally adaptable and transferable culture exports. Eastern ideas and practices associated with Asian religions and spirituality have not only come within reach of organized convert religions, the spiritual New Age market and the broader mainstream culture, arts, literature, media, therapy and health care, but also public institutions such as schools and prisons. In other words, the “Eastern” ideas and practices have broadened their impact in many different spheres. But are they the same ideas and practices or are they changed in the process?

‘Eastspirit’ explores how, where, why, and the extent to which the West has accommodated and transformed such ideas and practices both as a spiritual/ religious and a broader cultural phenomenon. However, rather than merely focusing on one-way directions of influence, the point of departure for the anthology is understanding transformations and translocations within the framework of mutual interaction and circulation: regionally and globally. Although Eastern inspired re-enchantment of the West to a certain extent paradoxically parallels a disenchantment in Asia, it is also true that traditional Asian spirituality is still alive and appearing in new, transformed and localized expressions as well, and that ‘Westernized’ versions of Asian religious traditions have been reappropriated in religious traditions and/or individualized spiritualities back in the East. Yoga, meditation, feng shui, reiki and alternative medicine have appeared on the market in Asia in their ‘Western’ forms, bringing ‘Eastern spirituality’ back to ‘the East’ as well as among Asian diaspora communities in the West: ‘authentic Buddhism’ or ‘global Buddhism’ is discussed and negotiated both among youth in Ladakh and converted Hindus in Kathmandu; happiness is sought after through spirituality in China; Japanese ‘power spots’ are revived or invented in Japan; kundalini has become a transcultural psychosomatic phenomenon; new age in Taiwan is thriving at the market; ‘Hugging Amma’ is honored as a living deity by devotees both in India and Mauritius as well as in Europe; Zen is narrated as the core of Buddhism in Vietnam—both because of regional ‘intra-Asian’, transnational and global transformations and because of inspiration from Western fascination with and transformation of ‘traditional Eastern spirituality’.

The object of this anthology is to describe and analyze such circulations of networks, ideas and practices between East and West within religious and spiritual traditions. Although new media has made such circulations much faster and multifaceted, ‘this fluid process of cultural interaction, expansion, synthesis, borrowing, and change has been going on from the earliest moments of recorded history’. It explores historical and contemporary circuits of transcultural and global flows, aligning such empirical realities into broader understandings of the dynamics of religion and spirituality including human circulation (through migration, mission and personal encounters)

and circulation of ideas, practices, concepts, materiality and imaginaries.

The theoretical framework encapsulating such an endeavor does not necessarily transgress traditional gazes within the study of religion with its focus on space, locality and a diversity of religions. However, it will necessarily have to acknowledge the questioning of unilinear, territorialized and essentialized understanding of religion and culture in recent years, redirecting attention to the study of global networks, transnational human and cultural flows, fluidity and hybridity, and always emerging, constructed, and invented traditions. A ‘new paradigm’ also necessitates within the study of religion a “new agenda for the human sciences in the light of processes of human circulation and the redefinition of the perimeters of societies that are occurring across the entire planet”. This explores both the impact of globalization on religion and acknowledges the fact that religion, as a “motor of cultural dissemination”, is constituted by such circulations. The remaking of religion does not necessarily permeate all of global society; however, its effects can be felt everywhere. In religious worlds where ‘God needs no passport’, hybrid representations of identity thus always find new expressions in an ‘anthropology of becoming’ and ‘pops up’ as recreated configurations of traditions, or, as the Buddhists would say about cosmic interrelatedness, ‘dependent origination’. A network approach to understanding religious representations can thus be “a lens that views them not as discrete, homogenous entities but rather as a web of intersecting institutional and individual networks through which religious ideas, values, norms, memory, and practices flow”. Metaphors of movement (flow, navigation) and networks (webs, knots) are used and discussed in several of the chapters of this book, analyzing such dynamic changes, processes, and circulations of transcultural spiritualities.

Such exploration does not pretend to produce the steppingstones of a new grand narrative, nor necessarily reveal new structures of cultural or religious evolution or causality. The cases and chapters in this book do, however, collectively unfold patterns, networks and phenomena based on such processes and circulations.

One important gaze with which to explore these is history. Encounters between East and West have a long history, modernization and colonization being important contexts framing both the religious traditions and scholars’ understanding of them. Especially the 19th century was a context of burgeoning Orientalism and Occidentalism, but also for concrete encounters laying the foundation for later interaction. This was true for the process of understanding the others, integrating their (religious) worlds into the (mainly Western) scholarly containers, where ‘the West and the Rest’ were mapped accordingly, and religions of the East were ‘invented’. And it was true for the people carrying and producing religion when migrating across cultural boundaries. The counter culture movement was the true founding era for the masses to begin practicing and consuming Asian religions (Campbell 2007). Westerners went backpacking in Asia in larger numbers, some of whom came back as devoted converts within a general cultural fascination inspiring later generations picking up Eastern traditions via, for instance, New Age but

also New Religions in different forms. Asian missionaries with titles of guru, lama or sensei supplemented the popularization of Asian religion from the 1960s onwards, and names like Dalai Lama, Sogyal Rinpoche, Thích Nhất Hạnh, Deepak Chopra, C. C. Wang, Terry Hu, Sai Baba and 'Hugging Amma' Amrtā nandamayī have been important carriers and performers of 'Asian spirituality' on the global scene. Like their predecessors who were influential in modernizing Hinduism and Buddhism (Vivekananda, Krishnamurti, Hariharā nanda Ā ranya and Mahatma Gandhi in India, Dharmapala in Sri Lanka, Taixu in China, Shaku Sō en and D. T. Suzuki in Japan, Vajirañā no in Thailand and Trí Hâi in Vietnam), they point to the important fact that rather than being passive extras or merely victims, Asian cultures have (also through individuals and networks of people) actively contributed to global development. They were not, however, isolated individuals. Encounters and network with other Asian or Western influential persons and networks (e.g., artists, philosophers, psychologists, religious scholars or religionists such as The Theosophical Society) show the interconnectedness of such religious and cultural renewal and intellectual creativity.

Another 'push factor' having influenced this was the immigration phases of Asian refugees and migrants to the West. Indians came as workers or coolies to English and French colonies such as Mauritius, Reunion, and Trinidad; in the US (mainly California and Hawaii), Japanese and Chinese working migrants had already since the late 19th century been a visible part of early versions of multiculturalism in the West, naturally also bringing with them religious culture, later to be transformed and transferred to other generations and 'segments', also in a return 're-asianized' version. Indian Sā mkhyayoga and Ayur Vedic medicine, Japanese reiki, Vietnamese Zen, Taiwanese new age, Global Buddhism and American mindfulness are all products of such bricolage of sources, processes and multiple flows of transmission, adaptation, re-integration and re-contextualization.

Both diaspora and globalization contexts encourage reflection on authenticity, translation, authority and identity. In other words, it is natural for both Hindu migrants in Mauritius, Dalai Lama inspired young Indians, Thai Buddhists and post-Mao Chinese to ask: what is it, really, we are doing and believing in? Questions of authority and authenticity point to the fact that circulations also regenerate and produce conflicts and diversification. Who defines or represents orthodoxy and orthopraxy? Although globalization absorbs some differences, there are cultural, ethnic, and sectarian differentiations both between and within religious traditions. Circulation, in other words, also has its limits, as encounters show of Western and Thai Buddhists in meditation centers in Thailand, transcultural uses of mindfulness, the appropriation of Christianity in China, the different cultural contexts for sensory experiences of Zen Buddhism meditation and discussions of generational authority in Ladakh and Nepal. Broader historical contexts frame the possibility and quality of religious circulation, some of which are characteristic of being open to human and cultural encounters. Spirituality has also been sectarian, national(istic), and cultural(istic), and occasionally also generated by frictions and differentiations, as when neo-Hinduism and neo-Buddhism

were both mirrored on and seen as reaction to the encounter with 'Western modernity'.

Diversifications and premises for circulation are also relevant for discussing what in this anthology is actually meant by 'East', 'West'—and 'spirituality'. In a global era, it could be argued that notions of 'East' and 'West' have lost their empirical significance. Such broad generalizations do not carry the same semantic value they once did; furthermore, underlying assumptions of correlation between geography, culture, ethnicity and religiosity are simply no longer undisputed.

As several of the chapters also discuss, global networks and mediatized narratives are in themselves 'deterritorialized', challenging the very notions of 'East' and 'West'. But, as some of the historical cases show, cultural and religious hemispheres were important knots of orientation, and seem to be so beyond the academy also in contemporary times. As analytical concepts with operational relevance able to include repercussions of the transformation and hybridization of traditions, we use them as heuristic devices exploring concrete cases and broader frames of reference. To pragmatically keep an empirical focus, the 'West' is thus broadly concretized in those geographical and cultural contexts originating in Europe, while the spiritual traditions of the 'East' are those having originated in India and eastwards.

The concept of 'spiritual' and 'spirituality' is perhaps even fluffier and more analytically challenging. The meaning of the concept has changed throughout history and the uses vary according to both cultural and discursive context to the extent that the excess of semiotic fluidity has made some scholars suggest abandoning it entirely. Some of those scholars using the concept define it as a kind of religious search for authority within, being different from a traditional focus on another-worldly authority. 'Spirituality' is often used in emic discourses as a concept designating qualitatively higher or more authentic religiosity beyond or parallel to institutionalized religion and especially in the contemporary West many within the 'spiritual milieu' understand themselves as 'spiritual' rather than 'religious'. Spirituality is thus often found in (or ascribed to) domains outside of religion, e.g., health, art, psychology, therapy, media and commerce; furthermore, whether it expresses re-sacralization or a "symptom of secularization, not a durable counterforce to it", sociologists of religion find it typical of contemporary individualization. Spirituality in the West is often heavily influenced by Eastern traditions and Eastern religion is often simply identified as spirituality. Some Eastern religious ideas and practices have been spiritualized in the adaptation process, while others have become 'secularized' or even 'globalized' to the extent that their 'Eastern' roots have become irrelevant to users in both 'West' and 'East'. There is no art to pointing out that Tantra and Zen in the contemporary West are different from their classical, Asian counterparts. The interesting thing to ask is: how and why are they different? Who made them different? Which semiotic stretches have they undergone, and for whom?

How do they work? How, why, and by whom has meditation been psychologized and secularized, dao demythologized, lamas charismatized, martial arts spiritualized, yoga healthified and feng shui aestheticized? Who decides when

mindfulness is a scientific technique, spirituality, hocus pocus storytelling or smart business?

'Spirituality' is a concept containing both a historical and contemporary, a global and a culturally particularistic perspective. Translatability is thus naturally a key challenge when conducting comparable work. Whereas the Japanese *supirichuaru* and *supirichuariti* are simply Japanized imports of spiritual and spirituality with close semantic resemblance, translations into other Asian languages have for both users and as scholarly discourse been challenging. Hindu reformer Vivekananda and Buddhist reformers Dharmapala and D. T. Suzuki saw spirituality in psychological terms, combining Theosophist ideas with post-colonial nationalist agendas, and "in the imperial encounter the cultures of India and China gradually came to be seen as 'spiritual' and thus as different from and in opposition to the materialism of the West". Jingshen was chosen by reformers and revolutionaries in China to be the word for psyche, later to become equivalent to 'spirit' and a work tool for spiritual self-development and happiness optimization. On the other hand, when young Ladakhi Buddhists watch You Tube or read books in English by Dalai Lama and 'global' Buddhists, they are both negotiating traditional Buddhism and more or less unconsciously 'spiritualized' and highly eclectic modern versions of it. And when 'Hugging Amma' appears with her divine energy, she is both performing according to traditional Hindu and globalized spiritual practices. With notable exceptions of an especially historical nature, the concept and field of 'spirituality' in contemporary Asia is still under-researched. It is, therefore, highly relevant to explore empirically how, where, why, and the extent to which such individualized spirituality is present in concrete Asian contexts, and how, by whom, and why such spiritual circulation has transformed both the East and the West. This anthology attempts to analyze such interaction of Eastern derived spirituality in both historical and contemporary perspective with articles focusing on different traditions, countries and religions. Some of the articles focus on the impact in particular settings, other on the routes taken. Eastspirit investigates processes of floating, routing, rooting, negotiating and changing. In a more general sense, the anthology contributes with new insights into the topic of transnational religion, highlighting the relevance of viewing cultural identity and religious traditions as hybrid results of cultural encounters, adaptations and transformations.

The anthology is divided in two interrelated parts. The first part, *Spiritual Flows and Circulations East and West*, contains six chapters from different perspectives and empirical cases, focusing on the process of circulation and what kind of impact this has had on different aspects of religion, spirituality and religious behavior and relations both in East and West, among diaspora-groups, and beyond. Jørn Borup in chapter 1, *Pizza, Curry, Skyr and Whirlpool Effects—Religious Circulations Between East and West*, presents an overall perspective on the transformation of ideas between East and West in both a contemporary and historical perspective. Justin Stein in chapter 2, *Global Flows of Universal Energy? Aquatic Metaphors, Network Theory, and Modeling Reiki's Development and Circulation in North America*, looks at the Japanese founded

Reiki, a set of spiritual healing practices, and how they transform when moving across cultural boundaries. In chapter 3, *Mindfulness on the Move: A Translocative Analysis of Global Mindfulness Flows*, Jeff Wilson analyses the success of mindfulness and concludes that this has to do with its adaptability to new environments. In chapter 4, *Śrī Mā tā Amrtā nandamayī Devī —The Global Worship of an Indian Female Guru*, Marianne Q. Fibiger focuses on the transnational worship of the Indian guru 'Hugging Amma' among diaspora Hindus in Mauritius and among spiritual seekers in Denmark, showing how worshippers in their search for authenticity in many aspects are more conservative in comparison with Amma worshippers in India. Zazen (silent sitting) in Japanese temple Buddhism as well as in Western contexts is the subject of chapter 5, *Same Forms, Same Sensations? The Practice of Silent Sitting in Traditional Japanese and Contemporary Urban Settings*, written by Inken Prohl, demonstrating how the apparently same forms of ritual or spiritual behavior are context dependent and can evoke different sensations. Chapter 6, 'East' and 'West' in the Kaleidoscope of Transculturality—The Discursive Production of the Kundalinī as a New Ontological Object Within and Beyond Orientalist Dichotomies is written by Dimitry Okropiridze. He focuses on the discursive production of Kundalini, arguing how this, with C. G. Jung as a major factor, changed in the 19th century from being an obscure and ambiguous Sanskrit term to become a major player in the religio-therapeutic discourse.

The second part, *Transnational Spiritualities in Asia*, has its primary focus on societies in the so-called East. The chapters investigate the fluctuations and ongoing export and import of Eastern and Western worldviews and translations of ideas that have changed the religious landscape and understanding of religion and spirituality in Asian societies. Chapter 7, *Global Flows of Vietnamese Zen* is written by Alexander Soucy and explores how the multiple flows of transmission and transformation of Zen Buddhism among Vietnamese have been at work since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Chapter 8, *Christianity and Positive Psychology—Are 'Western' Spiritual Practices Conquering the Chinese Spirit? —* written by Gerda Wielander, presents two case studies from contemporary China, illustrating how two very different 'Western' spiritual traditions co-exist among other 'optimization strategies' in the search for happiness. In chapter 9, *The Making of Power Spots: From New Age Spirituality to Shinto Spirituality*, Norichika Horie explores how the idea of 'power spots' has been appropriated by Shinto shrines, being an example of how the perceptions of New Age Groups have an impact on the old more established religions. In chapter 10, *The Significance of the Idea of Buddha's Dependence on Kapila for the Rebirth of Sā mkhyayoga in Nineteenth Century Bengal*, Knut Jacobsen offers an example of how western Orientalists and Indian intellectuals not only have had an impact on the reemergence of Sā mkhyayoga as a living tradition in late nineteenth century Bengal, but also how these discussions were favoring the Hindu influences on Buddhism in 400 CE rather than the other way around. Cameron Warner in chapter 11, *On the Road from Hinduism to Buddhism: Global Buddhism, the Conversion of Nepali Hindus, and What Comes Between*, takes us to Nepal; here, he explores the return effect

in Nepal of Buddhist missionary efforts in the West through focusing on the Byoma Kusuma Sangha—a group of Himalayan Buddhists primarily comprised of recent converts from Hindu families. In chapter 12, *Young Buddhism: Analyzing Transnational Currents of Religion Among Ladakhi Buddhist Youth in India*, Elisabeth Williams-Oerberg explores young Buddhists in Ladakh. They are aligned with what is modern and global trends; yet, they are also concerned about the future of religions, as analysis of their engagements shows. Chapter 13, *Religious Encounters in Thailand: International Meditation Centers Within Transnational Settings*, offers an example of the role of meditation teachers within international meditation centers in Thailand. The author, Brooke Schedneck, brings together ethnographic data collected from tourists, travelers and foreign residents in Thailand, demonstrating the various ways international visitors access Thai Buddhism and what this tell us about the circulation of religious ideas between East and West. In chapter 14, *Finding It: Echoes of America in Taiwan's New Age*, Paul Farrelly gives us an example from Taiwan and how two main New Age figures and their interactions with American culture shaped the origins of the New Wave in Taiwan.

Fiction, Invention and Hyper-reality: From Popular Culture to Religion edited by Carole M. Cusack and Pavol Kosnáč [Routledge, 978-1472463029]

Edited by the widely-published Carole M. Cusack, Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Sydney, and independent scholar Pavol Kosnáč of Bratislava, Slovakia, [Fiction, Invention and Hyper-reality: From Popular Culture to Religion](#) rests at the cutting-edge of the fields of Religious Studies and the Sociology of Religion; hence its inclusion in Routledge's Inform series on minority religions and spiritual movements, edited by Eileen Barker. True to the series, *Fiction, Invention and Hyper-reality* is attractive to both an academic and an interested general audience.

The emergent subject area addressed within [Fiction, Invention and Hyper-reality](#) encompasses contested contemporary religions that are based on fictional texts and those that include fictional texts in their canon of scriptures or inspirational phenomena. In their introduction, Cusack and Kosnáč place the study of 'fictional', 'invented', and 'hyper-real' religions closest to the study of new religious movements within Religious Studies. The three labels are derived from the scholarship of Markus Altena Davidson, Carole M. Cusack, and Adam Possamai, respectively. Due to the controversies within the field, such as potential misunderstandings by traditionally religious people, differing definitions among scholars, and the oft-perceived oxymoronic juxtaposition of religion and popular culture, Cusack and Kosnáč suggest that applying social scientific methodologies can aid in common rationalisation. However, they admit the various methodologies used within the field, as well as the wide net used for obtaining qualified subjects: both self-identified religious groups and non-self-identified, non-institutionalised religious and spiritual practices. Cusack

and Kosnáč maintain the importance of studying such contested religions and spiritualities, claiming that '[t]he principle reason to study the phenomena of fiction-based, invented or hyper-real religions is the challenge that such study presents to the classical understanding of what religion is and what "holiness" and "religiosity" look like.'

Following through on such a claim, [Fiction, Invention and Hyper-reality](#) includes four parts; each set on exploring and expanding the boundaries of 'religion'. The first part, 'Tolkien's Legendarium, the Elven lineage and the Internet', is perhaps the most diverse of the four. It brings together groups that use the internet as a space for initial encounter and continued interaction—whether social or ritualistic—with other group members. Markus Altena Davidsen provides an account, along with 'insider' accounts as appendices, of two Tolkien-based spiritual traditions. Carole M. Cusack discusses the contemporary narrative of the self as expressed in the Otherkin (people who believe and live as if they are partly other-than-human) and Therianthropy (distinguished from the Otherkin by their other selves being animal) communities, primarily existing online. Venetia Laura Delano Robertson compares the written religious narratives of women from medieval Christendom and modern fandom with the intention of studying how women have confronted patriarchal norms and articulated a sense of sacred selfhood. Robertson's case studies include Julian of Norwich, Margery Kempe, Mrs Sephiroth, and Sephiroth slave; the latter two recorded their Soulbond with the *Final Fantasy* villain, Sephiroth, via online journals, blogs, and discussion pages. Finally, Pavol Kosnáč explains the Brony fandom, including the attractiveness of *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic* following initial encounters with the show via fan-made content, such as internet memes.

The second part, 'Film and television as sacred texts', is composed of five chapters and includes two of the first complete 'insider' chapters: that of Jediism (by Ash Williams, Benjamin-Alexandre Miller, and Michael Kitchen) and that of Dudeism (by the Dudely Lama, Oliver Benjamin). This part also includes: a chapter on anime spirituality and an anime-based religion by Katherine Buljan, an observational account of Jediism within Second Life by Helen Farley (pictures included!), and Marcus Free's study of the spiritual symbolism surrounding former football player Diego Maradona as portrayed in cinematic films.

Part Three, 'Online mediation of invented, fiction-based and hyper-real religions', differs from Part One in the greater necessity of the online environment for the religious or spiritual groups included. J. Christian Greer's chapter on Discordianism focuses on the religion's more recent institutionalisation. David G. Robertson interrogates the relationship between satirising religion and taking religion seriously, using the Church of the SubGenius as his case study. The tensions between legitimatisation and anti-state digital activism within Kopimism are analysed by Danielle L.

Kirby and Elisha H. McIntyre. The final chapter of this section is another 'insider' account, this time by sociologist William Sims Bainbridge concerning the virtual revival of a deceased family member by means of online role-playing games.

The concluding part of [Fiction, Invention and Hyper-reality](#), 'Counter-cultural personal spiritualities and religions', presents a discussion of the sacred arenas created by Sun Ra's Arkestra performances by Johanna J. M. Petsche; an 'insider' account of the developments, evolution and continuing artistic and cultural contribution of the Church of All Worlds by Primate Oberon Zell; and Adam Possamai's and Vladislav Iouchkov's analysis of the Real-Life Superhero movement.

In Cusack's and Kosnáč's introduction, they claim that each chapter does three things: first, they study beliefs and practices that are based on popular culture yet can be described as religious or spiritual; second, they claim that these beliefs and practices affect participants in real life; and third, each chapter touches upon the problem of authenticity and legitimacy. The third commonality remains the most important within this edited volume, especially given the controversies surrounding invented, fictional, and hyper-real religions. Such questions of authenticity and legitimacy are perhaps more adroitly addressed in chapters written by scholars; however, the 'insider' chapters are more clearly able to provide an account of the motivations and desires of individuals within the religious/spiritual groups discussed therein. Taken as a complete whole, [Fiction, Invention and Hyper-reality](#) leaves the reader with the impression that perceived authority over belief, life-style, and ethics is shifting away from the institutionalised, traditional, ancient world religions. Such an impression is successfully imparted to the reader through a simultaneously entertaining and informational book. The interwoven voices of practitioners and scholars provide a wide scope from which to view this budding field—with its comingling of popular culture and the sacred, from the abiding coolness of Dudeism to the digital activism of Kopimism. [Fiction, Invention and Hyper-reality](#) is a valuable addition to the bookshelf of the religious scholar, as well as for the general reader interested in the sociology of religion.

The Unitarian Controversy, 1819-1823: Volume One
[Routledge Library Editions: 19th Century Religion,
Routledge, 9781138103443]

The Unitarian Controversy, 1819-1823: Volume Two
[Routledge Library Editions: 19th Century Religion,
Routledge, 9781138103474]

Originally published in 1987. The dispute between Leonard Woods, an American theologian and well-known Calvinist, and Henry Ware, a preacher and theologian influential in the

formation of Unitarianism, went on for four years and is reprinted here in its entirety. Although the combatants were concerned over whether God's nature was one or three, other issues were more important for them, and these issues are discussed at length in their correspondence. This title will be of interest to students of religious history and American religious studies.

Contents for both volumes: Introduction by Bruce Kuklick, the book, Unitarian Christianity by William Ellery Channing; Letters to Unitarians Occasioned by the Sermon of the Reverend William E. Channing at the Ordination of the Rev. J. Sparks by Leonard Woods; Letters Addressed to Trinitarians and Calvinists Occasioned by Dr. Woods' Letters to Unitarians by Henry Ware: A Reply to Dr. Ware's Letters to Trinitarians and Calvinists by Leonard Woods; Answer to Dr. Woods' Reply, in a Second Series of Letters Addressed to Trinitarians and Calvinists by Henry Ware; Remarks on Dr. Ware's Answer by Leonard Woods; and A Postscript to the Second Series of Letters Addressed to Trinitarians and Calvinists by Henry Ware.

A liberal impulse grew up in New England Calvinism after the Great Awakening, the series of revivals that swept religious centers in the late 1730s and early 1740s. For a long time, moderate churchmen were able to contain these impulses within traditional channels. In and around Boston, however, the religious leadership persistently strayed from what orthodox men thought was appropriate. Stimulated by a hopeful view of the human condition, liberals by 1800 had well-nigh repudiated their Calvinism. By 1820 Boston and its locale were "Unitarian" rather than Calvinist in religious philosophy. The new ideas prompted an acrimonious debate as well as, it turned out, a fierce institutional rivalry.

Context for the Unitarian Controversy need some explication of the development of liberal views that were spreading faster than ever in the Congregational churches after 1810. English Unitarian books were reprinted in Boston in increasing number, and were widely read. The Rev. Noah Worcester, a country minister of New Hampshire, influenced by Emlyn and other English writers, published in 1810 a little book called Bible News, which was Arian. For this his brother ministers bitterly attacked him, maligned his personal character, and caused him to lose his pulpit; but he at once found friends among the liberal ministers of Boston, served the liberal cause well, and later won enduring fame as the founder of the peace movement in America.

As for the liberal ministers, although by 1812 there were at least a hundred of them, only Freeman at King's Chapel and Bentley at Salem were Unitarian in profession. Of the rest only one or two had ever preached a sermon against the Trinity; and while they had generally ceased to hold that doctrine, yet they had not reached any wide agreement as to other points. They knew indeed that they had well outgrown their Calvinism, and they acknowledged only the authority of Scripture; but their main emphasis was on the practical virtues of Christian life, and their main opposition was to narrowness of spirit and bondage to creeds, while for the rest they advocated Christian charity, open-mindedness, and tolerance. They were most of

them Arian in belief, and so strongly opposed to what was then known as Unitarianism that when it had been charged that Professor Ware was a Unitarian, the charge was indignantly resented as a calumny. In fact, they did not regard themselves as heretics at all, for they knew that their views were widely held both in the Church of England and among the English Dissenters. The Congregational Church was still broad enough to bold both conservatives and liberals; and of the nine old congregations at Boston eight had grown liberal, while the ninth remained orthodox by only the narrowest margin.

All the while that things were in this uncertain state, Dr. Morse in the Panoplist kept calling on the liberals to admit that in important respects they had departed far from the faith of their fathers. They stedfastly refused to accept his challenge, for they disliked controversy, and they had no mind to champion special doctrines or to be set off into a separate party. They stood on their rights as free members of Congregational churches, and did not feel under any obligation to report to Dr. Morse or ask his leave.

But now something unexpected occurred which forced the issue. Three years earlier Belsham in London had published a life of Lindsey. It contained a chapter on the progress of Unitarianism in New England, quoting letters from Dr. Freeman and others giving an inside view of the liberal movement at Boston, and reporting that most of the Boston clergy were Unitarian. Dr. Morse at length discovered the book in 1815 and promptly reprinted this chapter, giving it the title, *American Unitarianism*. It created a tremendous sensation, and ran through five editions in as many months. Dr. Morse's charge seemed to be proved true: the liberals were Unitarians after all. The Panoplist followed up the exposure in a severe review, charging that the liberals were secretly scheming to undermine the orthodox faith, and were hypocrites for concealing their true beliefs; and that the orthodox ought therefore at once to separate from those who, since they denied the deity of Christ, could not be considered Christians at all.

The name Unitarian stuck, as Dr. Morse meant that it should, for it was then an odious name, and it has stuck ever since; but it was not fairly given. For the writers of the letters referred to had used it simply to denote disbelief in the Trinity; while as then commonly understood it meant such beliefs as those of Priestley and Belsham, who held that Jesus was in all respects a fallible human being, together with certain philosophical views which were abhorrent to the Boston liberals. The Panoplist, however, insisted that they were Unitarians in Belsham's sense of the word. The liberal ministers of Boston were outraged at such misrepresentation of their views, and they felt that the slander must not be let pass without responsible denial. The answer was soon forthcoming in the form of an open letter to the Rev. Samuel C. Thacher of the New South Church, from his friend, the Rev. William Ellery Channing. Though Channing was but thirty-five, he had been for a dozen years the beloved and honored minister of the Federal Street Church, and of late had come to be regarded as the leader of the Boston liberals; and he was destined at length to be the most distinguished of all American Unitarians. Though a semi-invalid, he had a remarkable charm of voice, manner, and character. In his earlier ministry he had been a moderate Calvinist, had been

on friendly terms with Dr. Morse, and had preached the sermon at Codman's ordination; but he had never believed the doctrine of the Trinity, and had never made a secret of his views. He held that Christ, though less than God, was far above man, a sinless being, and the object of religious trust and love. In short, he was an Arian.

Always shrinking from controversy, Channing could yet speak out strongly when he must; and in this letter he now indignantly denied the Panoplist's charges. He admitted that his brethren disbelieved in the Trinity, and in that sense alone were Unitarians; though they preferred to call themselves liberal Christians, or rational Christians, or catholic Christians; while they were wholly out of sympathy with the views of Priestley and Belsham, and were nearer to the Calvinists than to them. Most of them were Arians, some were not clear as to their views, and hardly one could accept Belsham's creed, though to believe with him was no crime. Their views had not been concealed: Dr. Morse and others had long known them. But the disputed doctrines had been kept out of their pulpits as unprofitable, and had been treated as though they had never been beard of. Such was his answer; and in conclusion he urged that it would be a great wrong to Christianity, and a great injustice to individuals, to create a division in the church by shutting any out of it as not Christians simply because they held more liberal views of scripture teaching than did the others.

The controversy was continued on the orthodox side by Dr. Worcester of Salem, whose two brothers had already suffered persecution in New Hampshire for their Arianism, and who was himself doubtless still smarting over his own dismissal from his Fitchburg church. Three letters were published on each side, and several other writers also took a hand in the discussion. Dr. Worcester picked flaws in Channing's letter, pressed the Panoplist's charges, and urged that the differences between the orthodox and the liberals were too serious to be longer ignored, and that the two must part company. Channing replied that in the essential part of Christian faith, which was that Jesus is the Christ, they were agreed, and that any minor differences did not vitally matter. The controversy ran for half a year, and ended in the opening of a permanent breach between the two wings of Massachusetts Congregationalists. The orthodox were made more than ever determined in their attitude; while the Unitarians (as they were henceforth known) began to abandon their policy of reserve and to speak out plainly also against other doctrines of Calvinism, and their views spread accordingly.

Before and during this controversy Dr. Morse and his strict Calvinist friends were steadily trying to get the Massachusetts churches to form "consociations," with power to depose heretical ministers as Sherman and Abbot had been deposed in Connecticut. But both liberals and moderate Calvinists resisted this plan as dangerous to liberty of conscience, so that after some years' effort the scheme was dropped. In an increasing number of churches, however, creeds were adopted to keep heretics from becoming members, and in a few cases where the orthodox could not control the situation as they wished, they withdrew and formed separate churches. More and more of the orthodox ministers also refused to include in

their list of monthly pulpit exchanges any who were suspected of being Unitarians; so that while there was still, indeed, but a single denomination of Congregationalists, its two wings were steadily drawing further apart. Thus, things went on for a few years, with the orthodox getting further away from the liberals, though with hope of reconciliation not yet wholly despaired of, until two events occurred which proved decisive. These were Channing's Baltimore sermon in 1819, and the decision of the Dedham case in 1820. We must speak of these in turn.

The primary dispute between Unitarians and Calvinists nominally concerned the unity or trinity of the godhead, but, of greater moment for almost every discussion, the Unitarians had a moral and social perspective different from Trinitarians. Reared in a more sophisticated environment, Unitarians could not sustain a creed based on mystery and faith. They demanded that Christianity be made more rationally credible, that its tenets conform to what a literate urban middle class considered believable.

The Unitarians at least initially were not interested in systematic theology, preferring to avoid abstruse theological controversy. Their spiritual leader was William Ellery Channing (1780-1842), a prominent Boston minister and a man renowned for his Christian character and practical piety. Largely because of his fear of the dangers of over intellectualization to religion, it was not until 1819 that a major codification of the Unitarian position was undertaken.

Channing's eloquent essay of that year, "Unitarian Christianity," is reprinted in this volume and gives a succinct elaboration of American Unitarian beliefs. Channing, however, was unwilling to engage in learned argument over matters of the soul and left the field after his initial foray. Nonetheless, at Harvard a separate school of divinity had emerged in the second decade of the century that was a bastion of Unitarian ideas. At Andover, in 1808, strict Calvinists had established their own clerical training school in prudent anticipation of Harvard's final apostasy. What became known as the Unitarian controversy was the debate between the rival theologians of these two institutions.

Leonard Woods (1774-1854) spoke for Andover and wrote initially so that Channing would not go unanswered. But the sustained responses to Woods came from Henry Ware (1764-1845) who defended Unitarianism from a position at Harvard.

The famous "Wood 'n' Ware" dispute went on for four years and is reprinted here in its entirety. Although the combatants were concerned over whether God's nature was one or three, other issues were more important for them. The Unitarians asserted the spontaneous freedom of the will and denied the innate depravity of man. Woods was forced to come to grips with many conundrums of Edwardsean Calvinism in his defense of human depravity and a deterministic will. Critics at the time thought Ware got the better of the debate; of greater significance, however, is the way the great issues of Reformed Protestantism became codified in America for theological professionals.

After the controversy of 1815 the orthodox kept treating the Unitarians in the Church with such increasing narrowness, and

kept attacking their beliefs with such increasing bitterness, that at length Channing, peaceable as he was, felt bound to strike a telling blow in return. The opportunity to do so came in 1819, when he was asked to preach the sermon at the ordination of Jared Sparks as minister of the church lately established at Baltimore, the first extension beyond New England of the liberal movement in Massachusetts. In this sermon he boldly took the aggressive against the orthodox, taking up the distinguishing doctrines of Unitarians one by one, showing that they were supported by both Scripture and reason, and holding up to pitiless attack the contrasted doctrines of orthodoxy in all their nakedness. Probably no other sermon ever preached in America has had so many readers and so great an influence. It put the orthodox at once on the defensive. They complained that Channing had misrepresented their beliefs and had injured their feelings by his harsh statements. Professor Moses Stuart of Andover wrote a whole book to defend the doctrine of the Trinity against Channing's attack, though in it he admitted that he did not know clearly what the doctrine meant; and he even brought upon himself from a Presbyterian source the charge that he too was tending toward Unitarianism. Channing himself said no more, but Professor Andrews Norton of Harvard renewed the attack upon the Trinity with such effect that the orthodox withdrew on this point, and were content to lay their emphasis henceforth upon the deity of Christ.

Professor Leonard Woods of Andover now came to the defense of the other doctrines which Channing had attacked, and debated them back and forth with Professor Ware of Harvard for three years, in a printed controversy which ran to over eight hundred pages. This "Wood'n-Ware controversy," as it was called, was carried on in fine spirit on both sides, and it made clear that even the orthodox had drifted further away from the old doctrines than they had yet acknowledged or realized. Nevertheless they continued to pursue more widely than ever their policy of exclusion of Unitarians and separation from them; while the Unitarians, who had had their views so clearly stated and so ably defended by Channing, now first fairly realized where they stood, and rallied to their standard with enthusiasm. The division between the two wings had become practically complete.

In the unhappy division that took place now, congregations were split in two, and even families were divided against themselves. But the question now arose, whose should be the church property when Unitarians and orthodox drew apart? This was the question involved in the Dedham case. In order to understand the matter, one must remember that in the Massachusetts towns there had long been two religious organizations. The "parish," or "society," consisted of all the male voters of the town organized to maintain religious worship, which they were bound by law to support by taxation. The "church" on the other hand consisted only of those persons within the parish (generally a small minority) who had made a public profession of their religious faith, and had joined together in a serious inner circle for religious purposes, and were admitted to the observance of the Lord's Supper. The church members were overall (though not exclusively) more devout and more zealous than the rest of the members of the

parish, and a large majority of them were usually women. Now by law a minister must be elected by vote of the whole parish which supported him; but by natural custom it had come to be generally expected that he must also be acceptable to the church, even if not nominated by it. For generations church and parish had generally agreed; though if they did not, means were provided for settling the matter through a mutual council. But when the controversy arose between the orthodox and the Unitarians, disagreements became frequent and often serious; and in many cases, it happened that while the majority of the church members wished to settle a conservative from Andover, the majority of the parish would prefer a liberal man from Harvard, and usually no way of compromise could be found.

This was the situation at Dedham, where the pulpit fell vacant in 1818, and the parish voted two to one to settle a liberal man, while the church by a small majority voted against him. As the parish refused to yield, a majority of the church withdrew and formed a new church, taking with them the church property, which was in this instance nearly enough to support the minister. A lawsuit followed, to determine which was the real church, and which might hold the property, the majority of the church who seceded from the parish, or the minority who stayed in it. The case was bitterly fought, and the Supreme Court of the state at length decided in 1820 that seceders forfeited all their rights, and that even the smallest minority remaining with the parish were still the parish church, and entitled to the church property; indeed, that if even the whole church should secede it must still leave the church property behind it. This legal decision, which would of course apply to any similar cases arising elsewhere, aroused among the orthodox a storm of indignation so deep and bitter that it has hardly subsided after a hundred years. They declared that the judge, being a Unitarian, was prejudiced in favor of his own party; and for many years they continued to cry out against the injustice of the decision, and against what they insisted was "plunder" of their churches.

The orthodox losses as the result of the divisions that took place were indeed severe. In eighty-one instances the orthodox members seceded, nearly 4,000 of them in all, thus losing funds and property estimated at over \$600,000, not to mention the loss of churches which went to the liberal side without a division; and they had to build new meetinghouses for themselves. They called themselves "the exiled churches"; but while there were cases in which the liberal majority oppressed the minority and meant to force them out, the latter most frequently seceded because they were not permitted, though often but few, to impose a minister of their choice upon the large majority of those who attended the church and supported it by their taxes, but to whom he was not acceptable. Nor were the losses all on one side. There were at least a dozen cases, first and last, in which it was the liberals that seceded, rather than listen to the preaching of doctrines which they believed to be untrue and harmful. There were happily many others in which there was no division. Of these the larger number remained orthodox, but thirty-nine became liberal without division, and often so quietly and gradually that no one could have told when the invisible line was crossed. Among these latter were twenty out of twenty-five original

churches, including all the most important ones. In only three of the larger towns of eastern Massachusetts did the parish remain orthodox, and at Boston only the Old South. In several cases the whole church withdrew in a body; in others only one or two members were left. At the end of the controversy a few over a third of the Congregational churches of Massachusetts were found to have become Unitarian.

Although churches kept on separating until as late as 1840, the greater number of divisions took place in the years immediately following the Baltimore sermon and the Dedham case decision. The Unitarians were thenceforth, against their wish, a separate denomination from the rest of the Congregationalists. They found themselves consisting of 125 churches, mostly within twenty-five miles of Boston, though with a few distant outposts at New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and Charleston. In eastern Massachusetts they had for the time won a sweeping victory. The ablest and most eloquent ministers, the leaders in public life, in education, in literature, were theirs, as were the great majority of those of wealth, culture, and high social position. In fact, they had quite too much prestige for their own good, since they now seemed as a church to have little more to strive for. The truth is that it was not so much Unitarian doctrines as Unitarian freedom that had attracted many of them. Hence, while broad in spirit, strongly opposed to sectarianism, and liberal, though vague, in their beliefs, they were yet conservative in almost everything else. But they were generally reverent in temper and were earnestly devoted to pure morals and good works. The consequence of all this was that they now settled back complacently, and showed far less zeal in promoting, their cause than did the orthodox; fondly believing that without any particular effort on their part Unitarianism would ere long sweep the whole country as it had already swept eastern Massachusetts.

The orthodox, on the other hand, were for a time stunned, and in acute fear of losing the whole struggle, in which the Unitarians had made steady gains since 1815. Their champion, Dr. Morse, had gone; their organ, the Panoplist, had suspended publication. A strong recruit for their cause, however, now came from Connecticut, where the spread of Unitarianism had thus far been so successfully prevented. Dr. Lyman Beecher, known as the most successful revivalist of his time, and as a powerful and eloquent preacher of tremendous earnestness, had with eager interest long watched the battle from afar when in 1823 he came to Boston to hold revival meetings. He soon revived the fainting spirits of the orthodox. They began to make fresh converts, and many of the wavering were won back from the Unitarian camp. Thus the orthodox reaction began.

When those ministers and churches that had accepted Unitarian beliefs found themselves quite excluded from religious fellowship with those that held to the old beliefs, it became a serious question what they should do. Shut out from the orthodox organizations, should they form a new denomination, or should they go on separately with no attempt to hold together or to act together for the interests they had in common? The older leaders were much disposed to go on as they were, and were opposed to forming a new denomination;

for they had of late seen quite too much of the evils of sectarianism, and they wished no more of them. The younger men had less fear and more zeal, realizing that, if they were to do anything at all to help spread Christianity in the newer parts of the country, they must unite for the purpose; while if they did nothing in the matter they would be simply abandoning the new field wholly to orthodoxy and to beliefs which they felt to be untrue and hurtful. In that case, liberal Christianity might become extinct within a generation.

Since the beginning of the century, indeed, four or five organizations had been formed to promote the spread of Christianity in various ways, in which, though they were quite unsectarian, only the liberals had taken part; and half a dozen publications, notably *The Christian Register*, weekly (1821), and *The Christian Examiner*, quarterly (1824), had been founded, in which the liberals had expressed their views, and had carried on controversy with the orthodox. But now that separation had come it was felt that something more was needed. It was ten or twelve young ministers lately graduated from the Harvard Divinity School that took the lead in the matter, and after long discussion and much opposition joined with a few laymen who shared their views, and in the vestry of Dr. Channing's church organized the American Unitarian Association, "to diffuse the knowledge and promote the interests of pure Christianity." Dr. Channing gave only passive approval to the move, and declined to be President of the new Association. Boston Unitarians generally were lukewarm. During its first year only sixty-five of them joined the Association, and only \$1,300 was raised to carry on its work. Yet it set to work with energy and skill, began publishing Unitarian tracts and circulating them in large numbers, and sent a scout into the West who came back reporting many promising fields where Unitarian churches would be heartily welcomed. Missionary preachers were sent afield, a missionary to the city poor was employed, a Sunday-school Society was organized (1826), and especial efforts were made to spread Unitarian literature. Yet so afraid were the churches of losing some of their liberty in the bonds of a new sect, that for twenty-five years only from a third to a half of them would contribute to the work of the Association, which thus had only from \$5,000 to \$15,000 a year to spend. Its work could grow but slowly until the timid conservatism of an older generation could be replaced by the missionary earnestness of a younger one.

Dr. Beecher's revival meetings at Boston in 1823 had revived orthodoxy for a time; but it was still on the defensive, and now the Unitarians had organized for aggressive effort. Beecher was glad therefore to accept a call to a church just established in Hanover Street, which had been organized on a basis designed to prevent it from ever calling a liberal minister. Coming to Boston to live in 1826 he at once began a revival which lasted five years. It often crowded his church, and it stirred up the drowsy Unitarians to unaccustomed activity. He took a bold aggressive stand, attacking Unitarian beliefs as unscriptural, and the results of them as unfavorable to true religion. Some years before this a Presbyterian clergyman preaching at Baltimore had declared that Unitarian preachers were "most acceptable to the gay, the fashionable, the worldly

minded, and even the licentious"; and another in New York had charged that religion and morals had alarmingly declined, and vice had increased at Boston since the spread of Unitarianism there, and he had insinuated that even the Unitarian ministers were men of loose morals and little piety. Dr. Beecher did not venture to go so far as this; but he and those that followed his leadership repeatedly charged that the effect of Unitarianism was to make its followers less earnest in their religion, less faithful in their religious habits, and less strict in their moral standards. It was declared that they had been steadily giving up one doctrine of the Christian faith after another, until little was now left. As their views of the inspiration of the Bible were changing, it became common to call Unitarians infidels; while it was often charged, and as often denied, that by accepting the doctrine of the Universalists they were encouraging men to sin by taking away their fear of eternal punishment.

Faith in Formulae: A Collection of Early Christian Creeds and Creed-related Texts, Four-Volume Set edited by Wolfram Kinzig [Oxford Early Christian Texts, Oxford University Press, 9780198269410]

Creeds, such as the Apostolic and Nicene creeds, have shaped the core of the Christian faith. It is therefore surprising that for over a century there has been no comprehensive collection of the early Christian creeds in their original languages. However, the study of their history has made excellent progress. In the general introduction to this four-volume set, Wolfram Kinzig summarizes the present state of research. This is followed by a collection of all creeds and credal formulae of the early Church in Greek and Latin, covering the whole period from the writings of the New Testament down to the early Middle Ages. The source texts are taken from the most up-to-date critical editions available and newly found texts have been added. They are accompanied by English translations and where applicable introduced individually by brief remarks on their authorship, date, and provenance. The volumes feature useful notes and cross-references.

Excerpt: This book was conceived as a replacement for the outdated *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln* of August and Ludwig Hahn (published in 1897), in the hopes of providing fellow scholars with an up-to-date reference tool for further studies on the creed. Collections such as these show how productive Christians have been when they felt obliged in various historical circumstances to give a succinct account of their faith, but they make also clear that over the centuries the Christian faith has always been in danger of coagulating into sterile formulae. Whoever understands the creeds understands what makes Christians tick. But it is also true that any attempt at laying down in a few words the essence of Christianity is bound to be futile, because the richness of Christian reflection and devotion simply cannot and should not be reduced to a formula comprising just a few lines. This fundamental dilemma has beset Christian theology and piety from its beginnings.

WHAT IS A CREED?

Today creeds are seen by most as liturgical texts that are recited in church on Sunday in order to affirm one's faith. For

Orthodox Christians it may be the Creed of Constantinople which first comes to mind. Christians who have grown up within the Western tradition might, perhaps, first think of the so-called Apostles' Creed which is recited during the services. When one goes back to the sources, however, and begins looking for creeds in the early Church, in the writings of the Fathers, or in early liturgical documents, one is startled by the plethora of texts which are all very different in character, yet claim to be creeds. In addition, the recitation of creeds was by no means limited to Sunday Mass. Creeds were memorized before baptism. Creeds were recited by bishops indicted for heresy. Creeds were solemnly proclaimed by synods as the point of departure or as a result of their deliberations. Finally, creeds were enacted as laws by emperors. Orthodox and dissident Christians alike changed existing creeds or produced entirely new ones. Some of the creeds were very short, just a few lines in length; others were extensive elaborations, sometimes covering several pages of printed text. Creeds appear to be like kaleidoscopes: they change colour all the time, and in this ever-shifting variety it is difficult to discern features that remain constant over time.

For the purpose of this introduction a creed may be defined as a formal pledge of allegiance to a set of doctrinal statements concerning God and his relationship to his creation in general and to mankind in particular. Typically, a creed contains the words 'I/we believe' or (in interrogatory form) 'Do you believe?' to which the expected answer is: 'I/we believe'. 'Whereas a creed's *Sitz im Leben* may vary (catechesis, liturgy, doctrinal debate), its wording usually does not. [...] The vast majority of creeds consists of three articles referring to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.'

There are, however, numerous creeds which do not conform to this structure. In these cases it is often difficult to decide whether or not we are dealing with creeds at all or with texts belonging to a different kind of literary genre. For the purpose of this collection I have, therefore, included those ancient and early medieval texts that claim to be creeds (that is, they are referred to as *pistis/fides* or *symbolum (fidei)*) and/or use the verbs *pisteúein* or *credere* in order to denote central dogmatic tenets relating to God and the Trinity.

Creeds are fairly unique to Christianity. Not only do Christians affirm the truth of a set of propositions (in which case the recital of such a set would have sufficed, as is the case with the *Shema Yisrael* in Judaism' or the *Tashahhud* in Islam'), but by saying 'I believe in / we believe in', they also express a particular personal engagement. They do not only say, 'I believe that' or 'we believe that' in the sense of, 'such and such a thing is true', but the addition of the preposition 'in' makes clear that the individual's faith goes beyond agreement to a set of propositions: it is a matter of trust. Stated in dogmatic terms: creeds are not only about the *fides quae creditur*, the content of the creed, but they also imply a *fides qua creditur*, a relationship between humans and God resting on faith.

Declaratory creeds⁶ are produced in times of dogmatic crisis, either individually or collectively. When there is no crisis, usually earlier creeds are simply repeated. These crises, insofar as they are collective, can be fairly clearly identified. They include:

In the East:

- (1) the Trinitarian controversy of the fourth century, ending with the Council of Constantinople in AD 381;
- (2) the Christological controversy of the fifth century, ending with the Council of Chalcedon in AD 451;
- (3) the Monophysite controversy (AD 451-553);
- (4) the controversy over Monothelism (AD 630-681).

In the West:

- (1) the change from Homoean to Catholic Christianity in the Visigothic Empire in AD 589 and its aftermath;
- (2) the debate about adoptionism in Spain in the eighth and ninth centuries.

In the East from the fifth century onward the standard doctrinal point of reference is the Creed of Constantinople (C): although further creeds are produced in later periods, all claim to be expositions or clarifications of C. In the West, the dogmatic creed is C as well, which is, however, treated with a certain degree of liberty. But *de facto* the Old Roman Creed (R) and its derivatives (such as the Apostles' Creed) are much more important, since they are the creeds used in catechesis.

The Athanasian Creed is an odd hybrid between a creed and a dogmatic treatise.⁷ It was very influential, too, but only at the level of academic theological debate.

In general, it may be said that the East is more productive in the composition of creeds than the West, where the vast majority of creeds are variations of R (the Apostles' Creed being one of these variations which later became the majority creed).

NAMES FOR THE CREED

There are various ancient names for the creed. In the East there appears to be no fixed terminology. They were usually called *ékthesis tês pisteos* ('exposition of the faith'), *symbolon tês pisteos* ('symbol of the faith'), or, more often, just *pistis* ('faith') or *máthema* (lesson, learning, knowledge'). In the West its Latin equivalents *fides* and later *credulitas* were also sometimes used. These terms, however, are not very precise designations for this specific genre and relate to content rather than to literary form.

The situation in the West is both more clear-cut and more blurred than in the East. It is more clear-cut in that from the time of their first appearance creeds are called *symbolum* or (less frequently) *fides*. Nonetheless, the origin and precise meaning of *symbolum* and how it came to be used as a technical term denoting the creed have remained something of a mystery; this has, therefore, given rise to considerable scholarly speculation. (For the sake of convenience the principal sources are included in chapter 4 of this collection.)

Symbolum is a Greek word, /*symbolon*, which designates a tally or token serving as proof of identity and also as guarantee, warrant, official document, contract, or receipt in various contexts; the lexeme can also be used as term for 'treaty' or 'contract', thus being identical with /*symbolé*.

These meanings are also picked up by the Latin Fathers. Subsequent to the emergence of the genre of credal exposition towards the end of the fourth century, almost every Explanatio

symboli includes an account of the meaning of symbolum. All texts appear to agree that it is some kind of sign, but they disagree on the contexts in which it is used. It is generally said that symbolum in Latin also means 'token' or 'contract'. In addition, they explain that symbolum is some kind of 'collection', a meaning which is not found in the Greek usage of the term but seems to derive from a conflation of symbolé and symbolon.

Nevertheless, in these Western explanations the details pertaining to the origin of the term vary widely:

(1) Ambrose and Augustine" say that symbola are used by business people to establish their trustworthiness and financial credibility.¹² Augustine seems to suggest that symbolum is closely related to or indeed identical with some kind of business contract (pactum). Symbolum here is clearly a word or a text, but its precise character remains unclear.

(2) Peter Chrysologus calls symbolum a contract or treaty which is concluded between two partners in hopes of future gain; such contracts are always produced in duplicate in order to prevent fraud.

(3) According to the author of the *Collectio Eusebiana* and to Pseudo-Faustus of Riez symbola are contributions made by members (sodales) of an association (collegium) towards the costs of a shared meal.

(4) Rufinus says that symbolum was a watchword to be used in times of civil war to distinguish friend from foe; for reasons of secrecy, it was not to be written down. He uses this argument in order to admonish his audience to keep the creed a secret and not to write it out. Augustine also shows knowledge of this construction of the creed as a 'watchword'. He calls symbolum the 'endorsed faith of our association' (nostrae societatis fides placita) by which Christians recognize each other.

Finally, there is an explanation in various anonymous credal expositions according to which symbolum is the sum to be paid for the hire of a ship, which sum must also be produced in the presence of the captain as proof of one's assets." It is difficult to know whether this information (which may partly be based on a comment by Tertullian) is accurate.

In earlier Christian sources symbolum is used in the context of baptism, but it looks as if the term here does not denote an actual text, but a sign such as that of the cross. There is some evidence to suggest that from the mid third century onward symbolum denoted the baptismal interrogations. By the late fourth century there is agreement that symbolum is a specific formula and that this formula is a declaratory creed.

In relation to the creed the Fathers consider symbolum to have the following meanings:

(1) token: (a) a token of recognition amongst Christians (e.g. in order to distinguish Christians from heretics or Jews) or of a true Christian (as opposed to a nominal or false Christian); (b) a token of the full knowledge of the truth; (c) a token of the right faith;

(2) summary of the Christian faith (often relating to the legend of the apostolic origin of T); reminder of the faith and holy confession; contract: (a) a contract of the believers with one another; (b) a contract of the individual believer with God; sign, symbol: this interpretation of symbolum as *signatura rei verae* is only found in Priscillian. The *res vera* is the Holy Scripture to which the symbolum refers.

Hence there is considerable confusion among the ancient Latin authors as to why precisely the term symbolon/symbolum came to be used. When we look at earlier religious sources, the evidence appears to suggest that the term symbolon/symbolum was current in mystery cults as a secret sign of recognition amongst the members of a particular cult. This could be some kind of formula, but it could also be an object or a symbol in the modern sense of the term. Although this view has repeatedly been questioned, to the present writer it still appears plausible to assume that this custom was transferred to the Christian cult and that creeds mainly served to distinguish between those that were baptized and those who were not (and, as a consequence, were unable to recite the creed). As

I have shown elsewhere, at a later date this was precisely the function of the congregation's recitation of the creed following the service of the word at the beginning of the Eucharist, when the doors were closed to the uninitiated. Given this function, symbolum refers specifically to the baptismal creed and hence to R and its offshoots such as the Apostles' Creed (T). The fact that a Greek term was used in this context points to the time when the Christians in the West were Greek-speaking. It does not primarily refer to the Eastern synodal creeds such as N and C. For these creeds the terms *fides* or *confessio fidei* is much more common.

Since R and its offshoots played no role in the East, it is hardly surprising that symbolon was not used as a term for creeds in the East until probably the fifth century, when it appears to have been introduced from the Latin (but see § 79 = § 562a). Still, even then it was rarely used in an absolute sense; instead (*tês pisteō sl' of the faith'*) was added.

IN THE BEGINNING: CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT CREEDS

Even within the history of Christianity the existence of creeds is not self-explanatory: in the beginnings of the Christian faith such a particular syntactical unit did not exist, although the importance of belief in Christ was already emphasized in the Gospel of John and the Pauline letters. Initially, it seems to have sufficed to exclaim 'Jesus/Christ is the Lord'. Statements explicitly affirming the belief of the speaker first appear in relation to baptism. Towards the end of the second century baptizands were asked a series of credal questions prior to or during the act of baptism; they were to reply to these interrogations by saying 'I believe', (Incidentally, this is also the reason why the singular 'I believe in' chronologically precedes the use of the plural 'we believe in'. The plural is not attested before the fourth century when it was introduced in relation to the first declaratory creeds.)

Apart from these credal interrogations, from the times of Irenaeus onward we find passages in the writings of the Fathers of the second and third centuries summarizing the basic

tenets of the Christian faith, but they have not yet congealed into fixed formulae. Their authors often called them 'rule of faith' (kanòn tês pisteos/regula fidei) or 'rule of truth' (kanòn tês aletheias/regula veritatis). They were used when theologians wanted to define what they saw as normative Christian belief over against dissenting views which they considered heretical.

It is important to keep these two functions in mind, because in a way they were blended together in the creeds. Creeds served two purposes: (a) they had a missionary purpose and were accordingly used in catechesis, just like the credal questions of the second and third centuries, and (b) they had a dogmatic purpose, defining true faith over against doctrinal dissent which may then have been expressly anathematized. As we will see, in the great creeds both functions are discernible, although, depending on the text, one or the other might be more prominent.

Both uses of these credal prototypes agreed in that they served as summaries of the Christian faith and as tokens proving that the person who knew and used them was indeed a (true) Christian.

THE EMERGENCE OF DECLARATORY CREEDS

There is little evidence that there were declaratory creeds, that is, creeds introduced by 'I believe in' or 'we believe in', before the fourth century. It is widely assumed, therefore, that the emergence of creeds in declaratory form is closely related to the doctrinal debates in the wake of the Constantinian revolution. However, this is largely a conclusion from silence and must therefore be treated with some caution.

The earliest authentic declaratory creed that has come down to us is probably the creed sent by Arius of Alexandria and his supporters to Alexander of Alexandria in c. AD 320. I call this a 'creed', because the authors themselves speak of it as their *pístis* and introduce this 'faith' with the words 'we acknowledge' (*oídamen*). Still, it does not yet relate to the three persons of the Trinity, but discusses in a rambling way only the relationship between Father and Son. Alexander of Alexandria, Arius' fiercest opponent, appears to have responded in kind by producing an even longer text and, as it were, turning up the doctrinal heat in the debate: he solemnly introduced his faith by saying, 'we believe just as seems good to the apostolic Church' (*pisteúomen hōs tē apostolikē ekklesia dokei*).

The Arian controversy sparked the production of a whole string of creeds: each confession developed the previous one, taking up material from the earlier creed and turning that material against the opponent to whom the newer creed was directed. The fourth century also saw an important institutional innovation which was introduced by the emperor himself and which was to play a pivotal role in the production of creeds: synods which drew together as many bishops as possible from the empire in order to resolve doctrinal conflict. A means to this end was precisely the composition of creeds and credal texts by the synod. The first episcopal assembly to use this literary device was probably held in Antioch in AD 324-325. This creed, if genuine, is still a fairly lengthy document which is clearly not intended for liturgical use. Nonetheless, it displays another

feature which is found especially in synodal creeds: the affirmation of a certain doctrinal content is supplemented by a series of condemnations of those who hold opposing views. Here it becomes clear that this type of written creed is in some ways a continuation of the *regula fidei* of the second and third centuries: its primary purpose is not mission or catechesis, but the demarcation of certain doctrinal content over against dissidents whose views were anathematized. This purpose is also clear from the most famous creed of the first part of the fourth century: the theological statement of the Council of Nicaea in 325. All major synods of the fourth century down to Constantinople 381 produced such documents.

THE CREED OF CONSTANTINOPLE AS THE END AND THE BEGINNING OF THE PRODUCTION OF CREEDS IN THE EAST

In a way this proliferation of creeds came to an end with the production of the Creed of Constantinople (C) in 381. There is no doubt that in subsequent centuries C remained sacrosanct. It was according to this standard creed that all later creeds and definitions of faith were measured. This was particularly true for the East. It may be, therefore, more than just a coincidence that in the period under consideration no further Eastern synod produced a text which was solemnly introduced by *pisteúomen eis*. Instead, as we can see for example from the Formula of Union of AD 433, the slightly less authoritative term *homologoúmen* ('we confess') is sometimes used; this expression seems to have

been preferred in order to avoid the impression that C was somehow to be replaced. In addition, there were alterations to the liturgical calendar in the late fourth century suggesting that attempts were made to make the christological content of C comprehensible to all believers through the liturgical celebration of the Feasts of the Lord such as Christmas, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost.

Nonetheless, even though the overall structure of C was clearly defined, its precise wording was far from clear. Our earliest evidence is already contradictory. As is well known, C is first attested in the acts of the Council of Chalcedon in 451, hence seventy years after the actual event. In these acts, however, there are two versions of this text. The original text (if there ever was one) seems to be that quoted at the third session of the Council, whereas the version of C included in the famous Definition of Faith adopted in the fifth session was revised such as to be closer to the Creed of Nicaea. Interestingly, it was the text of the third session that was later adopted by the Third Council of Constantinople in 680-681.

In addition, notwithstanding the existence and authority of C, in the ensuing centuries the production of creeds continued unabated. The authors of the later creeds, whether individuals or synods, all acknowledged the importance of C, but went on to set out their own doctrinal views, depending on the doctrinal controversy in which they were currently involved.

Given the undisputed authority and doctrinal importance of C, one might assume that the creed was introduced into the Mass soon after its composition. In the East, however, this probably did not happen before the sixth century.

Perhaps this liturgical innovation goes back to the Monophysite patriarch Timothy I of Constantinople (AD 511-518), but details are unclear. Nonetheless, C's function in the great liturgies of St Basil and of St John Chrysostom may be determined with some certainty. In both liturgies the recital of C follows the liturgical imperative to close the doors of the church, the instruction which marked the beginning of the Eucharistic liturgy. The reason for this prominent place probably was to make sure that catechumens and other unbaptized persons would stand out insofar as they were unable to recite the creed; by this means they could be excluded from the central part of the service. Thus C was, at least in that context, indeed used as a 'password' or 'watchword'.

THE APOSTLES' CREED AND ITS ANCESTORS IN THE WEST

In the West we find little of the theological subtlety and sophistication at which the Greek theologians excelled. As regards the doctrinal debates which rocked the Byzantine Empire, apart from the fact that most Western bishops no longer read Greek, they probably did not understand what all the fuss was about.

In fact, we have positive evidence that until well into the fourth century written creeds were unknown in large parts or all of the Western Empire. In the winter of AD 358/359, Hilary, the bishop of Poitiers, wrote a letter to his fellow-bishops in Gaul, Germany, and Britain. He appears to have been living in exile in Asia Minor when he learnt about the doctrinal controversies which shook the Eastern churches to their core. In his letter Hilary informed his Western colleagues about these controversies relating to the creed. In fact, he noted with some astonishment that these controversies had led to the creation of creeds as written documents, a literary genre which so far had been unknown in the West.

[63] [...] But among these things, O you who are blessed and glorious in the Lord, who preserve the perfect and apostolic faith in the confession of your convictions, you have hitherto been ignorant of written creeds [conscriptas fides]. For you, who abounded in the Spirit, have not needed the letter. You did not require the service of a hand to write what you believed in your heart [and] professed with [your] mouth unto salvation. You did not deem it necessary to read as bishops what you held when new-born converts. But necessity has introduced the custom of setting out creeds and signing what has been set out. Where the meaning of the convictions is in danger, there the letter is required. Of course, nothing prevents us from writing down that which is wholesome to confess.

This testimony, which has so far largely remained unnoticed in the discussion about the development of the creeds, is remarkable for a number of reasons. (1) Hilary clearly states that in the dioceses of the West to which his letter is addressed (i.e. large parts of the Western Empire) at the time no written creeds had previously existed. (The plural *conscriptas fides* clearly refers not to a particular creed, but to written credal texts tout court.) This is further testimony to the fact that in the West there was no written declaratory creed until the middle of the fourth century. (2) Hitherto the Western Christians had

confessed their faith in a way which had required no written text. This may mean that they

had memorized the creed which had only been handed over to them orally or, as seems more plausible to me, that they had simply answered the baptismal interrogations. (3) The synods/Councils mandated that creeds be written down. (4) Bishops were thereafter required to sign those texts in order to bear witness to their faith publicly.

Therefore, we have here a first-hand account of the emergence of creeds as written texts. Prior to AD 358 in large parts of the Western Empire no such texts existed in written form. The doctrinal controversies of the fourth century, however, required that the 'spirit' of the faith had to be written down as 'letter'. But in this respect C was less influential than another creed: the ancestor of the Apostles' Creed (T).

T did not make such a dramatic appearance as C. In fact, we have no direct evidence as to when it was actually composed. As to its origin, there is an almost unanimous consensus among scholars on two points:

- (1) T is a descendant of an earlier Roman creed (R);
- (2) T's Roman precursor R is first attested in a letter which Marcellus sent to Pope Julius of Rome in AD 340/341.

However, it is unclear whether Marcellus may actually be regarded as R's author. There is a view that this is indeed the case and that R may then have been adopted by a Roman synod and subsequently been disseminated in the West.

Yet there is also some evidence to suggest that some time in the early third century R was in some way modelled on even earlier credal interrogations used at baptism in order to combat not only dualist Gnostic views on the relation between the Father and the Son, which were propagated in Rome at around AD 150, but also a Monarchian theology which tended to identify the Father and the Son and was popular in Rome some fifty years later. Still, the precise process through which this happened is as unclear as is the precise text of R, which may not even have been fully fixed.

Yet there is no doubt that by the end of the fourth century R was considered normative in most of the Latin West. From Hilary's testimony we learn that, whatever the origin of R, in large parts of the Western Empire there were no fixed declaratory creeds until the middle of the fourth century. We also know from Augustine's famous description of the baptism of Marius Victorinus, which took place in AD 356/357, that by that time at the latest in Rome a ceremony had been introduced prior to baptism in which a fixed text of the creed was publicly recited by the catechumens (*redditio symboli*). The text of the creed had to be fixed not only, as in the case of N and later of C, in order to avoid doctrinal confusion, but also because it was handed over orally to large numbers of catechumens. In the wake of the Constantinian revolution the numbers of converts had increased dramatically, which made necessary the development of a uniform procedure. R was used for this purpose because, owing to its simple structure, it could easily be memorized; in addition, it may safely be assumed that at that time N was as yet unknown in the West and in any case highly controversial and could not, therefore,

fulfil this particular function. The legend of the apostolic origins of R in the late fourth century should perhaps also be seen against this background, since the legend, which was mainly spread through explanations of the creed, served to increase the authority of that creed.

The rites of *traditio* and *redditio symboli* were thus inserted into the preparations for baptism sometime before AD 356/357.⁶² At a certain point during Lent the bishop solemnly explained the text of the creed and 'handed it over' to the catechumens (that is, he recited it three times). This act was called *traditio symboli*.⁶³ Catechumens were then expected to learn the creed by heart and, in a ceremony called *redditio symboli*, to 'hand it back' by reciting it solemnly in the presence of the bishop, of their sponsors, and at least in some places of the congregation as a whole. This rite only made sense when the catechumens were no longer infants. But, as infant baptism became the norm, the rite lost its original function.

Nevertheless, the ceremony itself persisted for centuries, although from that point on the godparents holding the infant were given the creed and had to recite it on behalf of the infants entrusted to them.

Nevertheless, neither was R itself taken over as it stood everywhere in the West nor were the accompanying rites introduced straight away in the other Latin churches. There were other local creeds, and the most famous was perhaps that of Aquileia (written in c. AD 404), because it is the subject of an explanation by Rufinus, bishop of that city. This document, one of the first of its kind, is interesting for various reasons:

- (1) it clearly attests that Aquileia (see below) also knew the rite of *traditio* and *redditio symboli* (the handing over and the reciting of the creed) prior to baptism;
- (2) Rufinus also says that for that purpose a fixed creed was being used;
- (3) the church of Rome had a creed which differed from that of Aquileia in several respects.

Rufinus' insistence on the differences in wording has often deflected the attention of scholars from the fact that all the creeds used in the West in the preparation for baptism from the second half of the fourth century onwards were either the Roman creed or descendants from it, the most famous one being the Apostles' Creed. Unlike C the Roman creed was not primarily considered a dogmatic creed, but, owing to its brevity, it was well-suited for mission and for the catechesis of adults prior to their baptism. In that respect, the function of R was similar to that of the earlier credal interrogations (which were not, however, given up; as such in the early sacramentaries there is a strange duplication of credal texts at baptism, i.e. that baptismal rites include both interrogatory and declaratory creeds).

Owing to the old capital's influence, by the end of the fourth century R or some form thereof had spread throughout the West. Still, until the ninth century there was no unified Western text. As Liuwe Westra showed some years ago in a thorough study, minor variations were made in the various Western regions of the empire. One might mention the addition of *per sanctam ecclesiam* to the third article in North Africa (this

alteration was imported from the baptismal interrogations of the third century), the addition of *victor* after *ascendit* in Gaul, or the additions of *deum et* before *dominum nostrum* and *vivus* after *resurrexit* (which are first attested in Spain in the sixth century and are clearly anti-Homoean).

As a result of the ongoing liturgical standardization the descendants of R coalesced once again into the version used today in the baptismal liturgies of both Catholics and Protestants: the Apostles' Creed.

THE INCLUSION OF THE CREED OF CONSTANTINOPLE IN THE WESTERN LITURGIES

As was indicated above, for a long time the Creed of Constantinople does not appear to have been widely used in the West. Setting aside Latin translations of the acts of the Council of Chalcedon in AD 451, C does not appear to be quoted in any Latin source for two centuries after its first composition.⁶⁹ From the end of the sixth century onward it came to be cited by synods when some doctrinal issue was at stake. We find it quoted as a matter of course introducing the decrees of the various councils of Toledo in the Visigothic Kingdom, beginning with the Third Council of AD 589. As Peter Gemeinhardt has shown in his seminal study on the subject, it was in Spain at the Eighth Council of Toledo in AD 653 that the filioque was ultimately firmly inserted into the credal tradition, although the doctrine had *de facto* already been defended at the Third Council of AD 589. At that time the Visigothic king Reccared (reg. AD 586-601) decided to convert from Homoean Christianity to catholicism, a move which also led him to abandon the view of his father and predecessor Leovigild (reg. AD 568-586) regarding the Holy Spirit, insofar as Leovigild denied its divinity.

Whereas in Spain people did not shy away from altering the creed when doing so was necessary to combat heresy, the Roman church was much more conservative in the handling of the text of the creeds. In the earliest extant sacramentary, the Old Gelasian Sacramentary, which may have been composed in the seventh century, we find that the creed used for the *traditio symboli* is C without the filioque. It is first recited in Greek and then in Latin, the Greek having been transcribed in Latin letters. This seems to indicate that, at the time this sacramentary was composed, the Greek text was incomprehensible to both clergy and congregation. It may well be that in the Gelasian Sacramentary we have evidence of a period when the Roman community was still bilingual, as has sometimes been suggested. Nonetheless, in that text C is followed by a short explanation of the creed (which modern scholars have ascribed to Leo the Great).⁷⁴ The author of this explanation makes no mention of the doctrinal characteristics of C, but only enumerates those clauses which are also found in R. It looks, therefore, as if at some point R was replaced by the more elaborate creed C (while the earlier explanation remained in place). Yet at that point not only the text, but even the language of C was already considered normative. When the Roman liturgy of baptism spread to the Frankish Empire in the second half of the eighth century, either C or (some form of) T appears to have been used at baptism. When Charlemagne later insisted that C be chanted in the liturgy of

the Mass and that the filioque be included in order to combat Spanish adoptionism, Pope Leo III firmly resisted this order and apparently continued to recite C for catechetical purposes only. The filioque is first quoted in the baptismal liturgy of a sacramentary in the middle of the tenth century.

How did C come to be used in the liturgy of the Mass in the West? Again, the Visigoth king Reccared appears to have made an attempt at the Third Council of Toledo in 589 to introduce C into the Sunday liturgy, locating it just before the recital of the Lord's Prayer so that it might be 'proclaimed by the congregation in a loud voice'. Here the reason for the introduction of C is not so much to make sure that persons who were not (yet) fully Christian were excluded from the Mass, as was the case in the East, but to inculcate a specific form of the Christian faith (i.e. that adopted by the Council of Constantinople in 381) in order to differentiate official doctrine from non-orthodox beliefs. This had proven necessary because, as indicated above, at the same council Reccared had publicly converted from a Homoean version of Christianity which had been introduced more than two centuries previously by Bishop Wulfila. Reccared wanted to make sure that his subjects would do likewise; how better to achieve that than through the general recital of C?

In Spain this practice appears to have been generally adopted. The creed, however, does not appear to have been introduced into the liturgy of the Mass elsewhere before the late eighth century. Even then the evidence is fairly confusing, and this is not the place to go into details. Suffice it to say that, surprisingly, none of the preserved Frankish Gelasian Sacramentaries of the eighth and ninth centuries contain the creed in the liturgy of the Mass. It appears that in the Holy Roman Empire C was perhaps not introduced into the Mass until the eleventh century. The creed was then chanted after the Gospel or after the homily and preceded the preparation of the offerings. Thus it did not introduce the Liturgy of the Eucharist as in the East, but it concluded the Liturgy of the Word of God, thus serving as the (orthodox) answer of the congregation to the Gospel.

WHY CREEDS? SOME THEOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Interestingly, creeds deal first and foremost with questions relating to the Trinity. They do not define Christian morality nor do they describe the Church in any detail. Even eschatology is mentioned in the vaguest of terms (Christ's judgement, life eternal). Instead the content of the creeds is largely made up of statements about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In credal sermons there is some discussion about whether belief 'in' the Church is possible, as the third article of both T and C might suggest, but this is usually strongly denied.

This seems to suggest that creeds are really about a particular relationship to God. This God, however, is always specified as the triune God: Christian belief in God is not primarily belief in monotheism (as it is in Judaism and Islam), but in a God who reveals himself to the world in the persons of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and to whose actions in the world believers can respond by expressing their trust in him. One might even argue that the creeds are primarily about Christ and his relation to the Father. Furthermore, the controversy about the filioque is

not about the Holy Spirit and his work as such, but about his origin and the question of whether he proceeds from the Father alone or from the Father and the Son. This means that what is at stake here is the precise description of the status of the Son with regard to the Father and with regard to us. We believe in the Son as both God and man, and it is only through belief in Christ thus described that the full significance of the Father's creation and the preservation of his creation and of the Church through the Holy Spirit is revealed. It is God's revelation in Christ, 'who because of us humans and because of our salvation descended from the heavens', which is at the centre of the creed. And it is our trust in the salvific significance of this revelation which is expressed in the words 'I believe'.

CRITERIA FOR THE CHOICE OF TEXTS

The present collection includes all confessions of faith and creeds from the emergence of Christianity until the death of Charlemagne in AD 814. For the purpose of this book those texts are considered to be 'creeds' and are therefore included, that begin with the words 'I' or 'we believe/confess' or call themselves 'symbol', 'confession of faith', or simply 'faith'. The editor sees the time limit of AD 814 to be justified by the fact that the Carolingian renaissance brought about a certain standardization of the Latin Mass in the West through the gradual Romanization of the liturgy under Pepin the Short and Charlemagne.

This is not to deny that a terminus ante quem of AD 814 is to a large extent arbitrary. Liturgy continued to evolve after Charlemagne in a somewhat uncontrolled fashion until the appearance of the Roman Ritual of 1614 and beyond. It can, therefore, be assumed that the same is true for the creeds as part of Christian liturgy. Additionally, in Eastern Christianity, especially in the non-Chalcedonian churches, historical circumstances were very different from those in the West, such that the ninth century hardly provides an apt historical caesura for this project.

Yet even granting the timespan defended here, it was sometimes very difficult to decide which texts to include in the present collection. Firstly, for the reasons suggested above it makes little sense to speak of creeds in the first three centuries. Therefore, I included only those texts which possess a significant similarity to later creeds. The choice of these texts is to a certain extent arbitrary. In particular, I have quoted few Gnostic texts—not for reasons of heterodoxy, but because their content and structure did not typically appear sufficiently close to the later creeds.

Secondly, even from the fourth century onwards in some cases it was unclear whether a text had to be considered a 'creed' or a 'confession of faith' or whether it belonged to some other literary genre. I have usually included these texts or significant portions of them in this collection.

Thirdly, when dealing with explanations of the creed it was not always possible to extract the wording of the creed from its explanatory context. Again, in cases of doubt I have included the full texts of the expositions, and added thereto suggestions as to how the underlying creeds might be reconstructed.

Fourthly, those texts were included which, while not dealing with the wording of the creed as such, have proved very

influential in the development and use of the creeds. Thus readers will also find liturgical, legal, and narrative sources dealing with the creeds for the first time in a collection of this sort.

Finally (and notwithstanding a few exceptions), it was not possible to include ancient historical accounts regarding the composition of creeds (such as those found in the writings of Athanasius, Socrates Scholasticus, Sozomen, and Theodoret). Otherwise, another volume would have had to be added to this work.

STRUCTURE OF THE COLLECTION

As regards the organization of the evidence, I first collected those biblical testimonies which either speak about 'confessing' God or Christ or have influenced later rules of faith and creeds by supplying particular theologoumena or by summarizing certain data from the life of Christ (chapters 2 and 3).

Witnesses for the meaning of symbolum and other terms denoting the creed are collected in chapter 4.

The evidence for the creeds as such and their predecessors is organized according to a broadly chronological and regional pattern. The earliest bits of evidence for creed-like formulae are the baptismal interrogations, which are first attested in the second half of the second century. Since these questions developed into a genre distinct from declaratory creeds, they are collected in a separate chapter (chapter 5).

The development of credal formulae and the rule of faith before the appearance of the first declaratory creeds is summarized in chapter 6.

The turbulent controversies of the fourth century in the East which led to the development of the great synodal creeds of Nicaea and Constantinople and subsequent dogmatic discussions are documented in chapter 7. Here it was clear that the development until the Council of Constantinople (AD 381) should be presented as a separate unit (chapter 7.1), since all later creeds and credal formulae in the East refer to C in one way or another (chapter 7.2).

The Western creeds and credal formulae from the fourth to the eighth centuries which are collected in chapter 8 fall into three categories: (1) all creeds related to the Roman Creed (chapter 8.1); (2) the Athanasian Creed (Symbolum Quicumque, chapter 8.2); and (3) other Western creeds and credal texts (chapter 8.3). Both chapters 8.1 and 8.3 were then subdivided according to regional variants. Here I followed to a certain extent the model suggested by Westra. Nonetheless, it must be emphasized that this substructure is experimental. In many cases the provenance of a creed is uncertain, and there is an acute danger of circular argument when one bases the origin of a certain text on a set of particularities which are in themselves hypothetical. In addition, although certain variants in the wording of the creeds maybe assigned to certain regions, I am no longer certain whether Westra's model can be applied to the texts in aggregate, since there was at all times an active theological and ecclesial exchange between various regions of the Western Empire and its successor states.

As mentioned above, this collection for the first time also includes legal and liturgical sources, which are to be found in

chapters 9 and 10 respectively. In addition, a number of texts mostly taken from homilies are included that refer to the use of creeds in daily life.

Finally, Susan Keefe's magisterial monograph on baptismal liturgies in the Carolingian Empire made it clear to me that Charlemagne's attempt to clarify and unify the liturgy led to a spate of episcopal and synodal pronouncements and rulings on the creed as well as on its use in baptism and catechesis. In addition, Charlemagne was instrumental in enforcing the use of the filioque in the West. Therefore, it appeared to be reasonable to include the evidence for this era in a separate chapter which finally concludes this collection (chapter 11).

It should be emphasized that this is a collection of credal and not (primarily) of doctrinal sources. Hence many texts that are important for the history of dogma in the early Church have not been included, since they display no characteristics of a creed. This also applies to doctrines which are expressed in the form of anathemas only (although, initially, anathemas often followed credal texts and may, therefore, be considered to have formed part of creeds).

Santa Muerte: The History, Rituals, and Magic of Our Lady of the Holy Death by Tracey Rollin (Weiser Books, 9781578636211)

Death welcomes everyone. This is the foundation for the veneration of Santa Muerte, or 'Holy Death.' Considered to be the female personification of death, Santa Muerte is associated with protection and safe passage to the afterlife. She is also the patron saint of people who live on the fringes of society and often face violence and death. In recent years her constituency has expanded to include the LGBT community and people who are marginalized or whose jobs put them at significant risk of death such as military and police personnel. Santa Muerte is hailed as their potent and powerful protector, capable of delivering them from harm and even granting miracles.

Santa Muerte is a complete ritual guide to working with this famous – and infamous! – Mexican folk saint. It takes readers beyond the sensational headlines to reveal why Santa Muerte is so beloved by so many. Author Tracey Rollin presents simple, straightforward methods for working with Holy Death that may be used alone or easily incorporated into readers' own magical practice.

Rollin is the administrator of the Bone Mother Facebook group, a 65-thousand-member community of Santa Muerte devotees. She is also a registered nurse with years of emergency room and trauma experience.

Rollin begins Santa Muerte by citing the beliefs and practices of religions and cultures across the world that may have influenced or been influenced by Santa Muerte. In particular, she addresses the qualities, powers, and influences of Santa Muerte and discusses many 'spells,' or prayers, that allegedly help to heal relationships, cure illnesses, bring good luck, and increase sexual pleasure, among other things. Rollin also explores the Aztec origins and other 'parent religions' from which the veneration of Santa Muerte arose, as well as the

factors that may contribute to the unofficial folk saint's growing popularity in current times, which she attributes to a mix of folk status and subversive appeal.

This is a comprehensive and well-researched guide to the Mexican folk saint Santa Muerte, the "female personification of death... associated with protection and safe passage to the afterlife."... While the book focuses specifically on one saint, Rollin's understanding of a variety of religions grounds the book in a broad and inclusive understanding of the world's many mystical beliefs. At times, the work can be so straightforward that it takes on a textbook quality, but the wealth of information contained here will appeal to those seeking a studied and historical understanding of Santa Muerte. – Publishers Weekly

Do you have a friend in Death? You should and you can with Rollin's new book. Rollin does an amazing, non-judgmental job of relating the stories of Santa Muerte, but also gives the reader the practical goods on how to work with this powerful folk saint combining both traditional and modern ways of working with her. Her personal stories and experiences with St. Death are more often than not entertaining, and the book would give you more than a solid foundation to work with Santa Muerte. The only question you should have is how fast do you want your results? – Andrieh Vitimus, author of Hands-On Chaos Magic and podcast host of Deeper Down the Rabbit Hole

Tracey Rollin does an excellent job of laying out and explaining Santa Muerte. I particularly appreciate how she explores the history and beliefs of Santa Muerte, while balancing the theory with practical magic and suggestions for how people can integrate Santa Muerte into their existing spiritual paths. Her instructions are clear and easy to follow, but also encourage people to discover how to develop their own relationship with Santa Muerte. If you want the authoritative book on Santa Muerte, this is the book to read. – Taylor Ellwood, author of Pop Culture Magic Systems

Tracey Rollin's very well written book *Santa Muerte: The History, Rituals, and Magic of Our Lady of the Holy Death* avoids a dogmatic approach to Santa Muerte. The author, who hails from New Mexico, where Doña Sebastiana, Lady Death, presaged Santa Muerte, incorporates more research on Santa Muerte than other books aimed at devotees. – Professor R. Andrew Chesnut, author of *Devoted to Death: Santa Muerte, the Skeleton Saint*

Tracey Rollin's *Santa Muerte: The History, Rituals and Magic of Our Lady of the Holy Death* is a serious work dedicated to providing historical insight combined with spiritual application in the ways of the Holy Death. Rollin's book provides sound research and a unique inside perspective into the customs and rituals associated with one of the fastest growing religions in the world. This book brings together two important perspectives of both a historical and magico-religious worldview without alienating either one. A valuable contribution to this area of study. – Tony Kail, author of *Santa Muerte: Mexico's Mysterious Saint of Death and A Secret History of Memphis Hoodoo: Rootworkers, Conjurers, and Spirituals*

Santa Muerte provides an authoritative, broad and inclusive understanding of the world's many mystical beliefs, putting Santa Muerte in its historical context.

Religion & Spirituality / Tibetan Buddhism

[The Complete Nyingma Tradition from Sutra to Tantra, Book 13: Philosophical Systems and Lines of Transmission by Choying Tobden Dorje, translated, introduced & annotated by Gyurme Dorje \(Tsadra Foundation Series: Snow Lion, 9781559394604\)](#)

[The Complete Nyingma Tradition from Sutra to Tantra](#) is Choying Tobden Dorje's magnum opus presented in English for the first time, in an authoritative translation prepared under the auspices of well-known and highly respected Tibetan teachers and translators. This is Book 13: Philosophical Systems and Lines of Transmission.

Choying Tobden Dorje (1785–1848) was a brilliant Buddhist master from the Amdo region of eastern Tibet renowned for his realization of great perfection. A disciple of the first Dordrupchen Rinpoche, he founded the monastery of Dzogchen Namgyal Ling and was instrumental in establishing the community of mantra practitioners known as the Repkong Ngakmang. Translator Gyurme Dorje holds a master's degree in Sanskrit (University of Edinburgh) and a PhD in Tibetan literature (SOAS, University of London). He has written, edited, translated, and contributed to numerous books on Tibetan culture.

In 1838, Choying Tobden Dorje, a yogin and scholar of northeastern Tibet, completed a multivolume masterwork that traces the entire path of the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism from beginning to end. Written by a mantra practitioner for the benefit of mantra practitioners living among the lay community, it was intended to be informative, inspirational, and above all, practical. Its twenty-five books, or topical divisions, offer a comprehensive and detailed view of the Buddhist path according to the early translation school of Tibetan Buddhism, spanning the vast range of Buddhist teachings from the initial steps to the highest esoteric teachings of great perfection. Choying Tobden Dorje's magnum opus appears in English here for the first time in *The Complete Nyingma Tradition from Sutra to Tantra*.

Book 13: *Philosophical Systems and Lines of Transmission* presents the philosophical systems of India and Tibet, according to the writings of Longchen Rabjam and the revelations of Orgyan Lingpa. First, it discusses the views attributed to classical Hinduism, Jainism, materialism, and nihilism. Second, it describes the standpoints of the Vaibhashika and Sautrantika exponents of the lesser vehicle, exemplified by pious attendants and hermit buddhas, and the Cittamatra ('mind only') and Madhyamaka ('middle way') commentators of the great vehicle, exemplified by great bodhisattva beings. Third, it analyzes the inner and outer vehicles of the Buddhist tantras, with an emphasis on the three classes of the great perfection. Fourth, it documents the lines of philosophical transmission within Tibet, including Bon, Nyingma, Kagyu, Sakya, Kadampa, and Geluk. *Philosophical Systems and Lines*

of Transmission concludes with an extract from a well-known treatise of the Fifth Dalai Lama, applying the techniques of consequential reasoning to the first chapter of Vasubandhu's Treasury of Phenomenology.

In the Translator's Introduction, Gyurme Dorje says that it is a long-term objective of the Tsadra Foundation to publish this entire work in traditional dpe cha format and in modern book form, alongside its English translation.

The 2000 edition comprises five volumes. Among them, the golden key, the root verses, the outline, and the concise commentary are all contained in volume 1, while the extensive commentary is found in volumes 2 to 4 and the illustrations in volume 5. Within the extensive commentary itself, the sutra section, the subjects of Indo-Tibetan classical learning, and the section on Buddhist phenomenology are all found in volume 2, while the tantra section including Mahayoga and Anuyoga is found in volume 3, and Atiyoga in volume 4.

The ordering of these sections is significant in that the author evidently conceived of The Precious Treasury of Sutra and Tantra as an unfolding package, commencing with his own pithy golden key and root verses, continuing through the outline and concise commentary, and culminating in the elaborate extensive commentary and the illustrations. For the sake of readers who may find this structure overly repetitive, the present translation series gives precedence to the extensive commentary, with the root verses, outline, and concise commentary placed after it.

The present volume Philosophical Systems and Lines of Transmission contains an English translation of Book 13, which concerns the philosophical systems of India and Tibet, and their historical lines of transmission.

The first three parts of Book 13 Philosophical Systems and Lines of Transmission effectively restate Longchen Rabjam's analysis of the views held respectively by (a) the established non-Buddhist Indian schools; (b) the Vaibhasika, Sautrantika, Cittamatra, and Madhyamaka, who exemplify the 'causal' approach of the sutras; and (c) the outer and inner classes of fruitional tantra, comprising the tantras of action, conduct, union, great union, subsequent union, and highest union.

Part 1, entitled "Mundane Approaches," begins by exploring the difference between those following non-Buddhist spiritual paths who are said to have no understanding of the nature of reality but who nonetheless progress through the various god realms of form and formlessness on the basis of their meditative capacity and ethical conduct, and those of wrong understanding who fail to progress owing to their eternalist or nihilist views. There then follows a discussion of the purported views of the five well-defined non-Buddhist philosophies: Samkhya phenomenology, Vaisheshika categorization (with Shaivism), Mimamsaka ritual, Nirgrantha Jainism, and Barhaspatya nihilism or hedonism.

Part 2, entitled "The Philosophical Systems of the Causal Vehicles;" begins by outlining the superiority of pious attendants and hermit buddhas to non-Buddhists in terms of their refuge, view, meditative experience, conduct, and goal. The tenets accepted in common by pious attendants include the four noble truths, the positing of ultimate reality, the denials of

substratum consciousness, the great vehicle and the ten bodhisattva levels, and the assertion that buddhas have an individual mental continuum.

The distinctive philosophical schools espoused by pious attendants are then analyzed in turn. Among them, the Vaibhasika analysis concerns the five basic categories of phenomena, the positing of decay as a separate entity, the positing of the substantial existence of the three times, the positing of an inexpressible self, the denial of intrinsic or objective awareness on the part of consciousness, the distinction between defining characteristics and exemplars, and the existence of unexhausted substances.

The Sautrantika analysis concerns causality with its four conditions, the notion that appearances are mind, that objects are covert, that atomic particles have no intervening spaces, that the sense organs are causally effective, that disassociated formative predispositions are imaginary, and that nirvana is a nonentity.

This discussion on the lesser vehicle ends with a brief presentation of the vehicle of the hermit buddhas in terms of their focus, classes, view, and meditation based on dependent origination and its reversal, as well as their conduct and goal. The great vehicle is subsequently introduced with a paragraph concerning the superiority of bodhisattvas to pious attendants and hermit buddhas. Its philosophical trends are then discussed in turn. The Cittamatrin ('mind-only') system is generally presented according to its tenets, focus, and classes, and on the basis of the distinctions made between the three natures, substantial existents and imputed existents, and relative and ultimate truth, as well as its understanding of the enlightened intention of the buddhas, selflessness, conduct, and goal.

The presentation of Madhyamaka ('middle way'), the culmination of the causal vehicles, includes a general introduction to those employing independent syllogisms – both the lower and higher Svatantrika – and a detailed presentation of the Prasangika. The Prasangika refutation of conceptual elaboration and nonrefutation of conventional appearances are then contrasted. In terms of praxis, the middle way of the ground emphasizes the two truths, the middle way of the path emphasizes the two provisions of merit and pristine cognition, and the middle way of the result emphasizes the two buddha bodies of reality and form. The chapter ends with a discussion on the validity of acceptance and nonacceptance, and their synthesis.

Part 3, entitled "The Philosophical Systems of the Fruitional Vehicles," begins by examining the distinctions between the ways of sutra and mantra. The three outer classes of tantra – action, conduct, and union are then presented, followed by a brief account of the distinctions between the outer and inner mantras, and between the father tantras, mother tantras, and nondual tantras.

Following Longchen Rabjam, the author then moves swiftly to the main subject matter – the detailed presentation of the tantras of highest union, the Great Perfection. The main emphasis is on the three classes of the Great Perfection, which comprise the class of mind, the class of space, and the class of esoteric instruction.

Part 4, entitled "The Philosophical Systems of Tibet: Lines of Transmission," follows on from the aforementioned presentation of the non-Buddhist and Buddhist philosophical perspectives, by turning to indigenous Tibetan developments. It begins with a brief description of the geographical extent of the Tibetan plateau. There then follows a listing of the royal dynasties of Tibet and a summary of the Bon religion. A brief account of the origins of the medical and divinatory traditions is then followed by a detailed presentation of the foundation, establishment, and spread of Buddhism in Tibet during the imperial period. The long citations in this section derive from Orgyan Lingpa's Injunctions of Padma. There is a particular emphasis on the translation and transmission of the three inner classes of tantra in terms of both the distant lineage of the transmitted teachings and the close lineages of spiritual revelations.

Having completed his exegesis of the Nyingma transmission in Tibet, Choying Tobden Dorje then recounts the translations that were undertaken during the later phase of Buddhist propagation from the tenth century onward. The author outlines the Tibetan evolution of the New Translation Schools, emphasizing in particular how each of these distinctive lineages and their branches had been foreordained in the prophetic declarations of Padmasambhava and Yeshe Tsogyal.

Part 5, entitled "Dialectical Writings of Buddhist Phenomenology," introduces readers to the complexities of consequential reasoning. The subject matter predictably concerns the nature of conditioned and unconditioned phenomena, the sensory elements, sense faculties and sense fields, the hierarchy of the psycho-physical aggregates, the nature of vision, and so forth, but the approach is distinctive, as those successive themes are examined through 'garlands' or series of consequential reasoning, taken verbatim from the Fifth Dalai Lama's Precious Chariot Steering the Treasury of Phenomenology.

This monumental treatise, covering both common and esoteric Buddhist lore, was composed by Choying Tobden Dorje, a most illustrious scholar and accomplished sage. Fortunately, among his voluminous books, this, his masterwork, has survived and has been carefully translated true to the original. It will open the eyes of serious readers to the vast spectrum of Buddhist wisdom. — Tulku Thondup

For persons interested in the extraordinary fields of Buddhist studies, Philosophical Systems and Lines of Transmission is an excellent text elucidating the enlightened intention of the buddhas; the pith instructions of learned and accomplished masters, awareness holders, and genuine spiritual teachers; and the exegeses of the major fields of Tibetan classical learning. It presents the structure of ground, path, and result in respect of the sutra and mantra vehicles. It differentiates the view, meditation, and conduct in accordance with the path. Philosophical Systems and Lines of Transmission outlines the gradation of vows and commitments in accordance with the discipline of individual liberation, the training of bodhisattvas, and the conduct of secret mantra. It is an edifying text, which excellently establishes study, reflection, and meditation, based on the author's own reasoning. Study of this text leads to the resolution of outer misconceptions and the attainment of the

rank of a learned person. Meditation on this text resolves inner misconceptions and leads to actualization of the spiritual goals to which each person aspires.

Human and Divine Being: A Study on the Theological Anthropology of Edith Stein by Donald Wallenfang [Veritas, Cascade Books, Wipf & Stock, 9781498293365]

Nothing is more dangerous to be misunderstood than the question, What is the human being? In an era when this question is not only being misunderstood but even forgotten, wisdom delivered by the great thinkers and mystics of the past must be recovered. Edith Stein (1891-1942), a Jewish Carmelite mystical philosopher, offers great promise to resume asking the question of the human being. In *Human and Divine Being*, Donald Wallenfang offers a comprehensive summary of the theological anthropology of this heroic martyr to truth. Beginning with the theme of human vocation, Wallenfang leads the reader through a labyrinth of philosophical and theological vignettes: spiritual being, the human soul, material being, empathy, the logic of the cross, and the meaning of suffering. The question of the human being is asked in light of divine being by harnessing the fertile tension between the methods of phenomenology and metaphysics. Stein spurs us on to a rendezvous with the stream of "perennial philosophy" that has watered the landscape of thought since conscious time began. In the end, the meaning of human being is thrown into sharp relief against the darkness of all that is not authentically human.

Excerpt: Donald Wallenfang warns us at the outset that "Stein's masterpieces in philosophical theology are rigorous and dense," and that "it is a great feat just to read through one of them in its entirety," and I would add, in English, let alone in German, because some of Stein's most important works have not yet been translated into English. A true introduction to the thought of Edith Stein could not do it honor unless it was to some degree in its own right "rigorous and dense." Indeed, Wallenfang has "sifted carefully" through Stein's works, all of them, to produce a synthesis that, let the reader be forewarned then, is surely properly described as "rigorous and dense"! But the careful reader will find herself amply repaid for her efforts in sustained attention. And the book is designed, at any rate, to be read in manageable chunks of short chapters in order to encourage the reader and to assist her in mastering its contents. For all of its difficulty, it also manages to mirror faithfully one of the other salient features of Edith Stein's work no matter how abstruse—the way in which it is nevertheless suffused with a warmth that glows from every page.

The rigor of this book, and of Edith Stein's philosophical/theological anthropology, which is the subject of this book, gives it the feeling of alterity, of "otherness," to adopt one of Stein's favorite expressions from her earliest work on empathy. In turn, its alterity is itself a function—at least, I believe I have learned this from the book—of the banality with which most of us, steeped in a reductionist culture, greet the central question of *Human and Divine Being*, "What does it mean to be human?" with a complacency of the obvious. Whatever it does mean, we know from the outset of cultural

presupposition that it is culturally constructed without remainder, because, whatever it means, there is, before and behind and under these cultural constructions, nothing but matter and energy and natural law. For even those of us who are believers have a hard time, for example, imagining spirit as actually something. And, as Stein in Wallenfang's re-voicing shows, we therefore have a hard time imagining even matter as something. For being something implies form, and if there is truly form, and not the simulacrum of form that a purely natural-law description of reality provides, then there is something higher than matter that allows matter to also be something instead of a random association of entities that have no name but what we arbitrarily attach to it and which therefore can generate nothing with a name except that which we arbitrarily attach to it ("construct").

The seemingly irreducible alterity of this book, and of Edith Stein's peculiar combination, or mitigation, of phenomenology with metaphysics, as Wallenfang displays it to us, makes it something like a great work of fantasy. If you read J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (which I hasten to add is not mentioned in Wallenfang's book), for example, you find yourself in a fictional world with its own unique geography and logic, its own languages and peoples, mythic creatures, and history. Because it is a work of fantasy, and because that is agreed upon between reader and author from the beginning, the reader accepts its alterity as something postulated if not believed. But in accepting these terms, literally in accepting the new language(s) and logic of the fictional world, one finds, after one has thoroughly lived in the new world, that one has actually accepted an enhanced way of speaking and thinking about one's own world, which in turn becomes re-enchanted, the locus of a kind of fantasy-come-true.

In the case of Edith Stein, and of Wallenfang's book as a distillation of her thought, it is as though we have a work of fantasy to approach. It is cast as "fantasy" by those of us, all of us, who, even if believers, almost unconsciously accept a reductionist worldview, we who live in the Twilight of the Idols where we know that the philosophers are the greatest web-spinners of all, who have by abstraction "arrive[d] at their stupendous concept, 'God.'" And thus "that which is last, thinnest, and emptiest; the "last smoke of evaporating reality," is placed "first, as the cause, as ens realissimum," that which is absolutely most real. To enter the world where spirit is real, where spirit is something, and therefore where matter is real, is something, is to enter a world that has been constructed as fantasy for us by Nietzsche and all the prophets of suspicion who have, as his heirs, deconstructed metaphysical language describing it as a fictional language—who have, like Nietzsche, asked with incredulity, "Why did mankind have to take seriously the brain afflictions of sick web-spinners?" But Donald Wallenfang beguiles us, by his carefully disciplined step-by-step process, into accepting terms of agreement analogous to those between the fantasy author and her reader, and we are led, little by little, into learning (what seems) a fantasy language, feeling our way to using it, and discovering, in so doing, that we have actually taken it into our own world and that our own world is re-enchanted as a fantasy-too-good-to-be-true-come-true. We learn that we had

lost a knack for precise language in describing various grades of reality because we did not believe these distinctions were true. Wallenfang helps us recover this language for ourselves and makes us realize how impoverished we are without it.

We learn that "spiritual being is not just a negative verbal placeholder for the so-called opposite of material being"—something vague and fictional—but that "the term signifies the fullness, plenitude, and perfection of being as that which gives itself to the point of fecund abandonment" (159). We are given language to have confidence that this is so. We learn here that self-giving does not exist in the penumbra of a placeholder in the universe, a placeholder for that which is really real, matter, but that self-giving is what is really real. But, surprisingly, we learn that this in turn means that "the term 'matter' is not used by Stein "as a meaningless conceptual placeholder" either, but instead, that what physicists call matter, that is, atomic matter, is always already "formed matter." "The hydrogen atom, for example, is an instance of formed matter." We discover that there would be no matter, as we commonly understand the term, if "form" had not preceded it and brought it into being, as something. In a brilliant tour de force of reversal, Wallenfang enables us to see how Stein gives us the language for seeing how the theory of evolution, far from displaying evidence of random change, shows us the impossibility of reductionism, if you have the language to analyze and describe it properly: "The theory of evolution presupposes a formal impetus toward life, organization and order. Whether that uncreated impetus is called 'nature' or 'god(s)' is a matter of semantics." "However," he continues, "philosophically and theologically speaking, if one wishes to use 'nature' as a substitute for 'god(s)' within a postmodern metanarrative of material reductionism, let's at least come clean about the matter. Nature as such did not 'give birth' to itself. Even its own etymology suggests otherwise, for nascor means 'to be born' and that which is born is born of something other than itself." By this route we arrive back at "pure spiritual being, itself immutable and the logical condition for the possibility of material being and its diversification."

At this point, the theologian may be wondering if in this fantasy world that we are learning to recognize as our own world, the philosophical vocabulary has rendered the theological otiose and has voided revelation of its unique contribution. Such a worry is unfounded, we learn, because as Stein elaborates the case, the origin of matter in an act of creation is something that philosophy is incapable of grasping: "For Stein, natural reason is not able to comprehend the very act of creation." This is because the act of creation is an act of free self-giving that reveals what is "really real" in the first place. In fact, it is an act of grace that is only revealed in its fullest dimensions in the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, a pure gift, a gift so purely gift that it could never be anticipated, deserved, merited, or controlled: "Christ's vicarious offering of himself unto death on a cross of wood expresses divine grace to a degree that even surpasses the divine act of creation from nothing." Wallenfang masterfully entices us, step by step, into the fantasy world, or so it will seem to the "wise" of 1 Corinthians 1:18-19, which is all of us, of the cross, and to be more precise, the world rendered intelligible by the "science of the cross." "By taking ...

careful and convicting steps, we have brought the paradigm of the cross into the light of comprehension, if only by attempting to peer momentarily into its dark luminosity and to heed its saturating meaning and power." We must, in passing, note the beauty of expression here!

Having beguiled us this far, Wallenfang may be allowed to continue: "It must be said that one cannot help trembling in approaching the topic of the cross. Yet it is the cross that reveals both what it is to be fully human and what it is to be less than human." Wallenfang brilliantly shows how Edith Stein's "science of the cross" is the key to her whole enterprise, and, not as a principle of self-giving, or a concept of the fullness of meaning, but as an act, a concrete deed, not that which is the "last, the thinnest, and the emptiest" because the highest conceptual abstraction, but this one concrete act that "reached its climax in the hour of Jesus's passion when he handed himself over, `becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross' (Phil 2:8)." In another beautiful sentence, Wallenfang notes, "In other words, God has nothing left to give to his Bride, the Church. All has been given her without remainder. This is the definitive meaning of the cross." Far from an abstraction, the cross remains open as an irreducible invitation to faith. If faith is granted, then understanding can come. It can come with all of the philosophical language intended to guarantee that this act of divine self-giving can be glorified, can be seen as that which really reveals the most really real, that which enables us to understand even matter as real, as God-touched, because it, too, is ultimately a function of unmerited gift; it is itself a dim reflection of the primal self-giving life of God and a reminder, in its own small way, that the suffering which life calls us to is the way in which we make room for the other in our lives, even as God "made room" for matter and everything that is "formed" through it or in relation to it in His. And so we may confidently take our place in the universe of empathetic, loving communion that God intended all along.

The book ends with an original poem about the death of a Carmelite nun and the suffering it entailed. We know from the book, recapitulated in this poem, that this suffering was not meaningless. We know from the poem that the book it recapitulates was all along more poetry than prose. We were enticed all along into reading an extended prose poem as the intelligible structure of a momentary peering, a saturating meaning and power, that will always surpass, and thereby guarantee, intelligibility everywhere and always to those who will be enticed, and believe. --John C. Cavadini

Donald Wallenfang: What is it to be human? How are human beings different from other types of being in the universe? What are the integral parts that make up the human being? How can we approach the makeup of human being in a responsible and interdisciplinary way? Such questions are vitally important for all times, and today is no exception. How we answer these questions determines how we treat each other and how we live our lives. This book is a careful study on the theological anthropology of twentieth-century saint Edith Stein (1891-1942), as relevant for today's context of twenty-first-century postmodern skepticism and disenchantment.¹ Theological anthropology refers to a branch of study that concentrates on understanding what it is to be human in

relation to God. To omit the adjective "theological" would reduce the assessment of the human being from the start and would curtail the scientific possibilities of being in general. Theological anthropology at the very least puts forth the question of God while asking the question of the human. This approach is intellectually responsible and open to possibility because the question of God is the question of the infinite, that is, the question of infinite mystery. Without the question of God, we risk interpreting the human being as unrelated to infinite mystery. This is a very dangerous interpretation indeed. In her February 20, 1917, letter to Roman Ingarden, at the tender age of twenty-five, five years prior to her conversion to the Catholic faith, Stein writes: "I find that many people will cut corners (to totally avoid the religious experience) though it is impossible to conclude a teaching on person without going into the God question, and it is impossible to understand history ... It is the question that interests me." Emerging from her atheistic slumber, Stein refused to close herself off to the fullness of human experience and reflection. She confessed that personhood is bound to the question of God: the enigma of human personhood is rooted in the mystery of the personal God. History's meaningfulness prevails as long as it is interpreted according to its golden thread, the unifying logos, in which remembrance and parousia are joined as one. Future hope depends on the past redeemed. Today, more than ever, we must conduct a renewed project in theological anthropology in order to ascertain the truth and meaning of what it is to be human. This task takes place at the intersection of philosophy and theology, for it is these disciplines that are able to marshal the most fundamental levels of questioning in a holistic way. If a young person's education, for instance, is deprived of the disciplines of philosophy and theology, s/he will develop a distorted understanding of human personhood and will attempt to find meaning in life with the most fertile sources of meaning vacant to the mind. Therefore it is necessary to continue to recapitulate the sources of theological anthropology by using the most up-to-date methods and structures of thought.

This book seeks to present a holistic theological anthropology for today by elucidating the work of Edith Stein. She thought through the layers of what it is to be human in an exhaustive way, and her written works are an ample testament to the intellectual heights to which she soared. Her two great works, *Potency and Act* (completed in 1931 but first published in German in 1998) and *Finite and Eternal Being* (completed in 1937 but first published in German in 1950), especially probe the wonder and mystery of human being in relation to divine being. Stein combines two methods in particular within her work: phenomenology and metaphysics.¹ These two methods remain the most essential for a study in theological anthropology. They open the vistas of truth-seeking in response to the question, what is it to be human? In radical dialectical tension, phenomenology and metaphysics work together to throw further light on the meaning of being, on the givenness of experience, and on the vocation to authentic ethical action.

Phenomenology intends to be a purely descriptive method of investigation. The main question it asks is, what gives? Yes, it's as simple as that. It concentrates on the phenomenon that gives

itself to human consciousness. Without determining the parameters of the phenomenon's giving ahead of time, phenomenological perception awaits the arrival of whatever gives itself by bracketing out any presuppositions or inclinations that would set limits on what may give itself and how it may give itself. It intentionally brackets and sets aside the so-called "natural attitude" that "is indeed simultaneous with the practical person." A solely pragmatic approach to life rules out mystery as a hindrance to practical goals (unless, of course, mystery sells). For phenomenology, however, it is the natural attitude that must be leveraged in order to behold the intrinsic mystery of life and the unexpected givenness of all that gives. Angela Ales Bello writes that "a phenomenological analysis can never be considered complete once and for all. We are pushed to start anew over and over again [immer wieder] in the attempt to find a definitive structure, even though the quest produces imperfect results. This entails approaches that come close to the phenomenon of the interiority of the human being, make evident valid aspects and structures—but never exhaust consciousness itself." The nature of phenomenology is always open-ended and embarks on an infinite hermeneutic of that which gives itself to conscious perception.¹ Phenomenology is never done describing. Phenomenology generates layers of interpretation encircling each and every experienced phenomenon. Neither phenomena nor consciousness ever is exhausted in phenomenology's description of their interplay. Phenomenology, much further than psychology, is that discipline that is able to conduct a scientific investigation of the inner life of the person as it accesses and analyzes the abundance of meanings that go before and behind every experience.

Into the twenty-first century, Jean-Luc Marion (1946-), in his phenomenology of givenness, has extended—in the most precise way—the scope of phenomenology from the trajectory set by Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) (with whom Stein studied) and Martin Heidegger (1889-1976). Emmanuel Levinas (1906-95), who greatly influenced the work of Marion, is a key phenomenologist to understand also. He makes a compelling case to set ethics as first philosophy rather than privileging ontology or even given-ness. Both Marion and Levinas are helpful figures to comprehend while studying the work of Stein in order to sort out retrospectively her use of the term givenness and her penchant for otherness, empathy and ethics. However, more directly influential for Stein were her teacher, Edmund Husserl, the father of phenomenology, and Thomas Aquinas (1225-74), the angelic metaphysician. Husserl and Aquinas leave the most significant impression on Stein and her original dialectical method of blending phenomenology and metaphysics.

Metaphysics, for its part, examines that which is inherently necessary for all that is. It delves into the question of being by ordering the first principles for thought and the causal matrix of existence. For example, the first principle of theoretical reason is the principle of non-contradiction. Without this a priori gauge for reasoning, one thing could not be distinguished from another. Another first principle deals with causality: every effect has a prior cause. Without the coherence of causality there would be no science worthy of the

name. In addition to establishing first principles for knowledge, metaphysics offers an arsenal of vocabulary to decipher accurately the meaning of being.¹ Some examples of these terms are being, substance, accidents, essence/nature, genus, species, cause, matter, form, potency and act. The last two terms, potency and act, play a key role in the work of Stein. They serve as the foundational hermeneutic for inquiring into the meaning of being and into the truth and meaning of what it is to be human. Such terms will be unpacked substantially throughout the course of this book.

It should be stated at the outset that Stein's masterpieces in philosophical theology are rigorous and dense. It is a great feat just to read through one of them in its entirety. That is why I found it necessary to attempt to sift carefully through the works of Stein and put forth a summative analysis of her anatomical conception of the human being—body, soul, and spirit. Much rumination on her texts, as well as on the secondary literature surrounding her texts, was required in order to synthesize the primary elements of her lifelong project in theological anthropology. In a 1928 letter to her Benedictine friend, Callista Kopf, Stein writes, "That it is possible to worship God by doing scholarly research is something I learned, actually, only when I was busy with [the translation of St. Thomas [Aquinas's] *Quaestiones de Veritate* from Latin into German]." And this, too, I have experienced in doing scholarly research on the work of Edith Stein. It often happens that scholarship becomes a form of prayer and worship of God. It is impossible to study a scholar's work without simultaneously becoming acquainted with the person behind the work. As many Stein scholars note, it is impossible to study Stein's philosophical and theological works without becoming acquainted with the soul of the woman behind the words." With *Potency and Act* published as recently as 2009 in English, for instance, the time has come to apply the depth of Stein's work urgently to twenty-first-century problems. Lately there has been a burgeoning of scholarship on the work of Stein, including several international societies devoted to studying her work, such as The International Association for the Study of the Philosophy of Edith Stein, founded in 2009. Through such organizations and the efforts to translate Stein's work, her intellectual insights are becoming more and more accessible for scholars on an international scope. The aim of this project is to advance not only the intellectual genius of Stein, but to advance the cause of the dignity of the human person throughout the world for years to come.

Among Stein's notable works on theological anthropology, two books have yet to appear in English translation: *Der Aufbau der menschlichen Person: Vorlesungen zur philosophischen Anthropologie* (The structure of the human person: Lectures on philosophical anthropology) and *Was ist der Mensch? Theologische Anthropologie* (What is the human? Theological anthropology). Written in 1932-33 during the time she worked as a lecturer at the German Institute for Scientific Pedagogy in Münster, these two works focus their lens on understanding the essence of the human person for the sake of authentic human education. The former text is, as its title indicates, an exclusively philosophical analysis of the human person, especially through the grammar of metaphysics. This work

represents a project in philosophical anthropology primarily, and so is not informed by Church doctrines as is Stein's culminating work, *Finite and Eternal Being*. Only eight pages that make up the final chapter, entitled "Pipeline from the Philosophical to the Theological Contemplation of the Human," enter into explicit discussion with theology, minus the few pages that speak of eternal spiritual being as divine.

The latter text, *Was ist der Mensch?*, turns its attention to Catholic doctrine on the human person in order to illuminate more extensively the meaning of being human. It is an unfinished work and contains no less than 792 references, almost all taken from magisterial doctrinal formulations spanning the history of the Catholic Church. The text is comprised of Stein's careful elucidation of ecclesial doctrine as it has accumulated and developed over the centuries. Much of the text consists of direct citations of papal and conciliar documents, as well as material from Plato, Augustine, Thomas, Bonaventure, and Duns Scotus. The work is Stein's fervent attempt to piece together the meaning, nature and vocation of the human person as revealed through the incarnate Person of Christ and the truth about his identity as disclosed through Church teaching. In the foreword to *Was ist der Mensch?*, Stein writes that "this book aims to highlight the image of the human, as contained in our [Catholic] doctrine of faith. According to the scientific parlance of our day, one would tend to name it a dogmatic anthropology. The task has imposed itself upon me in my efforts to arrive at the foundation of education. That each educational science and educational work is guided by an idea of the human and decisively determined by it, no one will deny." Stein found it essential to discover the nature of human personhood in order to form a solid pedagogical foundation. As one understands the nature of the human person, so one teaches accordingly. In other words, theological anthropology is the most fundamental task for education, even though it is a preliminary one. Within Stein's view, the question of divine revelation and what it has to say to us is integral to understanding ourselves as human beings. Any anthropology that lacks inquiry into divinity and into potential sources of divine revelation will fall short of interpreting human being accurately and adequately.

Der Aufbau der menschlichen Person and *Was ist der Mensch?* deal explicitly with theological anthropology; however, in comparison with Stein's capstone work, *Finite and Eternal Being*, they are only preludes. This is why *Human and Divine Being* references the former works in passing but will concentrate its analysis on *Finite and Eternal Being* (completed in 1937), as well as *Potency and Act* (completed in 1931), as the two most mature and comprehensive works of Stein. Some Stein scholars within the international community focus their research on Stein's early work, including *On the Problem of Empathy* (written in 1916), *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities* (written in 1918-19), and *An Investigation Concerning the State* (written in 1921). These scholars tend to specialize in philosophy (rather than theology) and narrow their phenomenological research strictly to Husserl and the Göttingen Circle, and maybe go as far as early Heidegger. This is early phenomenology and, indeed, an important epoch in the history of philosophy. However, the work of Stein cannot

be categorized only as early phenomenology or only as philosophy. In her mature work, Stein can be seen opening explicitly more and more to theological horizons. In fact, in her September 22, 1921, letter to Roman Ingarden, in direct reference to *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities* and *An Investigation Concerning the State*, she writes, "I doubt that there will be any more communication with me about my works. They are from 1918 and 1919. As a matter of fact, there is hardly anything in them I want to change. They are to me about like the old skin a snake casts off. I really do not want to look at them again." It is clear from Stein's own words that she had moved on to something other than the concerns and scope of her early strictly philosophical works. Her philosophical knowledge was opening onto new vistas of theological and mystical knowledge.

Even though *Der Aufbau der menschlichen Person* and *Was ist der Mensch?* were composed a decade after her conversion to the Catholic faith in 1922, they must be situated as prolegomena to her mature opus, *Finite and Eternal Being*, which she wrote out of her state of intense prayerful contemplation as a Discalced Carmelite nun. What she says in *Der Aufbau der menschlichen Person* and in *Was ist der Mensch?*, she says in *Finite and Eternal Being*, but better. Furthermore, the phenomenological movement did not stop with Husserl or with early Heidegger. It has continued to evolve and to be informed by new and innovative voices such as those of Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-61), Emmanuel Levinas (1906-95), Michel Henry (1922-2002), Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005), Jacques Derrida (1930-2004), Jean-Luc Marion (1946-), Jean-Louis Chrétien (1952-), et al. While this litany of more recent phenomenologists attests to the method's pregnant evolution on the soil of France in particular, these developments cannot be neglected in any discussion of phenomenology today. Yes, the danger of anachronism lingers in inviting such voices into conversation with Stein, but it is necessary to follow the progressive trajectory of phenomenology leading up to the present day and its effective application in the field of theology. *Human and Divine Being* situates Stein along this trajectory so as not to curtail the history of phenomenology or to suggest that the hermeneutic structures of Husserl alone constitute phenomenology. Stein certainly is to be grouped along with those recent phenomenologists known for their signature turn to theology and theological phenomena within their work.

There is no question that *Human and Divine Being* engages in a serious polemic with the prevalent postmodern worldview, and accompanying ideologies, to be characterized as practical atheism born from material reductionism. Understanding existence this way reduces the human person to a random instance of atomic matter and energy that just so happens to recognize his own existence and search for his reason for being. This worldview has spawned some of the most tragic communist regimes in human history and continues to justify and reinforce systemic dehumanizing practices in economics, biotechnology, health care, and education. By disqualifying the possibility of divinity, this worldview at the same time disqualifies the possibility of collective human flourishing. It precipitates a dog-eat-dog world according to its "survival of

the fittest" and "natural selection" mantras. It neglects the complete truth about human and divine being by obliterating the possibility of transcendence. It scoffs at any reference to the supernatural and insists that nature is a self-constituting, self-contained, self-referential, self-replicating matrix of matter in motion, and that is all. Altogether, its godlessness is matched only by its eclipse of the human person.

Commenting on Stein's *Philosophy of Psychology and the Humanities*, Angela Ales Bello writes that "in her polemic, especially with the positivist claim to outline a theory that gives all the conditions of possibility of a science in such a way that with the identification of a part of its structure we can proceed by extension to grasp the totality of future events, E. Stein hits upon different objectives" The aforementioned worldview of practical atheism operates under the pretense that it is omniscient concerning all the conditions of not only its own possibilities, but concerning all the conditions of possibility in general and even those pertaining to the future.

It commits the fatal flaw of granting that which is partial and provisional eternal status. It fails to recognize that possibility and open inquiry is what originally gave birth to all scientific enterprises and thereby has "exchanged the truth of God for a lie and revered and worshiped the creature rather than the creator." For God is the condition for the condition of possibility and the impossibility of impossibility. Along with Stein, *Human and Divine Being* advocates the truth about being that is clearly evident to the intellect because "ever since the creation of the world, [God's] invisible attributes of eternal power and divinity have been able to be understood and perceived in what he has made." *Human and Divine Being* attends to that which is in order to contemplate that which is.

The title, *Human and Divine Being*, was chosen in reference to the title of Stein's work *Finite and Eternal Being*. *Human and Divine Being* highlights the finite attributes of human being and the eternal attributes of divine being. Instead of offering an index of all being and beings, *Human and Divine Being* steers its attention toward human being in light of divine being. Most especially, it undertakes to recuperate the ontological veracity of the human soul in relation to the broader categories of spiritual being and material being. Stein's work is determined to be the centrifugal center of this project in theological anthropology within today's skeptical (if not cynical) postmodern context. *Human and Divine Being* intends to renew the mystery of human being and personhood as perceived along the backdrop of divine mystery.

This book is organized according to the primary themes of Stein's oeuvre. Chapter 1 begins with a discussion of universal human vocation and the crucial potency-act hermeneutic that Stein develops to explain the makeup of human personhood. Chapter 2 describes the essence of spiritual being as the foundation of all being and the most fitting analogue for divine being. At the heart of the book are three chapters devoted to pedagogy on the human soul. The human soul is the locus of Stein's entire literary corpus as well as the centerpiece of Carmelite spirituality. Comprehending the human soul is argued to be the most pressing task for theological anthropology today. If the human soul—a concept found in all of the great religious traditions throughout the world—is not taken seriously

when asking what it is to be human, then we will end up with inhuman conclusions to our most decisive ethical questions. After establishing the fact of the human soul, the book turns to examine material being in relation to spiritual being, showing the contrast and complementarity between the two. The penultimate chapter is dedicated to Stein's dissertation work on empathy. Empathy is a dynamically important concept for theological anthropology as it goes beyond the "whatness" of the individual human being by inquiring into the intersubjectivity between persons. Finally, the book crescendoes with its last chapter dedicated to the logic of the cross as the most lucid pathway for understanding the transformation, or spiritualization, of being within the drama of cosmic redemption. It is argued that the science of the cross is the code that unlocks the enigmatic and paradoxical meaning of human being.

An observant reader may wonder why Emmanuel Levinas appears so often in a book dedicated to the work of Edith Stein. The reason is that I regard Stein and Levinas to be within the same genus of thought: theological anthropology oriented toward the ethical. Their shared Jewish heritage is ethical through and through. There is no question about this. Neither thinker elevates method, aesthetics, the question of being, or even the sense of the sacred, over and above solicitude for the other. Love and responsibility for the other is always the point. The fact that Heidegger does not figure prominently in either philosopher's work is additional evidence that neither Stein nor Levinas was enthralled with the manifestation of Being (Sein) from an egocentric point of view. To the contrary, for both, the question of being is always at the service of care for the other who faces me. This point is virtually self-evident given the hagiography that surrounds both of them in the wake of their courageous lives. Moreover, this is the reason I insist on beginning this book with a consideration of human vocation as an entrée into ontology and not the other way around. To know the nature of human being is to heed the call to responsibility for the other. Empathy takes a back seat to this call according to the call's radical alterity and its inability to be mastered or to be manipulated. This is why the chapter on empathy appears as penultimate in sequence. Had Stein lived twenty to forty years longer on this side of eternity, she would have become a Levinasian without a doubt. In fact, she lived "ethics as first philosophy" in her flesh, all the way until August 9, 1942.

The Second Vatican Council contends that "in reality it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of humanity truly becomes clear." Similarly, the source and inspiration for Stein's project in theological anthropology is Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus the Christ. It is Jesus, above all, who reveals the true face of humanity to a world of human beings striving authentically to humanize one another. Without the enlightenment of Christ (explicitly or implicitly), the human person remains locked inside an opaque cell of agnosticism, subject to a host of ideological manipulations and unwarranted self-interests. True human freedom promotes the freedom of all persons—the coexistence of freedoms that is won to the degree that human solidarity and responsibility become the touchstone of daily behavior. Paul of Tarsus writes, "For

freedom Christ set us free; so stand firm and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery" (Gal 5:1 NAB). It is Christ who has won freedom for all of humanity, liberating us from the bondage of ignorance, falsehood, sin and death. May this book, symbolically prepared on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, serve to promote the life, dignity and freedom of all human beings without exception or partiality.

The Origin of Modern Shinto in Japan: The Vanquished Gods of Izumo by Yijiang Zhong. London and New York: Bloomsbury, 9781474271080]

Yijiang Zhong analyses the formation of Shinto as a complex and diverse religious tradition in early modern and Meiji Japan, 1600-1868. Highlighting the role of the god Okuninushi and the mythology centered on the Izumo Shrine in western Japan as part of this process, he shows how and why this god came to be ignored in State Shinto in the modern period.

In doing so, Zhong moves away from the traditional understanding of Shinto history as something completely internal to the nation of Japan, and instead situates the formation of Shinto within a larger geopolitical context involving intellectual and political developments in the East Asian region and the role of western colonial expansion.

[The Origin of Modern Shinto in Japan](#) draws extensively on primary source materials in Japan, many of which were only made available to the public less than a decade ago and have not yet been studied. Source materials analysed include shrine records and object materials, contemporary written texts, official materials from the national and provincial levels, and a broad range of visual sources based on contemporary prints, drawings, photographs and material culture.

This fascinating book situates religious changes in Japan from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries in a global context, arguing that the emergence of "Shinto" was a response to challenges from Buddhists, but especially Christians. Yijiang Zhong demonstrates that Japanese intellectuals were grappling with the introduction of Western science and knowledge about Western political theories, as well as religion, in devising two forms of Shinto that displaced Buddhism as the dominant discourse in Japan, and combated the influence of Christianity. Zhong's historical study traces the rivalry between types of Shinto that elevated the kami Ō kuninushi, "Great Lord of the Land" and his shrine at Izumo, and the sun goddess Amaterasu and her shrine at Ise. He sets out to refute recent interpretations of Nativism exemplified by authors like Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801) and Hirata Atsutane (1776–1843) as a crude version of Emperor-centred nationalism. Hiratōs project proposed Ō kuninushi to support "a valorous human subject capable of resisting Russian invasion and saving Japan from national crisis", and drew upon more than a century of tradition since the Izumo shrine was transformed from a Buddhist influenced site dedicated to Susanoo, brother of Amaterasu, to a "Shinto" shrine focused on Ō kuninushi by the 1670s. Susanoo was a kami integrated into the "essence-trace" relationship that held that kami were only traces of Buddhist essences.

The history of Shinto is peculiarly tortuous and involves re-examination of texts, most importantly the eighth-century Kojiki and Nihon Shoki, and repurposing of sacred sites like Izumo and Ise, and large claims about indigeneity and political power. The promotion of Shinto began in the 1480s when Yoshida Kanemoto sought to recover the prestige of his priestly family by means of what he termed Yuiitsu Shinto (One and Only Shinto). Almost simultaneously Hayashi Razan (a former Buddhist priest and Neo-Confucian scholar) was promoting Principle-Mind Shinto. From the seventeenth century a dominant theme was the "Month without the Gods," which argued for the primacy of Izumo because in the tenth month all the kami of Japan went, initially, to that region and later, specifically, to the shrine of Ō kuninushi. This theme supported the primacy of this creator god, and his association with marriage stretched his powers from the origin of the world to the ongoing maintenance of sacred order. It also connected Ō kuninushi with prosperity and consequent national popularity. From the late eighteenth century into the mid-nineteenth interest in strengthening Japanese individuals and community led to Hiratōs idea of the "Yamato soul" (Zhong gives a terrific analysis of how Hirata reads prohibited Catholic texts and domesticates them to his own purposes) and rival scholars such as the neo-Confucian Aizawa Seishisai (1782–1863) from the Mito area, who styled Amaterasu as "heavenly ancestor". Like Hirata, Aizawa kept a careful eye on the Russians and investigated Christianity and conversion strategies as tactics of the "Western barbarians" that necessitated the elevation of the kami to counter the Christian God.

The inauguration of the Meiji Restoration in 1868 brought the question of the role of religion in the newly modern and international Japan to the fore. In 1870 the Missionary Office issued statements on "Revering the Kami" and "Respecting the Emperor" which situated Amaterasu as the imperial ancestor and in control of the universe due to her embodiment in the sun. In the negotiations about religion that accompanied the foundation of the new state, Buddhism was resurgent, though in 1875 the joint Shinto-Buddhism program ended. The Meiji administration began by co-opting Shinto, but later Shinto was divided into State Shinto which was not religious but applied to all citizens and the polity, and Sect Shinto was a personal faith in various disestablished groups. This was not easy: as Zhong notes, Shinto priests "had to choose between being official ritualists or private religious people". The result was that Amaterasu was elevated to the guardian or guarantor of the Imperial office, where Ō kuninushi was demoted to an object of "private religion". This book is extraordinarily interesting and merits a wide readership. Zhong has written an exciting book uncovering a little-known story, a story that deserves to be fare better-known.

Theological and Philosophical Responses to Syncretism: Beyond the Mirage of Pure Religion edited by Patrik Fridlund and Mika Vähäkangas [Brill Academic, 9789004352124

There has always been a strong tendency in the western cultural sphere to search for the ontologically pure and original

in both theology and philosophy. This has often been combined with a marked methodological tendency to make distinctions in the form of discrete entities with clear borders. It has to be acknowledged that the clarity that follows is often practical and useful, as it facilitates reflection and action. Nonetheless, as has been pointed out, this methodological approach can be seen to presuppose a specific ontology of stability and clarity. To strive for methodological clarity based on the ontology of discrete entities with clear and stable borders is problematic. To find the 'true something behind' is a difficult enterprise, vain or even dangerous. This is not the place to enter into the debate on this point. What can be said, however, is that in history of religion, sociology and anthropology of religion, there is a common understanding that insistence on pure religious doctrines, teachings and practices is fruitless. Hence from that perspective, syncretism is almost a non-topic, if seen as a *mélange* of elements from two or more distinct entities. Such mixing would simply be a *sine qua non* for religion.

On the other hand, in much theological discourse, pure religious traditions are seen as accurate descriptions of religious life. Many philosophies of religion accept this position, and religions are approached as if they were clear-cut entities that do not overlap and mix with each other, unless by mistake, falsely or illicitly. A given religion – in its pure and original form – is approached as an idea and as an ideological system almost hermetically sealed off from other religions, from ideologies and from cultures. Hence, academic study of religion, as well as theological and philosophical reflection in the field of religion, appears to suffer from a sort of schizophrenia. On the one hand, scholars recognise unhesitatingly the plural and complex character of religious ideas, doctrines, teachings, interpretations and practices. Yet, simultaneously, much reflection and research is conducted on the assumption that religions are clearly separate and distinct entities with clear limits. Of course, one may hold that a given religion is a complex phenomenon with a mixed history and with influences from many various sources, on the one hand, and yet concurrently claim that this given religion must be identified as a distinct entity, separate from other religions in a clear and indisputable fashion. Thus, a complex history would not in itself entail syncretism. Yet the issue of syncretism is far more complicated than that.

The aim of this book is to engage theologians and philosophers with the results of empirical studies of religion and of philosophical and theological insights in order to encourage consideration of two sets of consequences: firstly, those that historical and contemporary interchanges between what are identified as different religions should and could have in these fields; and, secondly, the kind of consequences that philosophical discussion regarding purity, origin and stability should and could have.

In discussions about syncretism, there are three areas which tend to hamper further reflections on the topic.

First, it is problematic if one approaches the issue of syncretism with preconceived ideas about how things are and should be, and a judgmental mindset. If one has decided that a certain religious phenomenon is theologically acceptable or to be rejected even before describing and analysing it, it will not get

the privilege of the researcher's attempting to study it and its potential. This has adverse effects not only on the credibility of the description and analysis of the phenomenon itself but also on the quality of the resulting theological discernment. When the phenomenon is not understood, the discernment cannot be theologically reliable because premature judgment tends to be one-sided, simplistic, and grounded in prejudices.

Second, a problematic question is that syncretism is sometimes approached as if it were a single process or a universal (and undesired) phenomenon. It is, however, patently clear that if religions are variegated and diverse in teachings and practices, then so-called syncretism must be diverse and variegated too, due to the varying types and levels of religious phenomena. Thus, it would be problematic to draw definite lines between what is seen as illicit syncretism, on the one hand, and other types of religious borrowing possibly considered licit, on the other.

Third, the variation of levels where syncretism takes place must be taken into account. Syncretism is a reality to many at an individual level when a person's religiosity is lived out within two or more religious contexts and/or when she identifies with more than one religion and/or when her religious thinking amalgamates elements of more than one religion. These processes can take place at a communal level, too. One can also postulate a systemic level for syncretism where syncretism takes place on the level of organized, even official, religion. In that case, the process can be highly centralised and tends to relate to the doctrines of the organised religion.

Syncretism as a topic has become almost a truism in religious studies especially since the publication of influential works like [Syncretism/ Antisyncretism: The Politics of Religious Synthesis](#), edited by Charles Stewart. Much of the earlier theologically oriented research on syncretism dealt with the phenomenon on an individual level in the form of dual belonging, probably because that level is easiest for religious communities to relate to. Such studies have been carried out by Rose Drew, Peter Phan, Paul Knitter and Gideon Gooshen, among others. It has been a much less common endeavour to address the communal level. There the theologians have tended to regard many cases of communal-level syncretism as a form of communal parallel belonging where the religions still remain separate and unmixed at an ideal level even though in the practices and minds of the people this is not the case. Only when organized religion mixes elements at a systemic level would that qualify as syncretism. Jonas Adelin Jørgensen's extensive fieldwork-based study [Jesus Imandars and Christ Bhaktas: Two Case Studies of Interreligious Hermeneutics and Identity in Global Christianity](#) is an opening that addresses the theologically trickier level of community and the subsequent theological, mostly ecclesiological and soteriological, questions that arise. It is precisely through the followers of Christ in other religions that Evangelical theology in particular has engaged in discussion of syncretism – albeit often in an oblique manner, without directly addressing the question of the admixture of religions. On a systemic level, be it in the doctrinal or ritual sphere, syncretism has received less theological attention in spite of the fact that its Siamese twin, inculturation or contextualization, has been one of the pet topics of the

theological study of world Christianity. William H. Harrison's book, [In Praise of Mixed Religion: The Syncretism Solution in a Multifaith World](#), is a peculiar case in the field because there a non-theological scholar of religion takes a normative position in defence of syncretism and writes very personally. In a certain manner he crosses the border into theologizing even though it does not happen within any clearly defined religious tradition.

In this book, we address various realms and levels of syncretism. However, this does not happen in a systematic manner because there is no consensus about the variations of syncretism. What all the contributions have in common, however, is that they acknowledge both the complexity of the phenomenon as well as the need to address it in theology and philosophy. While we cannot provide an overarching theory shared by all of us as to how to tackle this question, we can open areas of investigation and suggest ways forward in the theological and philosophical scrutiny of the issue. In doing so, we prepare the ground for the next generation of theological and philosophical debate on syncretism that will shift from questioning its existence and legitimacy to stating the obvious, namely that religious syncretism is anywhere there is religion and rather than questioning whether it is acceptable one should concentrate on considering how to best relate it to theology / philosophy. This naturally includes discussion of the limits of acceptance.

In the opening chapter, Jerker Karlsson attempts to give syncretism a clearly positive role from a strictly philosophical point of view. The idea is that syncretism may be seen as such a universal dimension of religion that it could actually serve as a theoretical foundation for seeing religion as a unified field of study. Starting from the claim that shared causal structures are what makes one field of study distinct from others, Karlsson suggests in this paper that syncretism may be seen as just such a causal structure of religion. Some of the implications of this view of religious studies are outlined, in particular with regard to defining the research agenda.

While Jerker Karlsson makes a possible defence of syncretism on theoretical grounds, Paul Linjamaa provides a historical perspective with consequences for contemporary philosophical and theological deliberations. In his analysis of Gnosticism and early Christianities, he argues that Gnostics considered themselves Christians, while many of the elements that have been used as distinctive marks of Gnosticism can also be found in the work of 'orthodox' theologians. Furthermore, the idea of Gnosticism as syncretic versus 'pure' Christianity does not hold. Thus, there is no reason not to count at least some forms of Gnosticism as Christianity. Linjamaa's compelling argumentation demolishes the possibilities of claiming clear-cut borders for pure early Christianity and demonstrates how syncretism has been a dimension of this group of religious traditions from the very beginning. As a consequence, common Christian theological claims about original purity appear in a very questionable light.

In Patrik Fridlund's contribution the issue of syncretism is framed as one of religion and negotiations. Fridlund observes that the history of religion is full of syncretism and yet syncretism seems to be disturbing. It disturbs the exclusive relationship between

God and his people, and it disturbs the idea of logical purity if things are mixed up in an uncontrolled manner. It is precisely this double entry to what is often seen as the disturbance of syncretism that Fridlund makes into an interesting point of division. Many religious arguments against syncretism are not based on arguments about logical incompatibility; rather, religious argument is often anchored to jealousy. That, at least, is Fridlund's contention. He argues, furthermore, that jealousy is a good and promising basis for taking stands regarding what mixing and blending can be allowed and accepted and to what extent. Jealousy is relational and issues about syncretism could then be treated concretely and in a contextualised manner. Hence, sometimes religious mixing may be accepted, sometimes it should be condemned.

The following chapter, written by Mika Vähäkangas, sketches various alternatives for addressing syncretism theologically, departing from the point reached by the previous chapters: that syncretism should not be ignored in theology because it is an inevitable dimension of Christianity (and of any other religion). Therefore, of the different alternatives, only those which address syncretism are viable. One can even maintain that the syncretic nature of faith belongs at the very core of Christian theology when the Incarnation and the Trinity are considered constitutive Christian doctrines. In that case, syncretism is no longer an enemy to be fought against but rather a hermeneutic tool with which the processes of communication between cultures can be analysed. While this approach does not necessarily need to lead to a position where anything goes, it hints towards a clarified relationship between empirical studies and constructive theology. While doctrinal discernment of syncretic processes is based on elaboration of Christian traditions, and is as such faith-based, this elaboration needs to be internally coherent and not contradict the evidence of empirical research. In this discernment, one needs criteria.

Vähäkangas outlines a possible structure of approaches and in the following chapter, Steve Bevans discusses the structure of criteria within a Christian setting. This chapter is an attempt to define the criteria for the discernment of syncretic processes. Static rules do not seem to work because of the great variety of syncretic processes and types of Christian faith. Rather, Bevans suggests that the dynamic criteria previously proposed by Robert Schreiter, José de Mesa and Lode Wostyn in particular, are valid starting points, and he adds a number of others. However, such dynamic criteria cannot be used in a simple and definite manner. Rather, they require dialogue between the assessed religious tradition and the ones involved in the discerning. The outcome is that not only are the criteria dynamic but the whole process must also be so. Bevans likens the process of discernment to the task of an umpire in baseball. Even if there are rules, and markings on the field, that guide the work of the umpire, the process of defining fair and foul involves active decisions in the interpretative tradition of the game.

Gavin D'Costa's extensive chapter is a case of an umpire at his work. D'Costa deals with the circumstances under which one could, in the play called Roman Catholic doctrine, judge individual dual belonging as fair, working with his own criteria

rather than Bevans'. Starting from the premises of Catholic teaching, he sketches possible modes of dual belonging, and assesses them in the light of magisterial teaching. The outcome is that while, in the light of Catholic doctrine, some forms of religious dual belonging are not acceptable, others are. In the acceptable cases, a number of conditions need to be met. Thus, one can conclude that in D'Costa's interpretation, Catholic teaching does not automatically rule out syncretism in ritual, faith and identity on an individual level.

D'Costa makes an evaluation of individual religious double belonging against a reading of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church's magisterium. Jonas Adelin Jørgensen approaches syncretism empirically from the field, reflecting upon it theologically from that perspective. His chapter approaches syncretism at a level that combines both individual and communal dimensions: at the individual level in the sense that the members of *Khrist Bhaktas* have consciously and usually individually decided about their faith, although at the same time they form communities of faith. In these communities, syncretic patterns are played out in ritual, identity and, in a sense, also doctrine. While D'Costa assessed theoretically possible positions in theological terms, Jørgensen's discernment builds on empirical studies of actual *Khrist Bhakta* groups. His point of view is Protestant, and he comes to the conclusion that the studied groups' liturgy and theology represent the incarnation of the Christian message in Indian contexts. Thus, in Jørgensen's view, the outcome is an acceptable type of syncretism, or contextualization. One can even maintain that Christianity is what it becomes through its history and its multiple and continued incarnations in and across cultural contexts. The *Khrist Bhakta* interpretation of Christian faith can therefore be seen as a case of the type of syncretic theology that, for Vähäkangas, by its very syncretic nature, exemplifies important Christian doctrines.

Lotta Gammelín's chapter is an ethnographical study of a prophetic healing church in Mbeya, Tanzania. In her contribution, there is a very clear move away from deliberations over theoretical possibilities and models of various kinds, to observations: What happens out there? This said, Gammelín does not stop at the observations. She employs her findings in order to question the technical vocabulary or the analytical instruments and notions that are used in the studies of religion, a fortiori syncretism. Starting with the question of whether people who seek help for health reasons in the Gospel Miracle Church of All People in order to be well again, also enter into other ways of perceiving reality by going there. In terms of syncretism one must ask, does this church demonstrate 'syncretic elements' and, furthermore, does academic work on syncretism help us to understand the studied community? The conclusion is that both questions may be answered affirmatively.

Kang-San Tan starts with an overview of various Christian standpoints, predominantly negative, on syncretism, and then moves on to Paul Knitter and his account of double religious belonging, which is evaluated. The paper ends with sketches of how the category of syncretism can be reconsidered and rethought. A conclusion that Kang-San Tan draws is that one cannot reject or embrace syncretism in any simple way. How

Christian theology should respond depends on the kind of multiple belonging that is discussed; for instance whether it is about external identification or not, whether the combined elements are compatible or not, and so on.

The last chapter is Elizabeth Harris' text exploring the dynamics of interreligious cooperation. In this chapter, she argues that theology makes a positive partner in interdisciplinary dialogue with social anthropology. In the phenomenology of the theological or confessional, theology can contribute to the anthropological. Social anthropologists need confessional theology to perceive issues of truth. If syncretism is examined by way of confessional 'theologies' found in a particular religion or in a specific culture, Harris maintains it will produce nuanced analyses capturing the play of dominance and power that takes place in apparent syncretism, wherein the various components are actually not of the same weight. In brief, there is an asymmetric relation. A specific consequence of this kind of analysis is that what seems to be syncretic may be seen as an inclusivist form of subordination. Harris pursues her model by describing various types of historical and contemporary meetings between religions.

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T&T Clark Companion to Atonement edited by Adam J. Johnson [Bloomsbury Companions, T&T Clark, 9780567565532]

The [T&T Clark Companion to Atonement](#) establishes a vision for the doctrine of the atonement as a unified yet extraordinarily rich event calling for the church's full appropriation. Most edited volumes on this doctrine focus on one aspect of the work of Christ (for example, Girard, Feminist thought, Penal Substitution or divine violence). The Companion is unique in that every essay seeks to both appropriate and stimulate the church's understanding of the manifold nature of Christ's death and resurrection.

The essays are divided into four main sections: 1) dogmatic location, 2) chapters on the Old and New Testaments, 3) major theologians and 4) contemporary developments. The first set of essays explore the inter-relationship between the atonement and other Christian doctrines (for example Trinity, Christology and Pneumatology), opening up yet further avenues of inquiry. Essays on key theologians eschew reductionism, striving to bring out the nuances and breadth of the contribution. The same is true of the biblical essays. The final section explores more recent developments within the doctrine (for example the work of René Girard, and the ongoing reflection on "Holy Saturday").

The book is comprised of 18 major essays, and an A-Z section containing shorter dictionary-length entries on a much broader range of topics. The result is a combination of in-depth analysis and breadth of scope, making this a benchmark work for further studies in the doctrine.

According to René Girard, society is constantly on the brink of self-destruction. Our inclination to imitate others ("mimetic desire"), good and natural in and of itself, easily mutates into envy, for the "imitation of the neighbor's desires engenders rivalry" and the rapid escalation of hostility, in which we perceive that our neighbor can possess the object of her desire (whether tangible or not) only at our own expense or loss. Such conflicts constantly threaten to tear society apart in a pattern of violence and revenge. Moreover, they tend to be opportunistic: at advanced stages they "are easily drawn to another scandal whose power of mimetic attraction is superior to theirs," such that one scandal is substituted for a new and more powerful and prestigious one, until finally "the most polarizing scandal remains alone on the stage ... when the whole community is mobilized against one and the same individual". This process of mimetic substitution is a vital one for the survival of the community, such that the crisis of war of "all against all" is transformed "into a war of all against one".

At this climactic point, Satan reveals his astonishing power of "expelling himself and bringing order back into human communities" (34). At the very height of mimetic conflict, and "in order to prevent the destruction of his kingdom, Satan makes out of his disorder itself, at its highest heat, a means of expelling himself": he "persuades the entire community, which has become unanimous, that this guilt [of a single, random and indefensible victim] is real" (35). By expelling and destroying this sacrificial victim or "scapegoat," "the crowd finds itself emptied of hostility and without an enemy ... Provisionally, at least, this community no longer experiences either hatred or resentment toward anyone or anything; it feels purified of all its tensions, or all its divisions, of everything fragmenting it". Satan restores the semblance of peace to the community, so that his reign can continue. So while rivalry and conflict naturally escalate, Satan diffuses them by casting himself out, by uniting the mass against an innocent victim (or one "suitable to receive the blame for society's ills, regardless of their actual innocence", because their murder will not demand an act of reprisal by another segment of that society), such that the tension of rivalry is temporarily gathered together and expelled by the community—a "sacrificial theory of social cohesion," as Hunsinger calls it. In this way the community "sleep[s] the sleep of the just," and Satan forestalls "the total destruction of his kingdom". The community, finding that the scapegoated victim actually achieved the miracle of peace, divinizes the victim and celebrates the event in the form of sacrifices, thereby "regulating a 'sacrificial crisis' that recurs periodically" (Balthasar, 303).

This cycle, while present in every culture, is likewise veiled in every culture, such that one never finds a conscious understanding or exposure of this reality. Only through exploring and reading between the lines in the poets of ancient cultures was Girard able to piece together this thesis. The exception is the Bible: though this is true to a certain extent in the Old Testament, according to Girard this mimetic cycle is explicitly and resoundingly revealed in the New Testament in the life and death of Jesus Christ. Only here do we find the perspective of the victim, and the questions: (1) is the victim in fact guilty? (2) Who will throw the first stone? And more

importantly still, only in the resurrection are we confronted with the undeniable fact that Jesus was an innocent victim and that in the community which followed him the cycle of mimetic violence was not only confronted and exposed but reversed (The role of the resurrection in *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning* also suggests the development in Girard's thought. While previously it was thought that Girard's was a closed system that denied a historical resurrection, this no longer seems to be the case. This is the atonement Jesus Christ accomplishes: fully casting out Satan by rendering the cycle impotent through exposure. With the irrefutable vindication of a single victim, the question is unleashed upon the world of whether each and every victim might not be innocent, such that the power of Satan's mimetic cycle collapses.

At first glance, there is much to critique in Girard's thesis. He ravages the Old Testament, admitting that much of it speaks of a God wholly unlike the Christian God (a good reading of Irenaeus would be helpful here!). His position ultimately offers no real solution to the problem of sin, for in unveiling Satan he admits that in so doing, and as Satan can no longer "expel" himself, he now unleashes himself fully—"these mechanisms continue in our world usually as only a trace, but occasionally they can also reappear in forms more virulent than ever and on an enormous scale". Within atonement studies, it seems evident that Girard's position is merely a demythologized and exemplarist account of *Christus victor* in which the work of Christ amounts to little more than what it teaches or inspires in us. Finally, one might argue that his work ultimately stems from his literary/cultural studies (Girard, [Violence and the Sacred](#)), with only a thin theological veneer attached, and one focused almost exclusively on theological anthropology at that. But while these criticisms are significant, they are ultimately shallow, missing the power of Girard's thesis and touch on points which are accidental to his argument and could in principle be altered.

The key to appropriating Girard's thought lies in appreciating the limits he sets for his project: "the present book can define itself as ... an apology of Christianity rooted in what amounts to a Gospel-inspired breakthrough in the field of social science, not of theology". While he does occasionally make slightly bolder statements, the gist of Girard's project lies in developing the anthropological insight of the gospel in such a way that is not at all antagonistic toward but rather inseparable from its theological point a project he explicitly roots in the double nature of Jesus Christ. The question we ought to ask, given Girard's aim, is not whether he advances an account of the work of Christ which is in and of itself sufficient or orthodox, but rather whether Girard has uncovered a significant aspect of the work of Christ which belongs in a fuller account. The answer to this much more charitable question is yes, and the key, once again, has to do with anthropology.

There are a number of aspects of our sin of sin, which necessarily correspond to the aspects of Christ's reconciliation. One of these "moments" operates at the social level of reality—sin against neighbors and the reconciliation thereof. There is every reason to charitably presuppose that Girard's anthropological insight into the gospel may in fact bring some

clarity to Scripture's witness to this specific moment, and in doing so, open our eyes to the other moments that relate to it. The key for future development lies in bringing this anthropological insight within the sphere of a more properly theological vision, rather than burdening Girard's contribution with the need to single-handedly offer a sufficient account of the death and resurrection of Christ.

Atonement: The Shape and State of the Doctrine by Adam J. Johnson

The doctrine of the atonement is the church's act of worship, an act of faith seeking to understand and expound the manifold ways in which the whole life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God and Messiah of Israel, was the chosen and effective means of the triune God to bring about the reconciliation and fulfillment of all things which God had made (in heaven, earth and below the earth) through a restored relation to himself, veiled now and made fully manifest in the Eschaton.

The goal of this doctrine is to understand and expound: the sanctified intellect's joyful act of worship,' as the church and its members seek to understand the God who revealed himself in his saving act, by means of God's chosen witness to that act, Holy Scripture. Developing this doctrine is thus first and foremost an act of submission, of learning, recognizing, and understanding the witness we have received, for its origin lies in the decision and act of God, who does not merely seek to save his creatures, but to be known and worshipped by them as he is, as the Savior.

Only in a secondary and derivative way does the doctrine of the atonement dwell upon and respond to the challenges and heresies of its day. Biblical, theological, philosophical, religious, ethical, and other critiques have their vital role to play in the development and formation of doctrine (not least in holding it accountable to its true vocation). But as the church's calling and freedom to develop doctrine stems from the being and act of God, such critiques and questions play at most a significant ministerial role in holding the church accountable to its primary calling: joyful and rigorous reflection upon and development of the scriptural testimony to the saving work of the Lord Jesus. This is all the more true, given that the church's primary end endures beyond all conflict and error, joining the angels in their never-ending privilege of worship, singing "blessed is the lamb who was slain" (Rev. 5:12) in ever new stanzas and choruses (Ps. 96:1).

But this call to worship is a great and demanding task, for Christ's work is a complex and multidimensional act by an equally complex agent—the work of the triune God in the incarnate Son, Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah of Israel. In this most central event in the history of creation, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit employ the ever-abundant resources of the divine life for our sakes, each divine person of the one Godhead fully active in this life and work of the eternal Son born of Jewish flesh.⁴ Above all it is the presence and activity of this God which gives the life and work of the man Jesus its abundant meaning, for by making himself the means of our salvation, God has enacted the simple yet abundant riches of the divine life for our salvation,⁵ such that it is the meaning and

significance of the divine life itself which is the source, means, and end of salvation.⁶ God, who is the source, means, and end of creation, is likewise the one from whom, by whom, and for whom our salvation derives (Col. 1:16-20; Heb. 2:10). At every point Christ's work derives its nature and character from the heart and will of the triune God, particularly the doctrines of the Trinity, divine attributes, and election.

But at the same time this act of God takes up within it the significance with which God has freely endowed his creation, particularly his covenantal partners, humankind. As an Israelite, Jesus lives both a fully human life and a specifically Jewish one, participating in the history of God and his chosen people as the Messiah of his people and the rightful heir of the garden temple that was to be humankind's from the beginning. Everything that it means for God to be God, and everything that it means for humankind to be God's unique and image-bearing creature in covenantal fellowship, is at play in informing the complex event that is the life and work of Jesus Christ.

This complexity on the part of the primary agent (both theologically and anthropologically) is fitted to the task at hand. The mission of Jesus involves overcoming the reality and consequences of sin while simultaneously bringing to completion God's creative purposes: a cosmic work of redemption, restoration, and fulfillment that includes individual guilt but far transcends it. The disarray of the heavenly powers (Eph. 6:12), and the groaning of the earth (Rom. 8:22), our burden of shame (Jer. 3:25), guilt (Is. 53:10), ignorance (Acts 17:30), and death (Rom. 5:12), the disastrous consequences of our misdirected worship (Rom. 1:18-32), the personal and social realities and consequences of our treason against God's kingdom (Amos 2:6-12), all these and more come to a head in the work of Christ, in whom God deals with them once and for all. But this negative dimension, which overcomes sin by bearing and doing away with it, is but the first movement of a far greater plan, wherein Christ recapitulates, or sums up and fulfills in himself the plan of God for his treasured creation. It is in Christ that we find life as it

was meant to be, properly ordered toward God and his purposes. It is in him that the Old Testament covenants and promises are fulfilled, that the plan for creation disdained by Adam and Eve is brought to its proper end. It is in and through him that creation is reordered, restored, and made "very good" (Gen. 1:31) once more, never again to be threatened.

A work of such proportions includes all the horror of the cross, while extending beyond it to the resurrection—the reestablishment of Christ (and in him, all creation) within the life and fellowship of God, seated at God's right hand (Acts 2:33). And from this central movement (from cross to the empty tomb) the work of Christ reaches out to encompass the whole life, ascension, and second coming of Christ." For it is only by means of this whole life, willed and accomplished by the one God, Father, incarnate Son, and Holy Spirit, that the fullness of sin could be overcome, and more importantly, that the whole of God's plan for creation could be completed by the same one who made it in the first place. This is, after all, a work of at-one-ment: of making creation one with God, a oneness in the intimacy of relationship, in the fulfillment of God's purposes for

his creatures, and a oneness impermeable to the threat of sin and death. Nothing less than the whole work of Christ, centering on the death and resurrection, but extending far beyond it, could bring about such a comprehensive and multifaceted work of one-making.

The doctrine of the atonement aims at giving a complete and balanced account of the work of Christ, for it is within the context of the Creator making himself the means in Jesus Christ to realizing his sweeping creative purposes in the face of sin that more specific questions, controversies, and doctrinal development find their place. The alternative is disastrous, wherein near-sighted and myopic contemporary trends dictate the terms for the theological discussion. As in building the soaring cathedrals of days gone by, only a proper foundation, structure, balance, and proportion within the doctrine will provide the architectural qualities necessary to accommodate the pressing concerns of the day, while making room for ongoing thought and worship in the years to come. While questions such as those regarding divine violence, the role of metaphor, the extent of the atonement, and the viability of competing theories of the atonement are significant and warrant sustained reflection, it is only as we attend to the shape and trajectory of the whole of the doctrine of Christ's reconciling work that we are equipped to tap into the deepest resources for answering, refraining, or rejecting these questions.

Of course, we can think of doctrine in terms of a set of (formal or informal) topics under which we have a variety of relevant questions and answers. Much better, however, to think of doctrine in terms of a structural entity. To build on the image of a cathedral, doctrine has its foundational features that support the whole edifice. Built upon this foundation are the walls and buttresses, which define the shape of the whole, sometimes apparently standing on their own, and in other instances working only in tension and harmony with other elements, as when the arches, columns, and domes work together to constitute the whole. But structure alone is insufficient, for it is the delightful sense of harmony and proportion that distinguishes a functional space from an architectural wonder fit to cultivate worship for centuries.

Polemic theology has its place, but at best it is a vital though limited and ultimately passing task of the church. Much more important is the emphasis upon the foundation, parts, relations, and proportions of the doctrine, which constitute the essential and proper task of theology: the work of the church knowing and worship its beginning and end, the triune God. It is precisely this emphasis upon the shape and structure of the atonement that provides that depth and perspective which sustains the doctrine in the long run, while strengthening and honing its polemic fronts, whatever those may be at present and in the years to come.

The Shape of the Doctrine

What then is the shape of the doctrine of the atonement? How do we reach a sufficiently broad and rich understanding of this work? The first and basic move is to recognize that the atonement receives its shape first and foremost from the fact that the being, life, and will of God are constitutive for every

element of the doctrine. It is the triune God, the maker of heaven and earth, who is active in Jesus Christ, and it his will and character which determines every step of the way, whether directly, as he himself is active in this work, or indirectly, as he is the source of all creation, and that which all creation either conforms to or rebels against. Atonement doctrine derives its shape, meaning, and significance from the prior and greater reality of the eternal life of God, revealed and enacted decisively in the life of Jesus Christ.

The internal dynamics of the life of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (such as the divine origins and perichoresis), the divine attributes (such as the divine love, patience, long-suffering, holiness, goodness, and righteousness), the history of God's self-involvement with creation and the people of Israel in terms of his laws, covenants, promises, self-giving, and self-naming, at every step it is the person and work of the triune God which implicitly and explicitly constitutes the essential premises, elements, and purposes of any explanation of Christ's work—for this is his work: his action, his creation, his purposes. Because it is God's work of reclaiming God's creation by means of God's own life and act, for the accomplishment of God's purposes, the shape of the doctrine of the atonement is essentially Trinitarian, marked off at every point by the being and act of the one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Among God's works, the life of Christ—particularly his death and resurrection—is the central locus of divine self-revelation, which marks the great transition from promise to fulfillment, from the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants to the New Covenant, with all the changes (and continuity) implicit therein. Far more than an event, or even an event in the divine life, this particular work stretches back into the eternity of the divine life, as the

subject and object of divine election, and forward into eternity. In thinking about the life and work of Christ, we are delving into the heart of God and his concern for his creative enterprise, for there is no such thing as creation apart from the will and purposes of its maker, Jesus Christ (John 1:3; Col. 1:1017). It is at this point, on this ground, that the "cathedral" of atonement doctrine is built—the work of Christ. So while the Trinity shapes every element, the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus is where that shaping occurs, with special emphasis upon the death and resurrection.

Five Key Elements

While the divine life and will unconditionally shape every aspect of the atonement, and the edifice of the doctrine rises from the ground charted by the life of Christ, there are five main components to any theory of the atonement which together, in their many interrelations, provide the basic features of this building. First are the characters in this history, this relationship. The triune God made man in Jesus Christ through the incarnation of the Son takes center stage, but along with him the whole of humanity (Jew and Gentile alike), the angelic and demonic hosts, and the full spectrum of the animal kingdom all play their respective roles. Creation is the stage for covenant, for God's binding of himself in relationship to his creatures that he might share the divine life with them. Accordingly, the creatures with whom God is in relationship

provide the basic building blocks of this building—it is with them that the triune God is concerned.

How the relationships between these characters is construed, or how these building blocks are connected and related within the structure, is largely a matter of the second main component of any theory: the divine attribute(s) it emphasizes. Athanasius's incorruption, Anselm's honor, Barth's justice, Campbell's love, Forsyth's holiness, Schleiermacher's impassibility, each of these theologians emphasize a unique attribute of God (in the midst of a host of other attributes to which they might refer), to give character and definition to their account of the works of Christ. Theories of the atonement, in order to limit the scope of their work and focus the energy of their treatment, emphasize one divine attribute to develop the relationships between the characters in this drama—for while all the attributes are present and active in Christ, highlighting one or the other casts the whole scene in a very different light, drawing our attention to different aspects of our salvation in Christ. Just as a building is formed not simply by its parts but by their relations, it is precisely the divine attributes that provide the resources for speaking of this range of relations.

The third component hinges upon the second, accounting for the problem of sin Christ overcomes in terms of the perversion of this attribute, guiding us into a deeper understanding of the reality and implications of a particular dimension of our rebellion against God's character and will. The tension supporting an arch likewise tears it apart—for the power of goodness, lacking the bounds which keeps it in check, is precisely the power that is so destructive and evil. That is, the same relations that explain the strength of the building account for its demise, when those relations are perverted either through lack of proportion, changing circumstances, or misuse. And the consequences, of course, are disastrous, whether in architecture, human relations, or doctrine. Just as our salvation is manifold, so is our dilemma, and one responsibility of the doctrine of the atonement is to honor the nature of this manifold dilemma, bringing such diverse issues as guilt, shame, demonic oppression, environmental crises, and systemic poverty under the scope of its inquiry. The work of Christ, after all, reconciles all things, all sin, all things currently opposing the will and purpose of God.

The final two dimensions consider how the work of Christ saves us from this reality of sin (primarily through his death), and how he saves us for a creaturely participation in the reality of the divine life (primarily through his resurrection). Christ came not merely to free us from bondage, or remove our sin and ignorance, but to clothe us in righteousness, and build us up into a holy temple (1 Pet. 2:5). Both elements are vital. On the one hand, there is the matrix of realities and consequences from which we are saved by the work of Christ. But just as we don't restore a building merely to remove rubble and hazardous conditions, so Christ came that he might bring this building to completion, to perfection. The work of Christ is fundamentally positive, constructive, and life-giving, though it contains within it an essentially negative, destructive, and deadly element. Above all, Christ came that he might extend to the creature participation in the life and character of God, thereby

restoring all relations, overcoming all sin, and bringing about our full salvation.

These five components ultimately entail the whole of Christian doctrine. I put them in this abbreviated form to give clarity and definition to our speech. While such abbreviation has its place, it must always serve the higher end of theology outlined already, encouraging reflection into the whole set of relations between the various Christian doctrines (creation, pneumatology, ecclesiology etc.) and their subtopics within the doctrine of the atonement. For the shape of the doctrine of the atonement is determined by the life of God and is ordered to the life of God—a doctrine that contains within itself the whole sweep of theology, as God takes up his creation by means of his own self-involvement, bringing it to fulfillment in and through himself. While these five components play an important heuristic role in thinking about the basic shape of the work of Christ, ultimately theology, like the God it serves, is one, and this unity must play itself out in sustained attention to the whole set of doctrinal interrelationships. Nowhere is this truer than the atonement, which every doctrine looks toward or builds from. When put this way, these five main parts of any atonement theory must be a vehicle toward a fuller understanding and exposition of this event, rather than a rigid construct hampering further exploration.

Theories of the Atonement

This brings us to how we are to understand the phrase "theory of atonement" in the first place—a phrase largely unique to the past two hundred years. Prior to that, theologians sought to explain the efficacy of the work of Christ by exploring the manifold reasons making Jesus's death and resurrection necessary or fitting. Multiple explanations were a matter of course, given the complexity of the problem(s) to be overcome—more a matter of "let me count the ways" than boiling things down to one primary view. As part of the Enlightenment's influence, however, particularly in attempts to summarize and classify the history of doctrine, theories often came to be seen as unique and mutually exclusive explanations held by individual theologians and the churches or schools that followed them. While this is not the place to offer a full critique of this unfortunate turn of events, it bears noting that this understanding of "theory" is (1) a late development in the history of doctrine, (2) subject to considerable criticism (and outright rejection), and (3) one that should not be presupposed without due theological warrant.

It is far more advisable to interpret theories as largely complementary expositions of the work of Christ. The key lies in the explanation of their diversity. If this is a matter of the cultural husk that came to surround (or contaminate) the gospel, or competing definitions of key concepts, then the differences will remain, and theories continue to vie for supremacy. If the diversity lies deeper still, however, if it lies in the different aspects of the divine character enacted for our salvation, the different dimensions of the plight of sin from which we are saved, and the complex nature of the life for which we are saved, then an altogether different understanding emerges. Different theories may be mutually complementary accounts of the work of Christ, exploring how his life, death, and resurrection were effective for us by means of emphasizing the

role of different divine attributes in the work of Christ, the characters and forces involved, the sin they overcome, and the salvation they bring. A diversity of theories is thus inherent in the saving action of the living God who in and of himself is diverse in the fullness of the divine attributes. While historical differences between theories remain, and biblical and theological disagreements remain, the diversity proper to the life of God as it is active in Christ demands a corresponding diversity in our explanations of how this work was effective.

The Future of the Doctrine

This vision of the doctrine calls for constructive theological work, furnished by biblical and historical retrieval. It calls for a move beyond the standard questions of the day, into fuller and richer explorations of the ways that the atonement relates to the whole of Christian doctrine and its constituent parts, bringing new life and worship to the field. And while this is an inherently constructive project, the best tool for accomplishing it is biblical and historical retrieval. Biblical study is vital, for it is God's self-revelation through Scripture that is the basis for the theological task. Apart from this anchor and guide, there is little to distinguish theology from idle (though hopefully benevolent) speculation. At the same time, historical study is likewise vital, for it is the record of the church's interpretation of Scripture, providing us with nearly endless categories and possibilities that energize and rejuvenate the work of biblical studies. One of the best antidotes to the limitations of our culturally laden questions, concepts, and presuppositions is sustained interaction with equally limited questions, concepts, and presuppositions of other cultures, past and present. Struggling to delve into our varied Christian heritage offers one of the most profitable sources for self-critique on the one hand, and new and creative avenues for exploration on the other, for these theologians' reading of Scripture (and the history of theology preceding them) is just as biased as our own but biased in different ways.

While some might caution that studying the works of others may encumber true genius with a spirit of subservience, the greatness of the church is of a lively submissive sort, steeped in the thought of others, and ultimately in the thought of God. It is no less great, noble, and creative for the fact that it is properly submissive to its Lord and the theological mothers and fathers that preceded it, for its goal is not novelty but deepened, enriched, and invigorated understanding of the ever-rich God. And just as our theological heritage consists of a fluid interplay of dogmatic, biblical, philosophical, historical, pastoral, and contemplative categories and methods, it is likewise the reintegration of these fields which will contribute to the rejuvenation of the doctrine of the atonement in the present day—an effort which will equip the church to address the polemic charges leveled against it, by means of its attention to the far greater task of worshipping the triune God who in Jesus Christ became man for our sake and for our salvation.

Constructive Developments

The good news is that such work is well under way. First, in terms of historical awareness within studies of the doctrine, there are good signs that Aulén's legacy is rapidly diminishing, as increasing momentum builds toward the appreciation of the

multiplicity of theories held throughout the history of the church. While one still finds many works that presuppose the "three main views of the atonement," this is becoming less and less common.

Historical accuracy is in and of itself sufficient reason to debunk this artificial categorization and limitation of atonement theories, but the bigger concern is that such a framework for interpreting the history of the doctrine hampers our appreciation of both the immense diversity and simultaneous homogeneity of views which are of significant value in their own right, and an invaluable resource toward renewed interpretation of Scripture.

Second, responsible historical work is impacting introductory or general works on the atonement. Irenaeus is perhaps at the forefront of the movement, as his thought has significantly influenced a number of contemporary works. Significant work on Anselm is on the cusp of reshaping the tiresome abuse of this thought in popular books. This is likewise true of Abelard, who is widely (and falsely) reputed to be the father of "exemplarist" theories of the atonement. One final example of this retrieval work is John McLeod Campbell, whose thought is undergoing a small but significant renaissance.

Third, the history of an entire doctrine is likewise under rehabilitation in broad and sometimes quite divergent circles, as several traditions and figures are seeking to explore, popularize, and modify a range of theories known variously as theōsis, divinization, and participation (in Christ and/or God). These theories, particularly influential in the history of Eastern Christianity, explore the work of Christ in terms of his bringing humankind into a creaturely union with God. This vein of thought is simultaneously the locus of careful historical work and contemporary innovation (with some of the latter being highly polemical and irresponsible) and is particularly promising for the ways it draws upon the history of doctrine to interweave

Such developments have their counterparts within constructive dogmatic work on the atonement, which in recent years has aggressively developed the doctrinal interrelations with regard to the atonement. This is most true of the doctrine of the Trinity, motivated in part by feminist, womanist, and nonviolent critiques of traditional views. Even apart from polemic concerns, however, this stands as a vibrant and dynamic field, building off of the significant attention given to the doctrine of the Trinity in recent decades on the one hand, and attention to Christ's descent into hell on the other. Recent studies have also drawn attention to the relationship between atonement and the doctrines of election, the divine attributes, and ecclesiology. Perhaps the two most outstanding loci for development in this regard are creation and pneumatology. While the Holy Spirit is often said to apply the work of Christ, or communicate the benefits of Christ's work to the believer, scant reflection has been offered on the role of the Holy Spirit in the atoning work itself—in the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. Similarly, the resources within the doctrine of creation have been relatively untapped in studies of Christ's work, though new interest in environmental/ecological issues on the one hand, and Irenaeus, Athanasius, and other patristic theologians on the other may bring about a shift in this regard.

Alongside these historical, biblical, and doctrinal developments, it is worth noting an increased interest in broadening the scope of material relevant for equipping and advancing studies of the atonement. Frances M. Young, for instance, has recently published a delightful book drawing not only upon Patristic sources, but ancient art, liturgy, and other theologically rich subject areas, to enrich her understanding of Christ's atonement. The incorporation of such a diverse and rich body of reflection from the history of the church promises to invigorate an already burgeoning field.

Critique and Polemic Fronts

While the emphasis in this chapter is undoubtedly upon the constructive nature of the theological task, theology does not happen in a vacuum, and it is often the case that polemic leads to doctrinal growth. The single greatest challenge to theories of the atonement that are in any way rooted in the theological tradition(s) of the church can be summed up in terms of nonviolent critiques and alternatives. The gist of this position is that interpretations of Christ's work which posit the crucifixion and death of Christ as an event willed or in some sense executed by the Father are intolerable, for they posit an intolerable violence within the character and life of God. Constructive alternatives vary widely, but the conviction that God is nonviolent in all his interactions, and especially the cross, is a widely shared, deeply held, and revolutionary thesis for the doctrine.

This critique, in many ways a variant of problems raised against traditional views of the atonement for centuries, is partly responsible for another major polemic front of the doctrine: the orthodoxy and relative significance of penal substitution. Though aspects of this doctrine were widely held in the early church, it began to emerge more clearly in Thomas Aquinas's development of Anselm and came into its own in the Reformers and post-Reformation theologians. Increasing attacks have contributed to a new dynamic for some groups, in

which penal substitution has become the theory rather than one of several theories of the atonement. This entrenchment leads to a dangerous lack of proportion and perspective. Fortunately, not all proponents of penal substitution are making this move, such that its entrenchment on the one hand, and creative and multi-aspectival development on the other are happening concurrently. Several factors are at play in this discussion: (1) the question of the role of penal substitution vis-à-vis other theories of the atonement, (2) the nature of divine violence, inasmuch as this is an indirect way of approaching those questions and topics, and (3) most importantly, the role of the doctrine of the Trinity and of the divine attributes (particularly justice, righteousness, and wrath).

For an increasing number of theologians, the vacuum created by the critique of penal substitution has been filled with variants of the *Christus victor* theory—a long-standing train of reflection exploring the work of Christ as depriving Satan of his (real or usurped) power or rights over creation and humankind. This family of theories is exceptionally diverse, ranging from revitalizations of traditional positions to demythologized accounts which employ categories of "victory," "ransom," and "Satan" by filling them with new meaning, often tied to views of evil as a societal force.

Summary

The doctrine of the atonement is no simple matter. To plumb its depths is to delve into the whole of the Bible, and the history of Christian reflection upon this book in biblical, theological, liturgical, and artistic reflection. No simple set of questions and answers, distinctions, and catch phrases will do justice to the complexity of the saving work of Jesus Christ—for this is the center of Christian doctrine, that to which and from which all other doctrinal reflection flows. And if this is to remain a stream of thought which waters and nourishes the church, we must learn to reinvigorate the old questions, and move on to ask new ones, for we are as likely as any other group in the history of the church to fall into ruts and stale patterns of thinking.

How best to do this? By playing at the boundaries—at the boundaries between doctrines, allowing the insights and developments in other doctrines to bear fruit and implications within the doctrine of the atonement; at the boundaries of cultures, lending an attentive ear to other cultures, past and present, and the questions and perspectives alien to our own which can and should open our eyes to see things anew; at the boundaries of disciplines, dwelling on the possibilities and challenges raised by other theological subdisciplines than those in which we are trained, or other disciplines altogether, such as those of philosophy, sociology, history, and literature; at social and ecclesial boundaries, seeking to listen, honor, and embrace those whose experiences and views differ wildly from our own. But underlying this zest for an expansive understanding of the doctrine lies the core commitment unifying it all: the atoning work of Jesus Christ is the work of the triune God, receiving from him its distinctive meaning and significance. Every field, every insight, plays at best a ministerial role, witnessing to this central insight.

Cicero in Heaven: The Roman Rhetor and Luther's Reformation by Carl P.E. Springer [St Andrews Studies in Reformation History, Brill Academic, 9789004355156]

This book has been long in the making... Let me offer to the reader a preliminary personal observation that may shed light on my motivation for writing this book. This seems especially apropos in view of the distinctively postmodern notion of Karen Halttunen, namely, that of "the barefoot historian." With this term she hopes to capture "one important creative response to the late twentieth-century critique of the omniscient narrator of professional historical convention." To avoid "the appearance of a dispassionate approach, uncontaminated by partiality or interest, unconstrained by the limitations of a single vantage point," Halttunen suggests that scholars "acknowledge openly their personal connections with their subject, joining the barefoot historian in asserting that they are in some way native to it."

Pursuant to calls such as these for a sort of transparent "presuppositionalism," if you will, and also in consideration of how many of the following pages will be devoted to the use of Cicero in the classroom, this book is dedicated to the memory of the instructors who labored to instruct the author in the fundamentals of the Latin language and introduced me to the major classical Latin authors, including Cicero. This process began for me when I was a freshman in high school and continued four years later at Northwestern College, a small institution of higher learning in Watertown, Wisconsin, whose aim it was to provide students (all male) with a liberal arts foundation that would prepare them for post-graduate theological study at Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Seminary. In the 1970s when I attended Northwestern College, its curriculum was still focused on the study of ancient languages and literatures— not so very different from a traditional German Gymnasium of the nineteenth century. Indeed, pupils in the preparatory high school attached to the college were still referred to using the old Latin designations for grade levels: Sextaner, Quintaner, Quartaner, and Tertianer. Before entering the College, all freshmen were expected to have had four years of high school Latin, including a year of Cicero. In the first year of college Latin, we read Horace, Livy, and Terence. Electives in later years included Plautus and Tacitus; only one class was devoted to ecclesiastical Latin. In Greek classes, we read such pagan authors as Plato, Aristophanes, Sophocles, Homer, and Menander. (There were only two semesters of New Testament Greek.) There was a required mathematics course and a science course, but by far the majority of the coursework was in language, literature, and history.

Why was it, I ask myself now in retrospect, that such a curriculum, so focused on the languages, literature, and history of the ancient Greco-Roman pagans, should have been deemed indispensable for those preparing to study Lutheran theology? And, why, of all the Latin prose authors, should Cicero have been assigned to me, propaedeutically, to read as a junior in high school, as, indeed, he was to so many other seventeen-year-olds across America at the time? And why the Catilinarian orations for much of that year? The answers to such

questions were self-evident, it seems, not only to Lutheran pedagogues of the day, but also to professional classicists such as Charles Jenney and Rogers Scudder, the editors of Third Year Latin, my dog-eared high school textbook, who found it unnecessary to account for Cicero's prominent place therein:

Making Cicero the foundation of the third-year course requires little comment, for Latin without Cicero is like English without Shakespeare. Cicero's writings and orations constitute a large proportion of classical Latin literature, and his mastery of style has made him the pre-eminent teacher of later generations.

It is the author's hope that any insights gleaned from the following pages may resonate not only with others who underwent the same kind of educational training as he, but also, more generally, with all readers who are interested in understanding more clearly Cicero's import for Martin Luther and his followers, and in gaining a deeper appreciation of the long-lasting effects Luther and Lutherans had on Cicero's legacy not only in Europe but also in America.

Prolegomena

Cicero was not a Christian and most certainly not a Lutheran (he died a number of decades before the birth of Christ and over fifteen hundred years before Luther's birth in 1483), but more than once Martin Luther expressed his fervent wish that God might be able to show his favorite Latin prose author some sort of consideration in the life to come. In 1538, in one of his "Table Talks" (Tischreden), it is recorded that he spoke to friends and family gathered around him of Cicero, "the best, wisest, and most hard-working man, and of how much he suffered and accomplished":

I hope, he said, that our Lord God will also be gracious to him and those like him, even though it is not up to us to say and determine this. We should rather stick with the revealed word: "Whoever believes and is baptized, etc." But that God is unable to make judgments regarding different people and to make distinctions among them, here we cannot know; he has his times and his means. There will be a new heaven and a new earth, much more complete and extensive. He is perfectly capable of giving individuals what they deserve for what they have done.

Whether there might be some sort of consideration not only for Cicero but also for other virtuous pagans in the world to come was a question that troubled Luther and many others in premodern Europe.⁹ The aporia did not lend itself to a simple solution. On the one hand, biblical passages such as John 3: 5 and 3: 18 seem to make it quite clear that baptism and faith in the Son of God are prerequisites for eternal salvation. But the epistle to the Hebrews suggests that Old Testament figures like Enoch had faith (Heb. 11: 5) and were able "to please God" even though they were born long before Christ's advent. If, in the course of his "harrowing of hell," Jesus preached to the "spirits in prison" (1 Pet. 3: 19), giving them a chance to be incorporated in the plan of salvation retroactively, were there only biblical figures in the number of those he triumphantly rescued (as he "led captivity captive"; Eph. 4: 8), or might virtuous pagans have been included too? These latter would

almost certainly have been quite unaware of the biblical God, but many (like Cicero) did seem to believe in some sort of divine being and might be credited with the possession of a partial faith. After all, Old Testament believers themselves could hardly have had a full understanding of God's triune nature. Was it really fair that those pagans born in a pre-Christian era should never have had a chance to accept (or reject) the Christian Gospel?

Dante's creative solution to this conundrum is well known. The Roman poet Virgil, whose fourth Eclogue was considered in the Middle Ages to be as valid a prophecy of the Messiah as Isaiah's, and who served as Dante's guide in Hell and Purgatory, inhabits a special place in the next world, Limbo. Here there is no weeping or torment as elsewhere in Dante's *Inferno*, but only sighs from those who through no fault of their own were never baptized. These are great spirits with "slow, serious eyes," speaking "rarely and with sweet voices" (*Inferno* 4.112–47). Near what Dante calls "a noble castle," surrounded by a pretty stream on a meadow of green grass, the poet spies a group of philosophers of whom the first mentioned is Aristotle, "the master of them who know." Included in this distinguished company is Cicero (Tulio), named right after the great musician and prophet, Orpheus, and just before Linus, the music teacher of Hercules.

Luther does not enter into any of these imponderables or suggest any imaginative solutions of his own. After all, neither Limbo nor Purgatory find any mention in the Old or New Testaments, and so Luther, the biblical theologian, simply leaves the entire matter in God's hands. All the same, he continued to express concern about Cicero's ultimate fate until the end of his life. As late as 1544 (Luther died in 1546) we find him still hoping that Cicero would fare better in the next life than Duke George, the ruler of Albertine Saxony and a staunch opponent of the Reformation. Elsewhere he gives Cicero better odds for less rough treatment in the afterlife than Caiaphas, the high priest who conducted the trial of Jesus, and hopes that he will occupy "a higher station" in the world to come than the Archbishop of Mainz.

How did it come about that this pagan Roman master of Latin eloquence could make such a favorable impression so many centuries later on a biblical theologian who believed that eternal salvation was dependent upon faith in Jesus Christ alone and who is often referred to as "the father of the German language?" What exactly was Luther's attitude towards the famous Roman rhetor? Why was Cicero so highly regarded by Luther's colleagues at the University of Wittenberg (especially Philipp Melanchthon) and adherents of the Lutheran Reformation elsewhere? How did he come to occupy such a prominent place in the curricula of Lutheran schools and universities for years to come? How significant was the influence of Cicero and his rhetorical theory and practice in the Lutheran centuries that were to follow? What sort of impact did the Reformation's warm embrace of Cicero have on subsequent generations of Lutherans, classicists, and others? These are some of the questions that will occupy us in the following pages.

Sweeping diachronic studies like this one, whose perspectives are informed by the *longue durée*, work best when their topic's

parameters are fairly restricted. This is especially true in dealing with questions of reception. It is difficult for general studies on Cicero's influence such as John Rolfe's delightful but dated *Cicero and His Influence*, or Bruno Weil's wonderfully idiosyncratic *2000 Jahre Cicero*, or more recently, George Kennedy's magisterial overview, "Cicero's Oratorical and Rhetorical Legacy" in Brill's *Companion to Cicero*, to do full justice to the particular, if they are to serve adequately the needs of the generalist. Alternatively, there are valuable specialist studies, like those collected in Brill's *Companion to the Reception of Cicero*, or *Cicero Refused to Die*, which, quite understandably, do not stray far outside tightly drawn chronological or thematic boundary lines. This is a book about the very long and rich legacy of that ancient wordsmith, Cicero, as viewed through the eyes of Martin Luther and the ecclesiastical movement associated with his name, which also has a rich, albeit shorter, legacy. Both Cicero and Luther are names that continue to be filled with deep significance for many to the present day, and this study aims to be far reaching in its scope, covering topics as distant from each other as Demosthenes and American presidential rhetoric, but without ever losing complete sight of its specific focus.

As daunting as such an approach to cultural history can be, the long trek through the European (and American) centuries is well worth the effort, as Tadeusz Zielinski observes in his classic study, *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte*, written, at least in part, to rebut the attacks against Cicero delivered by the preeminent German historian, Theodor Mommsen in his *Römische Geschichte*:

Anyone who has had the pleasure of travelling along one of those great roads which have long been among the chief highways of the human race—the roads which run northwards and westwards from the plain of Lombardy through the Alps—will always remember his experiences. He has felt the very pulse-beat of world history. All the ages have left their memories behind them: here a Roman watch-tower built for the wars of Marcus Aurelius, there a knightly castle recalling a Hohenstaufen's visit to the strange land across the mountains; this gorge speaks of Hannibal, this dam of Napoleon, this bridge of Suvorov; that lake was ennobled by an epigram of Catullus, yonder valley by a *terzina* of Dante, this view by a page in Goethe's diary; on this rock, like a strayed bird, the memory of Tristan and Isolde with their grievous love once alighted. Every reader of Cicero will have a similar experience, if he has a sense of history; and that experience alone is enough—even if the caricaturists are right in all they say—to give him thoughts and feelings of incomparable depth. This phrase of Cicero's was locked by Jerome in his heart, in spite of his dream vow; with that, Diderot endeavoured to destroy the "superstition" of posterity. That thought charmed Petrarch; by this, in the midst of tormenting doubts, the mind of Luther was "much and deeply moved." Here is the pearl that Bossuet set in the gold of his style; there the steel out of which a Jacobin forged his dagger. This sentence won a delicate worldly laugh from the pretty admirers of the patriarch of Ferney; and that moved the terrorized judges of Louis XVI to tears. It is a unique and unforgettable pleasure; but one must not be afraid of the effort it takes, for it cannot be denied that

it is easier to walk over certain other paths than to travel the Roman road.

The first chapter of this particular “Roman road” begins with a discussion of the signal contributions Cicero made to Latin rhetoric and prose style in the first place and proceeds to consider how his theory and practice came to influence Christian Latin authors in late antiquity and the Middle Ages. In this chapter we also explore the importance of the recovery of classical Latin in general, and Cicero’s Latinity in particular, for Renaissance humanists and for the “magisterial” Reformation. The next chapter considers the aspects of Cicero’s rhetoric which were particularly appreciated by Martin Luther; the German reformer’s attitude towards the Roman rhetor is complex and will need to be parsed carefully. Even if Luther’s distinctive prose is itself not exactly “Ciceronian,” there is still much about Cicero’s eloquence and wisdom and life that he respected enormously. Certainly, too, it is unlikely that without Luther’s enthusiastic endorsement Cicero would have played as important a role in subsequent Lutheran education as he did. The educational uses to which Cicero was put by Luther and his colleague, Melancthon, at the University of Wittenberg and other educational institutions are the subject of the third chapter, as we consider how Cicero came to occupy such a prominent place in the new system of education established by the Lutheran reformers. The fourth chapter considers Cicero’s continued importance in schools and universities in Europe, thanks not only to the long-lived educational programs established in the Reformation but also the Cicero-rich curriculum of the Jesuits’ Ratio studiorum. Here we also touch on aspects of Cicero’s influence in the generations that followed, paying specific attention to the example of Johann Sebastian Bach, who was a Latin teacher as well as a musician and composer. We shall also consider the question of how Cicero’s legacy was continued in the Americas, with special emphasis on education in general and Lutheran education in particular. The final chapter takes up the question of indifference and hostility to Latin, the classics, and Cicero, beginning already in Reformation circles (with Luther himself), the rapid rise in status of the vernacular languages in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the development of an “anti-Ciceronian” movement in the second half of the sixteenth century. The chapter goes on to explore the eventual diminution of Cicero’s stature, beginning markedly in the second half of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth, a circumstance that attended the rise of Romanticism and philhellenism in Germany and elsewhere in Europe, and the gradual attenuation of whatever influence Cicero once had on American culture.

If continuities and commonalities are featured as prominently in the following pages as their counterparts, ruptures and distinctions, the reader should not assume thereby that the author is unaware or even dismissive of the discontinuities and lack of commonalities that have been so often discovered between such familiar historical constructs as “paganism” and “Christianity,” “classical” and “medieval,” “Renaissance” and “Reformation,” etc. Distinctions are necessary, and they will be made in the pages that follow, all in due course, as the need for clarification or contextualization becomes apparent; they

should not add unduly to the length of the book or distract attention away from its singular focus. But while such distinctions have proved to be exceedingly useful for the purposes of clear teaching, developing specific areas of scholarly expertise, and even defining academic sub-disciplines, they have virtually guaranteed that the kinds of overarching questions posed in this book are seldom asked, either by classicists (even those who specialize in Cicero and the Ciceronian tradition), or theologians and church historians who devote themselves to the study of Luther and the Reformation. Rather than simply contributing to even more refined differentiations, therefore, this book aims to demonstrate the value of intellectual “clumping” (as opposed to “splitting”). As seen from this perspective, the most important word in the binary phraseology so often used to describe this particular dynamic relationship, “paganism and Christianity” (or in German, Antike und Christentum), may very well be the copula. There is a complicated relationship between the two concepts that is not as purely antithetical as is often supposed.

In classical rhetorical theory, similarly, words (*verba*) and the things or ideas that they signify (*res*) are different, but they are never for us really entirely separate from each other, any more than the person of the orator can ever be removed from what he says. After all, the best speaker or writer must not only be skilled in the use of words but also has to be “a good man” (*vir bonus*), if what he says is to be taken seriously by his audience. Cicero’s achievements as a rhetorician and orator cannot be easily considered apart from his biographical accomplishments and failures, as a philosopher and a politician and a man, who thought, spoke, wrote, and lived during a most violent, revolutionary, and dangerous time. He exerted his will by dint of his eloquence, and he died for what he believed and because of how he said it.

Of a study such as this it is a fair question, indeed, to ask which Cicero we are talking about. The orator and statesman, the philosopher, the rhetorical theorist, the tragic hero of the Roman Republic? Cicero’s name proved to be so magnetic over the centuries that to it were attributed more than one work that he did not author. There is a veritable host of “Ciceros.” Certainly, the interest in discovering the uniqueness and particularity of different aspects of a biography’s subject like Cicero is understandable, but there must also be a unitary, general object that lies behind and encompasses all of the particularized refinements in our mind, because otherwise we could not speak at all of a “Cicero,” even with quotation marks surrounding the word in question. It is difficult to disagree with John O. Ward’s conclusion that of “all these Ciceros,” it was the “Cicero of the art of speaking” who was the most influential of them all. Above all, Cicero was a man of words—words that were never divorced from things.

If there are many “Ciceros” onto whom successive generations have projected their own desires, fears, and literary tastes, there are no doubt just as many “Luthers” and “Reformations.” The German reformer’s strongly expressed views on any number of subjects, including Cicero, could vary widely depending on audience and editors, and his own mood, health, and age. What an infinite variety of identities have been attributed to their eponymous “ancestor” by millions of

Lutherans (to say nothing of others, not all of them in Europe, by any means), over the course of the half millennium that has passed since the 95 Theses were first composed! We shall be interested here primarily in the initial manifestations of the Lutheran Reformation in the first half of the sixteenth century, but we shall consider later developments as well, especially where Luther's direct and indirect influence may be most clearly discerned. Much of the emphasis in the following pages will focus, geographically speaking, on western Europe, particularly Germany, but by including a consideration of the impact of the Reformation and Cicero on the Americas, especially the United States, it is hoped that this study may also be able to make a small contribution to the burgeoning field of "Atlantic Studies." This is a book that is in large part about language in general and one language (Latin) in particular. Even though Latin was no longer being commonly spoken as a first language in early modern Europe, it was the lingua franca of the age. As a result, its study was still regarded as practical and its active use promoted in a way that those few who continue to teach and study Latin in this century can only with difficulty appreciate. Most often, Latin instruction today concentrates on learning to read the ancient language only. It is far less easy for modern students to appreciate the effect of the deliberate rhythmical patterns of formal Latin discourse than it would have been for the original Roman audiences. This will put us at a certain disadvantage as we try to understand from our present remove the lively impact of Cicero and his Latin prose on the Lutheran Reformation, especially if we are inclined to attribute to the vernacular languages and literatures a kind of spontaneous creative vitality that we assume must be artificially forced in Neo-Latin, or altogether lacking.

As Jürgen Leonhardt and others have shown, "repristinization" occurs frequently in the afterlife of historical languages like classical Latin, Attic Greek, or Sanskrit. The attempt to breathe new life into such languages is actually a common feature of their histories. Latin was a "dead" (or, better perhaps, "fixed") language not only in Emperor Charles V's time but also in Charlemagne's, one that had to be learned artificially, in schools and not at one's mother's knees. The challenging assignment to which the humanists of the early modern period set themselves with great zeal was to revive as fully as possible the use of this ancient language one more time. That this may not be seen as an urgent goal for very many today is no reason to assume that the cultivation of Ciceronian Latin was not of as paramount importance in the sixteenth century as its advocates claimed it to be.

That considerations of language, especially the Latin language, have not traditionally interested modern scholars of the Reformation as much as they did many of the reformers themselves is telling. Whether written by historians or theologians, far too much scholarship on the Reformation appears to regard language as little more than a form ready to be filled with content, as opposed to a constitutive force in its own right. Furthermore, if there is a language that has occupied the attention of Luther scholars, it has tended to be German. After all, the Reformation is precisely the period when the German language began to take on increased

importance and assume many of its present characteristics, thanks in large part to Luther.

Compounding the problem is the fact that Latin was very much taken for granted generation after generation by those who inherited and less than thoughtfully embraced the traditional curriculum fashioned long ago by ecclesiastical leaders whose authority was not necessarily questioned by their epigones. Indeed, it could be said that one positive benefit of Latin's virtual disappearance from so many curricula everywhere at the present time is that there may now be sufficient scholarly "distance" to permit diachronic perspectives to be applied to the study of the Latin language in general and Cicero in particular.

In view of this book's unflagging attention to issues of language, it would be rather unsatisfying for readers, one suspects, to be presented with lengthy discussions of topics like "Ciceronian style" or "Luther's rhetoric" without the benefit of actual examples of the same made available for them to consult firsthand. It has been said of Luther that his language is so distinctive and effective that "one is tempted simply to quote him." The same could be said of Cicero. Representative passages appear frequently in the following pages, therefore, although in the interest of conserving space these are most often presented in the form of translations only.

It would be foolhardy for anyone to claim to have consulted all of the secondary sources that might be of possible relevance to a study that ranges as widely as this one does. The amount of scholarly writing devoted to Cicero, the most significant and influential of all of the ancient Roman prose authors (Kathy Eden calls him "antiquity's larger-than-life literary paterfamilias"), and his reception through the centuries, is simply staggering, even if one concentrates only on his rhetorical significance. William Altman alludes to the conclusion of the Gospel of John (21: 25) to express the extent of the problem: "not all of the books in the world could contain the full story of Cicero's influence." The studious attention devoted by scholars over the years to the Reformation, too, has resulted in an enormous body of writing. In the pages that follow, we shall focus our attention more on Luther than on his fellow reformers, but that does little to make the bibliographic task easier since more has probably been written about this one churchman than any other figure in the history of Christianity except for its eponymous founder. This said, curious readers will find in the notes abundant, if not always exhaustive, references to relevant scholarly work that should provide them ample opportunity to pursue questions in greater depth as desired.

With all of these purposes, parameters, and provisos in mind, it is the author's hope that an interdisciplinary study of this sort will be able to shed some welcome fresh light on a topic of wide and deep significance. It should prove stimulating to specialized "archaeologists of knowledge," including those who are (or are preparing to be) professional classicists, especially if they are interested in questions related to the reception of Cicero. It is meant also for church historians and theologians who have an interest in Luther and the Reformation and the history of Lutheranism, to say nothing of intellectual and cultural historians and historians of education and rhetoric. Above all,

however, the book is intended to appeal to any reader who is fascinated by the complex interrelationship between the classics and Christianity, often summarized in the form of a rhetorical question first posed by Tertullian, a North African Christian of the second century and himself no mean rhetorician: "What does Athens have to do with Jerusalem?"—or, as we might also ask here: "What does Athens have to do with Wittenberg?"

Saint Columban: His Life, Rule, and Legacy (Cistercian Studies) by Terrance G. Kardong OSB [Cistercian Publications, 9780879072704]

Saint Columban: His Life, Rule, and Legacy contains a new English translation of a commentary on the entire Rule of Columban translated and introduced by Terrence G. Kardong. Kardong, OSB, is a monk of Assumption Abbey, Richardton, North Dakota.

Columban was a sixth-century Irish monk who compiled a written rule of life for the three monasteries he founded in France: Anegray, Luxeuil, and Fontaines. This volume also includes the first English translation of the *Regula cuiusdam Patris ad Virgines*, or the Rule of Walbert, compiled by the seventh-century Count Walbert from various earlier rules designed for women, including those of Columban, Benedict, Cassian, and Basil. **Saint Columban** begins with an extensive introduction to the history of Columban and his monks, as well as various indices and notes, which will be of interest to students and enthusiasts of monastic studies.

According to Kardong in **Saint Columban**, a reasonable opening question to introduce this study of the Rule of Columban might be simply: why? The Rule of Columban is not a very attractive body of early monastic literature, at least to the modern sensibility, as is suggested by the fact that the last, and only, English translation appeared forty-three years ago. The reason behind this lack of interest is revealed by a cursory glance at the pages. This Rule is, by current standards, quite harsh. Of course, that might be said of almost every ancient monastic Rule. Yet the Rule of Columban is an extreme case, for it is largely composed of penalties.

So, then, what is the positive value of this literature? For a Benedictine monk, the Columbanian material has important connections to the Rule of Benedict. For one thing, the Rule of Columban was written not more than fifty to sixty years after the Rule of Benedict and therefore provides a rare glimpse into a rather murky period of monastic and medieval church history. Columban was an immigrant to continental Europe from Ireland, but he was well read, and that reading included the Rule of Benedict. Columban does not quote the Rule of Benedict directly, but the mere fact that it influenced him is significant, for it suggests that Benedict's Rule was known north of the Alps by AD 600.

Readers might say that the Rule of Columban was the vehicle, as it were, that carried the Rule of Benedict over the Alps. Kardong in **Saint Columban** asks, aside from its role as a vehicle of and partner with Benedict's Rule, is Columban's Rule

of much intrinsic interest to readers today? The first reason is that it was and is one of the foundational documents of early monasticism. As such, it is worth their attention if readers wish to understand the mindset and customs of the pioneers of an important movement in the history of the Roman Catholic Church.

When readers read and study the Rule of Columban, it is well to remember that it is an Irish Rule, transmitting the Christian vision of a non-Roman church. A glance at the map of Europe shows plainly that Ireland is on the edge. Columban stands as a healthy symbolic antidote to Roman Catholic centralization and Ultramontaniam, which has become especially strong today.

The Rule of Columban is loaded with penalties. Did monks ever live that way? In this regard, we might ask whether the monks of Columban actually lived under such a penal system. No: they put it into practice, as is suggested by the fact that the Rule begins with the requirement that "we make confession before meat or entering our beds." That is, the monks confessed their faults to the superior every day. What is more, when this Rule was adapted for women, e.g., by Walbert for Eboriac, the nuns were urged to confess their faults three times a day!

Yet it does not make sense to dwell too much on the weaknesses of the Rule of Columban. It contains a wealth of detail concerning early medieval monastic life. When a person examines the text minutely, many curious aspects of everyday life come into focus.

One of the great attractions of the Rule of Columban is the happy fact that we know quite a lot about the author and his circumstances. Unlike most early monastic legislators, we have a good vita of Columban and his followers.

Not only was the Rule of Columban important in its own right, but it also had a significant effect on posterity. Two of Columban's own disciples from Luxeuil, Walbert and Donatus, wrote monastic Rules for nuns. These Rules use parts of the Rule of Columban plus materials from other monastic Rules, especially those of Benedict and Caesarius of Arles. Kardong considers the Rule of Walbert more interesting. Therefore he includes a translation of and commentary on it in **Saint Columban**, following the three parts of Columban's rule: *Regula Monachorum* (Reg), *Regula Coenobialis* (Coen), and *Paenitentiale* (Paen).

Kardong is America's foremost scholar on monasticism in general and on monastic rules in particular. To his much-acclaimed translation of and commentary on the Rule of Saint Benedict, Kardong can now add his translation of the Rule of Monks, the Cenobitic Rule, the Penitential Rule, and the Rule of Walbert. Kardong's translation, based on both French and English sources, as well as on his own prodigious knowledge of Latin, is first rate. Especially helpful is his introduction and copious footnotes. In both, we see Kardong's wit and scholarship at their best. A must-have for anyone interested in monastic studies. — Fr. Benedict M. Guevin, OSB, St. Anselm Abbey

The productiveness of Fr. Terrence Kardong is astounding and from it we have all benefited. Here, once again, he makes accessible to us a literary monument of the ancient monastic

tradition, this time the Rule of Columban, written not more than fifty or sixty years after the Rule of St. Benedict. With the meticulousness and erudition and wit that we have come to expect from him, Fr. Terrence provides fresh and lively translations of this historically significant Rule and one of its epigones, the Rule of Walbert. What a wealth of fascinating – and strange – material one finds in these texts! – Mark DeCogliano, Assistant Professor of Theology, University of St. Thomas

The Rule of Columban, from about AD 600, is well worth another look by students and those interested in monastic studies. [Saint Columban](#), which also includes some of Columban's letters and sermons, provides that opportunity.

The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating Apostolic Movements, 2nd edition by Alan Hirsch, with a foreword by Ed Stetzer, with an afterword by Jeff Vanderstelt [Brazos Press, 9781587433863]

Alan Hirsch's paradigm-shifting classic remains the definitive statement of the church as dynamic missional movement. The bestselling first edition of [The Forgotten Ways](#) ignited a conversation about how to harness the power of movements for the future growth of the church. In this major update, Hirsch shares significant insights gained along the way, provides new examples of growing churches, and reflects on the last ten years of the missional movement. The 2nd edition of [The Forgotten Ways](#) has been thoroughly updated and revised throughout and includes charts, diagrams, an expanded glossary of terms, new appendices, an index, a new foreword by Ed Stetzer, and a new afterword by Jeff Vanderstelt.

Hirsch, founder of Forge Mission Training Network, Future Travelers, and 100 Movements, is an adjunct professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, George Fox Seminary, Asbury Theological Seminary, and Wheaton College among others, and he lectures frequently throughout Australia, Europe, and the United States.

Known for his innovative approach to mission, Hirsch is widely acknowledged as a thought leader and mission strategist for churches across the Western world. He considers [The Forgotten Ways](#) the guiding work to all of his other writings. The book explores the factors that come together to generate high-impact, exponentially explosive, spiritually vibrant Jesus movements in any time and context. This extensive update to Hirsch's influential work offers a system of six keys to movements that will continue to shape the future of the missional movement for years to come.

Hirsch says in the preface to the 2nd edition of [The Forgotten Ways](#) that he can still remember the day when, after years of trying to grasp the dynamics of apostolic movements, he felt that it all came together in a singular 'Eureka!' moment that he could only subsequently understand as a flash of revelatory insight. After that flash of insight, of synthesis, he says he scrambled to get the ideas down on paper. When he was finished he realized that what he had been given was in some way world changing.

The basic ideas presented in [The Forgotten Ways](#), mainly concerning the individual elements of the mDNA (Jesus focused culture, discipleship, incarnational mission, innovation and risk, multiplication organizing, APEST, etc.), have seen significant adoption across the wide spectrum of Protestant denominations, agencies, and institutions.

[The Forgotten Ways](#) is not a how-to book, although readers might well discern practical things within it. It is written to appeal to the imagination and to direct the church to embrace the more dynamic movement-based paradigm evidenced in the New Testament and in the various transformational movements in history.

It is clear throughout [The Forgotten Ways](#) that Hirsch is committed to the idea of translating best practices in cross-cultural global missions into the church in the West. Although this book is primarily about the mission of the whole people of God, mission is not limited to the corporate mission of the local church or denomination. Mission must take place in and through every aspect of life. And this is done by all Christians everywhere. Both forms of mission – the collective mission of the community and the individual expression of mission by God's people – must be activated if we are to become a truly missional church.

Another feature of [The Forgotten Ways](#) is the consistent critique of religious institutionalism. The material itself is structured in two sections.

Section 1 sets the scene by referring to Hirsch's own narrative to assist readers in tracking some of the seminal ideas and experiences that have guided his thinking and fired his imagination. This is spread out over the first two chapters: Chapter 1 looks at the issue from the perspective of a local practitioner trying to guide a complex, inner-city, church-planting movement through the massive changes that are going on. Chapter 2 explores the missional situation in which we find ourselves from the perspective of a strategic and translocal level.

Section 2 is the heart of [The Forgotten Ways](#) in that it is a description of and the constituent elements of mDNA, which together activate the Apostolic Genius latent in the system. Hirsch discerns quintessential elements that combine to create Apostolic Genius and to simplify them to the absolutely irreducible components that are common to every Jesus movement that experienced exponential growth and had a transformative impact on society.

Assuming the pervasive prior presence and work of the Holy Spirit, we can observe six simple but interrelating elements of mDNA, forming a complex and living structure. These present a paradigm grid with which readers can assess their current understandings and experiences of church and mission. They are:

1. Jesus Is Lord: At the center and circumference of every significant Jesus movement there exists a very simple confession.
2. Disciple Making: Essentially, this involves the lifelong task of becoming like Jesus by embodying his

message. Disciple making is a core task of the church and needs to be structured into every church's basic formula (chap. 5).

3. **Missional-Incarnational Impulse:** Chapter 6 explores the twin impulses of missional movements – the outward thrust and the deepening impulse – which together seed and embed the gospel into different cultures and people groups.
4. **Liminality and Communitas:** The most vigorous forms of community are those that come together with a shared ordeal or with a mission that lies beyond themselves. Chapter 7 puts the adventure back into the venture.
5. **APEST Culture:** Chapter 8 examines another element of authentic mDNA: the active presence of the apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic, shepherding, and teaching (APEST) functions-ministries listed.
6. **Organic Systems:** Chapter 9 explores the next element in mDNA, the idea of appropriate structures for growth and movement – ‘multiplication organizing.’ Here readers will find that the exemplary Jesus movements have the feel of a movement and the structure of a network, and tend to spread like viruses.

[The Forgotten Ways](#) is written not from the perspective of an academic but rather from the perspective of a missionary and a strategist trying to help the church formulate a missional paradigm equal to the significant challenges of the twenty-first-century world in which we are called to be faithful.

[The Forgotten Ways](#) was a catalytic force of God in my own life, and it remains on my must-read list for anyone interested in the church and mission. Prophet, priest, teacher, and leader, Hirsch is an essential voice to our generation. – Danielle Strickland, speaker, author, and Salvation Army officer I referred to the first edition of this book as a ‘full-blooded and comprehensive call for the complete orientation of the church around mission,’ and that is no less true for this updated version. With the benefit of ten years of experience in teaching these concepts around the world, Hirsch has freshened his groundbreaking work for a new generation of readers. – Michael Frost, author of *Road to Missional* and *Surprise the World*

A navigational chart for pastors and churches willing to brave a journey of faith, courage, and sacrifice beyond the safety of comfortable shores for the sake of the gospel. – Mark DeYmaz, directional leader, Mosaic Church of Central Arkansas; author of *Building a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church*

Reading [The Forgotten Ways](#) when it was first published revolutionized the way I understood God’s mission, the essence of the church, and my participation in both. I didn’t think it was possible, but with this second edition, Hirsch provides even greater clarity and challenge. – Brad Brisco, coauthor of *Missional Essentials* and *Next Door as It Is in Heaven*

No book has influenced my thinking about leading a church and a church planting movement more than [The Forgotten Ways](#). Alan Hirsch is the leading missiologist of our day and his genius is on display in this work, which helps us rediscover what the church of Jesus Christ was always meant to be. I wholeheartedly recommend this book to every church leader! – Dave Ferguson, lead pastor, Community Christian Church; lead visionary, NewThing

For a decade, Hirsch has simmered on the revolutionary ideas he presented in the first edition of [The Forgotten Ways](#). In this new edition, he develops his thoughts further and recommends ways to apply them and move confidently into a hopeful, vibrant, movemental future. Stunning. – Linda Bergquist, church planting catalyst and coach; coauthor of *Church Turned Inside Out* An amazing work of analysis, synthesis, and application. Hirsch provides a timely, well-informed overview of the range of current thinking and writing on movemental Christianity and draws rich insights that, if ignited by the Holy Spirit, can revolutionize many churches today. – Howard A. Snyder, author of *The Problem of Wineskins*; visiting director, Manchester Wesley Research Centre

This new edition of [The Forgotten Ways](#) speaks to the power and vision of Hirsch, offering the six keys that will continue to shape the missional movement for years to come. It is worth revisiting again and again. It is foundational for understanding mission and irreplaceable as a guide for the church's new situation in the West – a landmark book for the missional movement. [The Forgotten Ways](#) appeals to those who are church planting and/or initiating new forms of sustainable Christian community for the twenty-first century and to those who are involved on the strategic level of ministry – namely, that of leading movements, parachurches, and denominations.

Heroic Shaktism: The Cult of Durga in Ancient Indian Kingship by Bihani Sarkar [British Academy Monographs, Oxford University Press, 9780197266106]

Heroic Saktism is the belief that a good king and a true warrior must worship the goddess Durga, the form and substance of kingship. This belief formed the bedrock of ancient Indian practices of cultivating political power. Wildly dangerous and serenely benevolent at one and the same time, the goddess's charismatic split nature promised rewards for a hero and king and success in risky ventures.

This book is the first expansive historical treatment of the cult of Durga and the role it played in shaping ideas and rituals of heroism in India between the 3rd and the 12th centuries CE. Within the story of ancient Indian kingship, two critical transitions overlapped with the rise of heroic Saktism: the decline of the war-god Skanda-Mahasena as a military symbol, and the concomitant rise of the early Indian kingdom. As the rhetoric of kingship once strongly linked to the older war god shifted to the cultural narratives of the goddess, her political imagery broadened in its cultural resonance. And indigenous territorial deities became associated with Durga as smaller states unified into a broader conception of civilization.

By assessing the available epigraphic, literary and scriptural sources in Sanskrit, and anthropological studies on politics and

ritual, Bihani Sarkar demonstrates that the association between Indian kingship and the cult's belief-systems was an ancient one based on efforts to augment worldly power.

Excerpt: In 1151 this curious inscription in Sanskrit was commissioned by the Western Caulukya sovereign Kumā rapā la. In it he boastfully commemorates subjugating Arnorā ja, a rival lord of Malaya, with a savage and bloody act. Cutting off the head of the warlord, 'having shot his heart with a single flight of arrows', Kumā rapā la hung it from his palace gate as a trophy to please the war-goddess, the fiery 'Candī present in his arm'. It was she who he believed had furthered his success. As a sign of his gratitude, the king 'intoxicated her with propitiatory offerings of [his rival's] gushing blood' and 'captivated her' with Arnorā ja's lotus-like head', given (the versifier notes with unintended humour) 'her penchant for collecting toy-lotuses'. Vividly evoked in this stanza is a particular aspect of medieval courtly life and religion, one of utmost importance to Indian kingship—the cult of the heroic goddess.

This was a deity of kaleidoscopic identity. Her immediately visible form was the Amazonian Durgā, represented in medieval iconography as a tempestuous buffalo-demon-slaying sovereign. She also incarnated divinities from wholly separate religious traditions. She was celebrated in each of these charismatic embodiments with the greatest pomp, involving the entire populace of a kingdom and in absolute secrecy, with worship known only to a few. It was considered necessary to appease the deity—widely regarded to be fickle and capricious—at the onset of the military calendar in autumn, through splendid court ceremonies. Here large numbers of buffaloes, goats and sheep (and in a few cases even a humane) were sacrificed for her sake, weapons and armies were blessed and infused with her energy, and kings demonstrated their fealty to her. For the medieval Indians, this ritual appeasement was believed to encapsulate the very essence of the heroic ethos.

Even when certain features such as offering blood and appeasing wilder, unbridled forms of this devi were condemned by the medieval moral codes, their worship remained central to political practice rather than being relinquished. Why were Indic kingdoms loath to let go of these divinities?

One reason was that the custom in medieval India required a kingdom and its ruler to be sanctified and affirmed by a powerful god and an associated cult.' The acceptance of the ruling clan by the local population depended greatly on the belief that an important deity, in a large number of cases a tutelary goddess who commanded a much broader following among groups other than the ruler's, had exclusively sanctified the family in power. It was politically necessary that the continued rule of the dynasty was owing to her grace.

However, the literature of the times suggests that the reason for royal goddess worship, besides the social need for inheritance and popular acceptance, was also more emotional and psychological.

On the one hand, a king had the consolation of his patron-devi's prodigious protective powers safeguarding him through

critical times, such as the loss of the throne, or on arduous journeys, a gift ancient Indic sacred and secular literature associated most particularly with a female potency. However, her protection was not permanent but remained entirely contingent on regular placation. If this pact was to be broken, legends warned she could cast one of her awful curses in displeasure, or let loose a horde of ghosts, and the consequences for king and kingdom could be dire indeed.

On the other hand, a king would also turn to a devi for a profoundly intimate and revelatory experience of the basis of his authority—celestial power. The most heightened embodiment of this power was thought to be his tutelary goddess, whom he called his Sakti ('capability/potency/power' in Sanskrit). Given her immanence in the world, a well-attested and widely held view, it was possible, suggested the literature, to grow close to Sakti, to be able to experience her without distance. This meant that a king could transform himself into a conduit channelling the energy of the deity.

This belief found expression in an impressive range of rituals whereby the Sakti's potency could be internalized by a ruler who was a committed practitioner of her creed. By performing these rituals, a king believed he was transformed into a mahā bala, a man of superhuman might, unvanquished in the onslaught of battle, or indeed under any duress. These interactional, sometimes ecstatic, substantiations of mystical power in the person of the king took place in special ceremonies propitiating the royal devi, taught in traditions refined in courts. Ritual strategies whereby power was invested in the king ranged from reciting secret mantras propitiating the deity, performing rites of self-identification whereby the body of the worshipper was transformed into the body of the goddess, to summoning the goddess and appeasing her with blood in return for great gifts. The ecstatic experience of a Sakti's power was often to be had by possession or through esoteric (Tantric) meditative-worship believed to grant mystical encounters with flying yoginis.

In narrative too this intimate relationship between goddess and king is revealed. Some myths show the goddess appearing to a great warrior and granting boons. Some show kings losing their sense of self and speaking in the voice of the goddess. Certain legends even suggested that a king could be inhabited by Sakti in dreams or trance.' Others cast the devi in forms palpable to men, a royal sword or amulet kept close to the monarch's body, a Kumā rī who counsels the king and plays dice with him.' Such was the passionate devotion aroused by the deity that a good king was even prepared to lacerate his body and offer his blood or decapitate his head to appease her, should she grow more demanding. These myths convey an important cultural belief about royal authority: in medieval India the relationship between sacred and mundane power—Devi and Rajā —was not abstract, but one of real, close and visceral engagement. It was even believed that both were mutually permeable, even different sides of one personality and occasionally fused identity.

Aims

This book tells the history of the relationship between sacred and mundane power between the 3rd and 12th centuries as it

unfolded in Indian courts. It is about the story of Durgā , the buffalo-demon-slaying deity dear to rulers, which illuminates an entire belief system concerning political power: warrior-centric goddess worship, henceforth called heroic Sā ktism.

Fundamentally, the slow development of this deity cannot be disentangled from the narrative of the state in pre-modern India. Heroic Sā ktism unfolded within a social landscape of conquest and competition, dependent on a monsoon economy in which harvests were unreliable and the appeasement of gods in control of environmental crises, foremost among whom was the goddess, was paramount. Its emergence is imbricated with the imperatives of state: military expansion, the rise of local lineages, the assertion of regional cultic identities, the authorization of territorial ownership and the development of the regular ritual life of kingdoms. All these political processes involved Durgā at their very core. She was the prime symbol that communities used to articulate the shifts they underwent during the fluctuations of expansion and consolidation.

Within the story of ancient Indian kingship, two critical transitions overlapped with the rise of heroic Sā ktism: the decline of the war-god Skanda as a military symbol and the concomitant rise of the early Indian kingdom. The first shift coincided with a transference of the rhetoric of kingship once strongly linked with the older war-god to the cultural narratives of the goddess. This process consolidated her political imagery and broadened its cultural resonance like no other. The second led to the association of indigenous deities in possession of territories with Durgā and thereby the unification of small states into a broader conception of civilization.

Both transitions are interconnected. Skanda was the symbol of empire in its heyday, which had lasted up to the time of the Kusā nas. But from Gupta times, the hegemony of empire was confronted by the need for a more expansive political canvas encompassing upcoming aboriginal states and their symbols of faith. From Samudragupta's time comes an official declaration of the inclusion of, among a series of rulers in the north, south, east and frontiers of India, the ā tavikarā jas, or 'forest kings', within the empire, the restitution of disempowered royal lines, and also assertions of the donative rights of local chieftains.¹ These declarations of local power-players tell us that the notion of empire was changing to mean something more expansive, accommodating the rights and authority of regional kingdoms. As Gupta empire declined and northern India became a crucible for rising polities forged by independent lineages, imperial symbolism began to transmute in a profoundly radical manner. Once the unchallenged metaphor for charismatic power, Skanda, a male war-god, became eclipsed by smaller goddesses with control over the ā tavika lands. They in turn were made into parts of a larger identity, Durgā , whose very nature was, like the transforming empire, patterned by difference and even contradiction. Durgā in one sense was the most potent image of the new sociocultural map at the dusk of ancient Indian empire, in which regional actors and polities were fashioning their identities in active conversation with a notion of wider civilization. Though she had come into being in the womb of the great empires run by the Kusā nas and the Guptas, she grew into a more expressive

symbol for the 'new world' and its spirit of entrepreneurship at their disintegration.

The Scholarly Tradition

The lengthened historical perspective in this book of the goddess's slow transformation and its position within the broader history of Indian state-formation are indebted to observations made in scholarship on India since the 19th century. Even in colonial India, the early traditions of the goddess in empowering heroic practice had endured and were visibly evident to observers. British ethnographic accounts of the warrior Rajputs had noted in descriptions of religion that 'the principal deity of the Rajputs is the goddess Devi or Durga in her more terrible form as the goddess of war. Their swords were sacred to her, and at the Dasahra festival they worshipped their swords and other weapons of war and their horses.' This role continued to excite scholars of religious traditions in South Asia for the next hundred years.² Their studies dealing with the life of small medieval kingdoms in Rajasthan, Nepal, Orissa, Bengal and Tamil Nadu had pointed out the charismatic goddess involved in all their processes, and that the ruler and the royal family shared a mysterious connection with this powerful if enigmatic deity shrouded behind private shrines and private practices. They had also pointed out that one of the key roles served by the goddess's public rituals within the regular functioning of kingship was to consolidate social structure. Among these studies, Burton Stein in an influential article had explained the importance of the south Indian Navarā tra, the principal ritual of the goddess, in consecrating the power of the Vijayanagara kings.

In the chapters are described the stages that tell the story of Durgā from the 3rd to the 12th centuries as she transformed from a wild, antinomian deity to a respectable, classical symbol of kingship. Within these stages, sectarian appropriations, by Vaisnavism, Saivism, Tantric Buddhism, Jainism and Brahmanism, unfold. These stages coincided with a particular historical setting: the transition from empire to autonomous kingdoms.

In Part I (Chapters 1 to 4) I discuss how an archetypical cult of the single Durga acquired prestige from obscure origins between the 3rd and 5th centuries, while empire under the Guptas was in its heyday. I locate myself first in the 3rd century to examine the roots of the single goddess Durgā in the black-hued, yellow-robed, peacock-feather crested Vaisnava goddess of Death, Time and Sleep, Nidra-Kalaratri, and examine her cult of averting dangers in that period. Next I assess how this early, marginal form was assimilated and transformed by Saivism from the 5th century onwards, in which Durgā eventually acquired co-identity with Parvati, Siva's consort. Her dark complexion is explained as Parvati's rejected black skin. In the third chapter, we find how Durgā began to replace Skanda as a symbol of imperialism as she began to represent local goddesses thought to control land, something Skanda could not. Saiva mythology employed narrative devices and concepts used to integrate Skanda into its fold to incorporate Durgā and to grant her a critical place within the Saiva pantheon. This period coincided with the end of the Gupta empire, during which other lineages asserted themselves on the political map. The goddess, now a cohesive deity,

began to appear as a political metaphor in their propaganda, replacing Skanda. The Calukya emperors, for example, begin to prioritize her over their other favoured lineage god, Skanda. To what extent can the link between the rise of the goddess cult and that of independent lineages be understood through patterns of commerce integral to the civilization process? In the fourth chapter I turn more specifically to the period between the 6th and 12th centuries, the period when heroic Sāktism attained maturity, to assess the forms of patronage established by these lineages to support the worship of the goddess.

In Part II (Chapter 5), I turn to how the cult transformed against the backdrop of these upcoming lineages, into a symbol of particularity by absorbing other similar deities important to specific lineages. This part encapsulates the 6th and 12th centuries, when the political map of India represented a heterogeneous order of entrepreneurial lineages. Here I untangle the distinctively coloured threads of smaller local figures enmeshed with Durgā in her symbolic form of this cohesive social backdrop. I present as case studies the stories of six locally popular goddesses who were synthesized with Durgā —Bhimā, Nana, Kantesvarī of the Caulukyās, Mānesvarī of the Mallas, Āsapurī of the Cahamānas and Dantesvarī of the Nagas and Kakatiyas of the Bastar Raj. These aid us in evaluating the intricacies of individual goddess-cults and their continuity through dynastic shifts up to the 12th century. I turn to further tales of clan-goddesses, in which heroic Saktism is seen as the theology sanctifying a king, assessing the tropes and motifs whereby this sanctification and its concomitant concepts of power are evoked. First, I locate a period and a locus when and where Brahmanical discourse, silent on local goddesses, began to contain such deities and the heterogeneous practices many represented, and assess accordingly the genealogical part of the Sahyādrikhanda, a Purāṇic work, as an example of this containment. Next, I study the legend of Kāmatesvarī, a story that was employed by the princely state of Cooch-Bihar in explaining the divine right of its rulers, assessing this in parallel with Rajput ideologies and narratives, where similar narrative structures and figurative devices centring on the goddess and the king are employed.

In the third and final part of the book (Chapters 6 and 7), I examine the beliefs and symbolic systems evoked by the cult to make itself meaningful to its adherents in the early medieval period, arguing that these beliefs created a myth of imperial kingship for independent rulers to cultivate. Fundamental in creating this myth was the performance of the Navarātra, the festival of the Nine Nights, which was intertwined with Durga's cult. I will deal with how the cult functioned in creating the spectacle of 'public religion' through a reconstruction of this ritual in which the goddess was worshipped by a ruler in the month of Asvina. A detailed exposition of the modus operandi of the Nine Nights shows us how the religion of the goddess was spectacularly brought to life in an event of grand theatre and solemnized before its participants, the king and the entire community. The development of the Nine Nights from a Varanāsī and Tamralipta on the eastern alluvial plains. At the same time, she was worshipped in the south in the Pallava

domains surrounding Kancī, and in Cālukya territories in the western part of the southern peninsula. By the 10th century there arose more cult centres in Rajasthan, Mahārāstra, Bengal and in the Himachal regions.

Similarly, the internal history of the ritual of the goddess, the Navarātra, parallels the move from empire to independent kingdoms. Beginning as a small ritual, it transplanted the more classical Vedic modes of 'making' kingship such as the aśvamedha and the rājasūya, as the religious expressions of the atavika world radically reshaped received wisdom about classicism. So it was that the cult of the goddess in the context of the 'new world' developed a double identity, in which the other face was an indigenous one. The tribal following of Sakti was a fact well known to Sanskrit writers till the 10th century, a period when literary authors still described in great detail the warrior-goddess's mlecca devotees. In this way, the goddess's cult represented nothing less than the civilizational transmutations of the classical period from the 3rd to the 12th century. At every stage it allowed the inclusion of the liminal into articulations concerning civilization, and through this a radical reforming of the old order.

Durga, the demon-slaying warrior goddess of Indian religion, is a bewilderingly composite deity, whose narratives and roles accumulated in layers over time. Numerous legends are extant about her origin which give very different accounts of her birth. The most authoritative among these legends, the Devimahātmya, presents three stories of how she was born: the first as an embodiment of the god Visnu's sleep; the second from a fusion of light that radiated from the foreheads of gods; the third through a reconstitution of the goddess Parvati's rejected black skin. We have also seen that her overall personality underwent some extreme transitions. From the 3rd to the 7th centuries, she was considered dark. From the 8th century she was thought to be white with the light of the gods. At the same time, from virgin she became a mother; from young, beautiful and bejewelled, she became emaciated, boneadorned and demon-like as the Saiva-Kāpālīka version of Kālarītri. At a social level, different personalities clustered around her from at least the 7th century, when records attest to her absorption of other local goddesses. In her worship, traditions usually taken to be mutually distinct—the Tantric, the tribal, the Purāṇic, the Saiva, the Vaisnava, the Jaina, the Buddhist, the local—all intersected.

The reason for these radical alterations and stark paradoxes was that she mirrored the socio-political. She was both shaped by and projected in herself the complexity of interactions in the ancient Indian landscape of cultural conflict and conversation. Her example invites us to question readily assumed schisms—particularly between what is 'Hindu' and 'non-Hindu'—in Indian historiography, since they all overlap in her. There is even the impression that these religious currents, beginning with the Vaisnava, only attempted to claim her as their own, but nevertheless in each of them she stands to some extent as an outsider.

History shows us that Durgā never had a fixed identity, apart from one: her ferocious, liminal aspect thought to control death and thereby war. As argued in this book, this core, thought to avert dangers, evoked in the name Durgā itself and accessed

through rituals, abides despite transformations. Her control over endangering circumstances, over chaos and the ability to manage chaos in the world, became the characteristic that was most cherished by warrior-culture that prioritized a readiness to face mortality. Essentially, in describing her control over chaos, culture was articulating Durgā 's power over civilizational crises. In her came alive a primeval idea of civilization, one that was ever aware of its own demise and of the impermanence of its glory. Such a civilization was profoundly in awe of chaos, the unknown and the elemental. It believed that expansion came not by continued mastery but by conciliation with the dangerous forces of the unknown.

The historical phases and their inner tensions that I have described in as much detail as possible reveal that Durgā 's representation of the civilizational process and the problem of chaos remained fundamental throughout her *longue durée*. In a wider sense the goddess was an intimate part of the making of early Indian civilization. Each of the three political orders within which the story, and stories, of Durgā unfolded signalled a different period in Indian culture. Whatever the principal ideographs about people, society and power latent in the air, they became imbued in the goddess. Under the Central Asian Kusānas, whose empire was symbiotic of Hellenistic and Iranian cultures, Durgā 's personality interwove elements from those traditions, and the extent to which she was indebted to percolations from far-away Bactria may be much greater than we now assume. Under the more parochial, Brahmanical Guptas, Durgā 's form articulated the Vaisnava 'classical'; under both empires her single identity as a Vaisnava goddess resonated with the centralized imperial structure. When the ātavika New World took over, and classicism began to be reformulated, the form of the goddess became heterogeneous, and harmonious with indigenous belief systems belonging to smaller kingdoms on the rise. Heroic Sāktism offered an idea of power that was in the world, not removed from it. It gave a sense of the divine that hovered close above the ocean of sarnāra (an image often evoked in Sanskrit poems to Durgā), ready to bridge the distance between heaven and earth in order to intervene when the duress of civilizational reformation grew debilitating for its agents.

The cultivated imperialism of small lineages participating in the process of entrepreneurial kingship propelled her cultic expansion. Many of the lineages that were worshippers of the goddess or sponsored her shrines had larger political ambitions of forming greater empires. Their worship of the victory-bestowing Durgā went hand in hand with their political aggrandizement. Through the patronage of those lineages, Durgā acquired greater prestige from her initial cult bases in Mathurā and in the Vindhya region by acquiring important temples. Among these, two mentioned in records were established in major seats of political and religious power in the Gangetic plains, Pātaliputra, the heart of the mighty old kingdom of Magadha, and fringe, Vaisnava ceremony in the month of Kṛṣṇa's birth under the Guptas, to a ritual supplanting the established autumnal Brahmanical ceremonies of kingship and finally into a crucial rite in Indian culture for consolidating royal power, formed a crucial motivation for the expansion of Durgā 's cult.

Among beliefs of heroic sākṭism, there was firstly the belief that a goddess had granted investiture to a king, secondly the belief that a king defeated in battle would regain power through a goddess, and thirdly the belief that a goddess was to be worshipped in times of war. These are expressed among various examples of literature from poetry to inscriptions, in versions of the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata that include scenes with Durgā aiding Rāma and the Pāṇḍava brothers, thereby showcasing her role in aiding the deserving hero.

I then turn to visual symbols whereby the mythic relationship between king and goddess was expressed in the medieval city, the swords, crests, amulets, and the array of abstract motifs whereby the goddess's presence and energy in the life of the king and his subjects was made manifest to citizens. If one were to inhabit a medieval Indian kingdom, it would be important to celebrate the investiture of political power. Links with the Sakti, in all her forms, would be demonstrated in ways palpable for its citizens. Rites giving shape and meaning to her connection with the king were seasonally repeated so as to ensure the continuance of this relationship with the divine. Various forms of the goddess, located at separate shrines, would be seen as interrelated parts or grades of an all-pervasive energetic force-field emanating from the palace (such as in the sacred geography of the Kathmandu valley). There were first symbols of punishment believed to atrophy rivals and grant victory in battle. From resplendent chariot-concours headed by the deity, the erection of victory-bestowing flags, to the ornate ceremonies of the royal sword charged by the being of the goddess—the repertoire of triumphal rituals was complex and their magical significance in overcoming enemies and threat was deeply embedded in the cultural life of a kingdom.

Next there were symbols of defence, whereby a kingdom girded itself from attack. In these too, the ability of goddesses to protect citizens was reflected, from villages to citadels, in shrines from which they guarded their domains. The fortress emerged in this period as the most important defensive structure. All medieval kingdoms were organized around strategically located forts, the reservoir of food and military supplies, as well as centres for forging alliances and conducting diplomatic exchange. It was seen as necessary to protect a medieval fortress with a goddess-shrine at a propitious location, whence her authority radiated through all inhabitants. In all these ways, through legend, sovereign lineages and symbolic objects, the investiture of the deity in the world of men was substantiated.

Reincarnation in America: An Esoteric History by Lee Irwin [Lexington Books, 9781498554077]

[Reincarnation in America: An Esoteric History](#) surveys the complex history of reincarnation theories across multiple fields of discourse in a pre-American context, ranging from early Greek traditions to Medieval Christian theories, Renaissance esotericism, and European Kabbalah, all of which had adherents that brought those theories to America. Rebirth theories are shown in all these groups to be highly complex and often disjunctive with mainstream religions even though

members of conventional religions frequently affirm the possibility of rebirth. As a history of an idea, reincarnation theory is a current, vital belief pattern that cuts across a wide spectrum of social, cultural, and scientific domains in a long, complex history not reducible to any specific religious or theoretical explanation. This book is cross-disciplinary and multicultural, linking religious studies perspectives with science based research; it draws upon many distinct disciplines and avoids reduction of reincarnation to any specific theory. The underlying thesis is to demonstrate the complexity of reincarnation theories; what is unique is the historical overview and the gradual shift away from religious theories of rebirth to new theories that are therapeutic and trans-traditional.

Excerpt: There is a long history of belief in reincarnation in America, reaching back to the cultures and peoples who inhabited this continent before the coming of the Europeans. As a primordial belief, preceding interaction with those dedicated to a forceful religious conversion of native peoples, reincarnation has roots in America that go deep into the cyclical nature of seasons and the regenerative power of nature. With the coming of the Europeans, monotheistic, linear attitudes toward the afterlife were aggressively propagated by Catholics and Protestant missionaries who dismissed and denied native beliefs in rebirth and return. This contestation over postmortem existence, as either unilinear or cyclical, reflects the tension between theories of afterlife based in very explicit monistic religious theologies, in contrast to other, often Asian, traditions that assert more developmental or multilinear theories. This tension, usually couched in explicit terms of condemnation and denial of the viability of developmental postmortem theories by adherents of monotheism, reflects a fundamental religious question: Are we limited to "one life, one death and one possible judgment" or are we part of a much larger process of self-development through multiple lives, deaths, and generational patterns of shared discovery? It seems clear that in the monotheistic view, communal relations are absolutely limited to a single life and knowledge can only be transmitted via cultural productions. In the pluralistic view of multiple lives, incarnational knowledge is something potentially transmitted with each new generation, communally developed, and embodied in enduring human relations.

Not all Europeans taught a doctrine of resurrection and judgment. Some were emissaries of the theory of multiple lives, or "revolutions of soul," that reflected esoteric traditions within European history that stretched back to Greco-Roman and even to fabled Egyptian origins. Masons and, even more so, Rosicrucians, as well as other esoteric groups, brought theories of reincarnation, transmigration, and metempsychosis to America, often veiled by the exclusive and initiatic nature of the transmitting organizations. Many of these groups and individual teachers were also fully committed, if minority, Christians. Thus, there is a stream of Christian esotericism that has long been a part of American postconquest history that supports reincarnation theory. Simultaneously, scientific materialists offer another dogmatic and unprovable perspective, the denial of any life after death, imagining death as a conclusive termination that clearly reflects a post-Christian view of unilinear thinking. The theory of "one life and

one death" is mirrored, perhaps ironically, in materialist (and atheistic) thought that would assert absolute closure to the life process with an aggressive finality similar to attitudes expressed by fundamental Christians. Such "absolutes" of rational denial as well as equally absolute theological assertions are deeply problematic because they depend entirely upon explicit worldviews that cannot be proven either true or false. Life after death is a contested area of human speculation, no position can be proven as unquestioningly correct—much is based in beliefs that best suit the worldview of the individual or community to which they belong.

However, in the American context there are a multitude of belief communities, be they religious, scientific, aesthetic, ethnic, academic, or literary, all of which provide multiple perspectives for nuanced reflections on the question of postmortem existence.

Infused into the American cultural landscape is an increasing multitude of religious traditions, many of Asian origins, which reflect a persistent and unflinching assertion of reincarnation as a viable theory. African traditions have a heritage in America of reincarnation beliefs brought by African indigenous peoples into the New World and sustained in a variety of African-American communities. These beliefs are tied to theories of ancestral return in the children of future generations, adding nuance and affirmation to the often world-denouncing theories of reincarnation in Asian traditions. In African-based beliefs, souls may divide into multiple bodies, each amplifying a characteristic of the parent soul, a belief carried over into several New Age religions in America. Afro-Cuban-Indian beliefs in afterlife also espouse reincarnational theories; Santeria teaches reincarnation, as does Umbanda and certain varieties of Vodoun, each with their own unique emphasis. Asian theories have pervaded the twentieth century in America beginning in nineteenth century with Theosophy and later propagated among a variety of American esoteric groups influenced by Asian ideas. The growth of Buddhism in America has paralleled the growth of belief in reincarnation as has the growth of Yoga traditions based in Hindu philosophies which teach the viability of reincarnation. Many American martial arts schools also teach reincarnation as part of the Asian inheritance within many Chinese and Japanese schools. In addition, Sufi traditions in America have adherents that profess belief in reincarnation as consistent with their spiritual tradition.

However, it would be misleading to assume that the primary sources of reincarnation theories are transmitted through exclusive religious or spiritual beliefs. Far more influential and much less connected with any specific religious tradition is a form of participatory knowledge or direct personal experience which, unlike strict faith traditions, provides a very strong basis for affirming reincarnation theories. There is a long and complex history of persons affirming belief in rebirth theory based in past-life memory, out-of-body experiences, dreams, and visionary encounters with both the living and the postmortem that act to confirm for these individuals the viability of reincarnation. Even more persuasively, research in parapsychology, psychic sciences, and the analysis of narratives from children who claim past-life memories have all provided increasing recognition of the role played by

participant knowledge in affirming reincarnational theory. While such research cannot prove in any absolute sense the viability of the theory, it nevertheless provides in many ways the most eloquent evidence for such belief based not in dogmatic religious claims but upon experience which is a common, evidential, and convincing basis for affirming the theory. Literally tens of thousands of documented accounts, some gathered under rigorous scientific conditions, have at this point created a body of literature that is utterly distinct from any religious belief system and based strictly on direct personal, participatory knowing.

Thus, there are three explicit sources for belief in reincarnation in the American context: ancient indigenous beliefs among pre-American traditional peoples; imported traditional (often esoteric) religious theories, transmitted into a wide variety of contexts; and direct participatory knowledge taken as evidential basis for such belief, often nonreligious in character. In a historical sense, these three areas represent an engaging cycle of overlapping influences in a dynamic context of ideological contestation. Indigenous cultures have fought to retain their beliefs in the face of denial and mockery, yet many native peoples are now members of major religious traditions that deny reincarnation. Various Asian and other cultural traditions have come to America but have themselves been changed by transmitting patterns of belief that once absorbed, transmuted into a wide variety of theories often only very loosely associated with those parent traditions. Personal experience and participatory knowledge have not simply resulted in a positive testimonial, but can be a source of conflict and struggle as individuals face an uncomfortable confrontation with more traditional beliefs among family and friends and find themselves marginalized when no longer conforming to more dogmatic expectations. Or even more poignantly, they undergo inner conflicts as experience and inherited beliefs clash. Further, the historical

context of change and development in American psychic life has resulted in whole new models of transpersonal theory, sometimes paired with speculations in physics, biology, evolution, or psychology, resulting in a variety of conceptualizations completely divorced from any religious context and yet acknowledging human potential for radical spiritual growth, change, discovery, and self-surpassing realizations. Brain science, neurotheology, research in altered states, studies in consciousness, and new cognitive and cosmological models have all added to the complexity of how we conceive of our real capacities and how those capacities may shape our postmortem future (and potentially influence our past).

The issue of belief is not simply reducible to an attitude toward the afterlife or to the fate of the individual at death. Under the complex circumstances of multiple collapsing worldviews whose rigidity cannot hold and the strange fruit of newfound visions, often poetic, symbolic, and highly imaginative, as in much speculative fiction on afterlife, belief often represents only a surface under which the roiling turbulences of radical cultural transformation strive for new synthesis and integration. The American context of belief is not one of quiet acceptance and uncontested affirmation; we live in a time of great change and

turbulence, where beliefs at the center often do not hold and old strategies of authority and consensualism no longer dominate the cultural environment. Nor are religious beliefs a matter of "personal choice"—one of the great fictions of American idealism—think rather, religious belief is a matter of family inheritance, and often, severe social expectation however diverse the cultural climate. Religion is mostly, from my perspective as a lifetime scholar of religion, a socially collective phenomenon much more than it is an individual matter of choice. The good news is that in the American climate one can change allegiance, adopt a new faith or belief, change subgroups, or explore alternative religious choices. But inevitably, such a change creates new communal alliances, new affiliations, new expectations, and new social partners in the quest for transformation and human development. The context for belief in reincarnation is a social choice as well as a metaphysical commitment, an alignment with like-minded others whose values support a theory whose ultimate reliability remains unproven.

Thus, this book project is an attempt to understand more fully the American context for reincarnation as a viable postmortem theory to many people; it is not an attempt to prove or argue for any absolute conviction but rather to explore the value that such a theory has for others in the American context. My primary interest is to discover and demonstrate how theories of reincarnation have influenced American intellectual, ethical, and spiritual life; I also hope to offer some insight into why this theory continues to gain adherents, not only in America but in Britain, Europe, and many other nations. Approximately 23 percent of those Americans polled in the last 20 years believe in reincarnation (as do 22 percent self-proclaimed Christians) as a viable postmortem theory; many are not a member of any religious organization, including about 11 percent of all atheists and agnostics interviewed and others who deny the existence of God, but not the possibility of reincarnation. The statistical mean for belief in reincarnation in Western Europe is about 22 percent, while in Eastern Europe the mean is 27 percent.¹ A recent statistical study on the correlation between paranormal and religious beliefs demonstrated that over 90 percent of the 1200 Americans interviewed believe in some form of human paranormal capacity, while 72 percent express belief in life after death and 24 percent confirm their belief in reincarnation. Significantly, there is an inverse relationship between those who hold strong religious beliefs in monotheism and doubt reincarnation and those who are not religious but hold a positive belief in paranormal phenomena, including reincarnation. Reincarnation is a current American belief pattern, strongly associated with paranormal and participatory knowing, not simply a "new" religious belief system. And this belief is ancient and widespread, not local, eccentric, or simply emergent. Reflectively, if the theory is viable, its recovery may be a matter of increasing sensitivity on the part of individuals whose experiential knowledge is ameliorating generational amnesia, a general forgetfulness recognized long ago by Plato.

As a point of contrast, I want to review briefly the dominant theories articulated by monotheistic, unilinear religious doctrines of life after death. Christianity has, without doubt,

been the greatest influence in the American context for a belief in "one life, one death, one judgment" theory, though there is strong disagreement among various Christian denominations on the exact nature of the after-death state. Not all Christians oppose the idea of reincarnation; beginning well over 100 years ago, more esoterically inclined Christians have embraced the idea. While it is not possible in a brief review to discuss the nuances and disagreements on Christian afterlife and eschatology, in a broad sense, a rough distinction can be made between normative Catholic and Protestant theories. The Catholic theory offers the following scenario on the after-death state, classically articulated by Augustine (d. 430 CE), dogmatized at the Council of Toledo (675 CE), and reinforced by Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274): resurrection is the key concept, and between death and resurrection, the immortal soul enters an intermediary state. This intermediary state, in the medieval period, was known as purgatory, a place where the soul is purged of sin while awaiting final divine judgment. The resurrection is a return to the actual, same physical body of the one life; following judgment, the newly resurrected individual is to either live eternally with God in heaven or sent to hell to suffer eternal physical punishments. For a very long period in Catholic history, purgatory became the predominant concern as resurrection receded increasingly into the distant and unknowable future (that is, the oft-predicted Last Days and End Times did not occur). This resulted in greater emphasis on the intermediary state and the cultivation of more practices, such as formal petitionary prayers, for those in that in-between state.

Aquinas formalized the idea of purgatory as an interim period, but also elevated the significance of the soul as "an intellectual substance which is not united to the body [and] is more perfect than a soul united to a body" while he also insisted on the physical resurrection of the body at final judgment. A question thus arises as to the nature of this "immortal body" subject to pleasure and pain: What kind of body is not able to age or decay? This unequal relationship between body and soul is a fundamental problem within Christianity. The body as the "lesser vehicle" has resulted in pervasive world-denying tendencies within Christianity, well-illustrated by monastic, ascetic attitudes toward the body that tend to reinforce a dualistic view of human existence, acknowledging the superiority of the spiritual as opposed to the inferior physical. Fear of hell played an increasingly active and dramatic role in this belief system, with great focus on the fate of the individual, resulting in the rise of petitionary prayer (known as indulgences) by priests on behalf of the dead. The classic imagery for the intermediary fate of the soul was later envisioned by the great Italian poet Dante (d. 1321), whose *La Divina Commedia* depicts real persons, poetically inscribed, in situations reflecting the soul's fate in the afterworld in accord with Catholic tradition. Martin Luther (d. 1546), reacting against the sale of indulgences by priests, rejected the notion of purgatory, and adopted a Jewish scriptural idea that, after death, the dead would sleep in an unconscious state, without memory, until awakened by the trumpet blast on the Last Days to face final judgment. The Protestant reformer, John Calvin (d. 1564), disagreed with Luther, stating that the soul is immediately transported to either hell or heaven at death,

prefiguring the final dispositions of souls in the Last Days. The resurrection, as a reuniting of soul with the body, results in an intensification of either rewards or punishments through amplified physical sensations.

Broadly speaking, Protestant traditions tend to place less emphasis on an intermediary period after death and more emphasis on an immediate awakening to judgment. The nature of the resurrection "body" (physical, immortal, spiritual) remains controversial and displays a wide range of interpretations. Significantly, for many Christians the issue of the afterlife is not resurrection, nor its exact nature, but rather judgment and the disposition of the soul, material or immaterial, to explicit and cruel eternal suffering in "fire and darkness" or heavenly rewards, often vague and mixed with metaphors of the heavenly city, streets of gold, apocalyptic imagery, and mystical joys. Rewards and punishments remain an individual condition, a direct consequence of actions and thoughts cultivated in the one life, though more liberal Protestant theologians have emphasized the transpersonal nature of life within the heavenly sphere, more as a condition of soul in contact with the infinite.¹ However, all those who deny the absolute authority of this afterlife tradition will be, according to many conservative Christians, condemned to hell for all eternity.

Judaism, older than Christianity and often reflecting beliefs common in the ancient Mediterranean world, has generally placed less emphasis on the afterlife than Christianity which sees the afterlife of reward or punishment as the true goal of worldly existence. In Jewish tradition, this world, this life (*chai*), is the primary focus of the Jewish articulation of religious tenets. However, early Hebrew scripture gives a poetic image of the fate of the soul at death: descent into Sheol, "a land of deep darkness" where "he flees like a shadow" (Job 10:21, 14: 2). There is no judgment, nor reward, just a faded image of the once-vibrant life now obscured by the gloom of the deep. Unlike the prophet Enoch, who was taken up to Paradise directly in physical form (Gen 5:25), the common fate was believed to be descent into Sheol. From this poetic, metaphorical position, two basic schools of thought developed on afterlife in prerabbinic times, each current in the life of Jesus. The upper-class Sadducees held that there was no afterlife, that life itself was the great reward. The more common view, held by the Pharisees, was that the soul lived after death (with some early belief in possible multiple lives of one soul) and was subject to judgment. Other variations on Jewish afterlife also existed, as among the Essenes and various Platonically influenced intellectuals like Philo, who sought to reconcile afterlife with possible reincarnation.

In the Talmudic period, the Rabbinic-Pharisee view became normative; the soul was regarded as immortal, the righteous and repentant would be gathered under the "shelter of God's wings," and the living and dead reunited at the resurrection. For traditional Judaism, resurrection means physical return of the body, thus no cremation of the body is permitted, whereas, for Reform Judaism, only the soul is resurrected. Normative Judaism rejects reincarnation, though traces of the belief can be found scattered in early sources and in Jewish Kabbalah, particularly the concept of *gilgul neshamot* ("cycling of souls"),

a concept which is more fully developed later in this this book. The focus of Jewish religious intent is on the current life, on performing good deeds (mitzvot), and on accepting God's justice which will determine the state of the soul after death (Dan 12:2). The resurrection is also a resurrection of the Jewish community in totality (classically expressed in Ezk 37), where the life of the individual is inseparable from the weaknesses, strengths, and rewards of the community. The resurrection will occur in the days of the Messiah when all the nations of the earth are at peace. Paradise (Pardes) is characterized as a place of learning, peace, and dedication to the study of sacred texts; hell, or Gehenna, is mysterious and described primarily as a dark and fearful place. Purgatory has Jewish roots as an intermediary place for the soul following death; according to Rabbi Akiba, souls dwell there no longer than 12 months, though such a belief has only minor testimony in normative Judaism. Thus, at death, the soul awaits resurrection (in physical or spiritual form), which will occur at the time of the return of the Messiah, and the Olam Ha-Ba (World to Come) will be a renewal of the present world, where righteous souls will be awakened, living in peace, while some souls may never be resurrected, and those who committed evil may be subject to punishment. As for the gentiles, or non-Jews, there is a debate over the exact fate of those who follow other religious traditions, with a consensus favoring divine recognition and reward for those who live just and exemplary lives.

While the influences of Islamic ideas of the afterlife have had far less impact in the psychic history of America, nevertheless it is a major world tradition that holds to a "one life, one death, one judgment" view. As interest in Muslim religion increases, in a world of conflict and misapprehension, both Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims have immigrated to America for well over a hundred years, and currently there are about 3.3 million Muslims in America, representing both Sunni and Shia traditions. The Qur'an, the primary scripture of Islam, gives substantive descriptions of the fate of the soul at death, and Islam, like Christianity, has tended to place heavy emphasis on the rewards and punishments of the soul after death. The teachings build on earlier Christian and Jewish ideas as recorded in the New Testament and the Tanakh (Jewish scriptures), both of which are considered sacred, revealed books of God by traditional Muslims. Paradise (Jannah) and Hell (Jahannam), according to the Qur'an, were created by God as places of reward and punishment; paradise as a garden is depicted as pleasurable, with food, drink, beautiful youths, virgin brides and male spouses (pure souls), joyful feasting, friendship, and lasting peace. Jahannam, from Hebrew Gehenna, is a dark, fiery place where souls of the unbelievers must wear garments of fire and where the misguided are punished by demonic Jinn, tortured as in Christianity, according to their sins and evil deeds; others may wander without relief, suffering terrible pain and deprivation. At death, the soul (nafs) enters an intermediary period (barzakh) between death and resurrection, and during this time the soul remains in the grave; some graves are experienced as very narrow and others very expansive, depending on a person's deeds, thoughts, and faithful adherence to the tenets of Islam. Thus, reward and punishment begins immediately upon death, constraint in a narrow grave whose "window" shows the punishment of those in

hell or a large and expansive grave, with a window showing the pleasures of paradise.

On Yawm ad-Din, the Day of Judgment, following two blasts of the angelic trumpet, all souls will be resurrected (al-qiy mah) from the grave, in physical form (ba'th) as in the one previous life. Then all will gather in accord with their sacred book (thus Jews, Christians, and Muslim form three distinct "people of the book," as linked communities within an Abrahamic tradition), and all individuals will be judged according to how well they followed the teaching of their sacred scripture and community. One by one, each soul is brought before the Throne of God with their two recording angels, on the left and right sides, who have recorded every thought, deed, and intention in a book carried by the individual. Judgment is then made on the individual's final disposition, to reward or punishment, for as long as God (Allah) wills. Then all are led in two groups to either paradise or hell. Martyrs who die in defense of their religion pass at death directly to paradise where they remain perpetually, as do some Muslim saints, a tradition also found in Catholicism. Judgment will occur "at the end of the world" following many apocalyptic events including the return of Jesus ('Isā) as a sign of the end times. The garden of paradise is said to have eight levels, each closer to God, while hell has seven, each further from God, darker, and more severe. Heavenly souls are taken to behold God directly on a weekly basis (called the Day of Visitation), and each person sees God based upon his or her disposition, thus experiences may differ as to what is seen of the divine nature. Those in the lower hell are utterly veiled from God, which only increases the magnitude of their suffering. Many Muslims concur that eventually divine mercy will end the torture of hell and comfort will be given, even to the worst of souls. Time, as in Christianity and Judaism, is a unilinear flow from a beginning creation to the end point of judgment and the disposition of souls. Just as individual life runs from birth to death, so all creation follows this same unilinear pattern, and encompasses all other traditions and all humanity into its singular, universal flow toward a final end (though there is some hint of a new creation in the Qur'an following the release of those in hell).

Perhaps one of the greatest presuppositions of Western monotheism is the conception of time as a unilinear flow with a marked beginning, middle, and end. However, quantum cosmology in the twentieth century has called this premise into question by relativizing time (different for different observers) and offering a variety of theories on space-time as multidimensional and enfolded into patterns of iterative becoming. Time in this contemporary model is not based in a lineal measure but the product of interactive relations and contains, in the present, all past and future possibilities. It is not unilinear, but diffuse and multidimensional; time is defined as an epistemological perception based on perspective and engagement, on agency over objectivity. Subsequently, a unilinear perspective on time is an imposition of older order, a hierarchical thinking, and, while operative psychologically as "historical consciousness," it may not be the most adequate description for an accurate ontology of the afterlife. Perhaps time in the postmortem condition is more an expression of agency, a flow that accords with a specific mentality or set of

beliefs or values and motivational attitudes (including belief in unilinearity) that are at base far more multidimensional and incorporative of past and future embodiment. Reincarnation as a general theory is far more cyclical, branching, reiterative of past occasions, and formative for probable future outcomes, with more diverse occasions for agency than a strict linear model can offer with its preset cause-and-effect structures.

Part of the task ahead is to not only discover the role of reincarnational theory as formative for certain attitudes and moral actions, but also to explore ways in which its explanatory power corresponds to contemporary, nonreligious, esoteric, or at least nonconventional ways of thinking about the afterlife. Does reincarnation theory provide a context for rethinking transphysical modes of being? Does it align with our understanding of emergent space-time cosmology or contribute new perspectives on that cosmology? In what ways does reincarnation support emergent models of human potential and transpersonal theories of primary human development and evolutionary change? Is reincarnation a model that reflects principles of nature, its cycles and rhythms, and does it support a meaningful perspective on a balanced spiritual ecology? Is it an individual, communal, collective, national, or global theory and what consequences come from applying it to a meaningful human life, in full committed to improving human existence and our communal well-being? And, finally, how does it reflect deep ontology, the real nature of human coexistence in a complex universe of others whose beliefs and actions are informed by very different values and spiritual concerns? While I cannot address most of these questions, it is my hope that the contents of this historical survey will contribute to a more complex and nuanced approach to reincarnation theory. While there is no final theory, there is a fruitful exploration that can, I hope, produce some insights and contribute overall to our deeper, shared understanding of human capacity and potential.

Finally, I want to give a very brief synopsis of my own views on human spiritual development as relevant for this work. I take the distinction between "religious" and "spiritual" to be meaningful and necessary. To these two nominal categories we can add a third, a "mediating scholarship" that seeks to understand these distinctions in a context of critical thinking and evaluation. My understanding is that "religion" tends to indicate institutional development that results in historical patterns of belief and practice held by membership in communities dedicated to the enactment of those beliefs and practices. By contrast, "spirituality" may be distinguished as less bound by institutional history and doctrine, thus often disidentified in the American context from "traditional religious institutions." As a consequence of social entanglement with like-minded others, spirituality reflects heterogeneous, syncretic views that emphasize personal development and an individualized blend of beliefs and practices. American spirituality tends to cut across traditions, uniting a variety of teaching, beliefs, and practices into contextual patterns that make sense to the individual. These patterns are also linked to communities, and not simply to individuals, who share similar beliefs or practices. Thus, a person may attend yoga classes, participate in a variety of spiritual groups, and on occasion

interact with those located within more normative religious traditions—all as part of a socialized "spiritual" worldview. Such a description resonates with the variegated, multifaceted, and interactive mosaic of contemporary social life, allowing for the gaps, inconsistencies, and, at times, contradictions that inform typical postmodern views of the world.

I understand "mediating scholarship" as the study of a wide range of "metaphysical" contents or thought worlds that references a variety of modes of knowing. Such knowing privileges mind (or perhaps consciousness) and includes intuition, extrasensory perceptions, altered states, and nonordinary experiences that reveal the correspondent links between material and spiritual worlds. In such a metaphysical context, "what is above is also below," and what is below, rises up to meet that which is above, forming an integral, at times magical, view of the universe as a living, interactive, exploratory reality grounded in codiscovery, inquiry, and creative thinking, and often based in embodied spiritual practices. Theoretical emphasis falls on creative agency and like-minded community, not on isolation from others but in harmony with others who also seek similar goals and realizations." In this process of discovery, the imagination is linked to psychic intuition and often emphasizes a developmental thrust directed toward the realization of latent human potential, capacities which reflect cosmological processes in a universe of multiple sentient others who may hold distinct and differentiated views on that process. Rather than emphasize reduplication and repeatability, there is a tendency in emergent metaphysical paradigm theory to honor uniqueness, special abilities, and artistic, fictive, symbolic, and surreal expressions that reflect the intangible mysteries of hidden human potential. Such views reflect a new maturity in "mediated scholarship" based in the study of direct participatory knowledge, esoteric claims, and generational synthesis that has a long explicit history in the American context.

My own perspective is aligned with other scholars of comparative religions who seek to understand the sacred human as indicating unrealized human capacities that lead to greater harmony and attunement with the underlying processes of nature, the larger cosmos, and other living beings that share our world. Thus, my approach to reincarnation is to review and articulate such beliefs as they contribute to the development and formation of distinctive "metaphysical" worldviews. Such worldviews are often rooted in a common, vernacular "folk belief" arising through experiences, dreams, and intuitions whose character is highly significant for those worldviews. The general belief is that if one is incapable of discernment, unable to directly perceive the vitality, presence, and vivid aliveness of the world and all its imaginative, spiritual manifestations, and if one is caught in abstraction, ideology, and strictly conceptual language, then there is little or no space left for metaphysics. The world as a mundane order of material structure is seen as a reductive theme that seeks to disempower the role of consciousness in the creative play of discovery, dreaming, and artistic exploration of what a more spiritual humanity might attain beyond the application of abstraction and rational materiality.

My view as a mediating scholar seeks to avoid entrapment in the closure of any traditional worldview that would reduce imagination and belief to a fixated scenario whose outcomes are predetermined by a limited reference to texts, institutions, or evidence whose authority is also a condition of predetermined beliefs and doctrines. I do not embrace any commitment to a particularist theory of reincarnation, as necessarily true or false, nor do I seek to disempower reincarnation theories through any artificial claims to objectivity. There is no provable objective stance that is not embedded in very specific attitudes toward the theory. Thus, this is not a book about religious systems of belief in the afterlife as much as an exploration of how such beliefs have contributed to spiritual development in the persons and communities that embrace various reincarnation theories.

I regard religious traditions as testimonies of human discovery, as moments and means of illumination and witnessing, as empowering resources and teachings for shared spiritual development, and as offering a concordance of human sacred teachings. But religion and traditions are only select facets of human experience that contribute to an understanding of our spiritual capacities; they are not the defining sources of our deep potential. I have no doubt that a follower of any religious tradition can find a pathway to greater awareness and fulfillment. I do not question the value of these teachings and practices as a valid resource for human transformation. However, as a mediating scholar, I do not limit my view to only a traditional understanding of the sacred human. Whatever our capacities, I believe they reflect the full spectrum of all fields of research and knowledge; every insight and expression, in art, science, literature, economics, history, international relations, and every other discipline can contribute to our view of the sacred human. My view of our human circumstance is that we are agents of change, developing beings, whose history and legacy will depend on the scope and maturity of our personal beliefs and commitments, in actual, real occasions of embodied living. Our ways of life and practices give visible testimony to the values we hold as most vital and important for the realization of our deep potential. In such a view, the capacities of the sacred human remain unplumbed and require a cross-disciplinary approach that engages traditional, transtraditional, and nontraditional theories of human becoming.

For me, reincarnation presents itself as a plausible theory for a process of creative discovery, for an encounter with historical persons and beliefs, that may change or alter self-perception. As a mediating scholar, what I offer here is an exploration, an inquiry into the possibilities of a theory whose embodiment resonates with my own mediated experience but which also represents a viable context for a vividly imagined human spirituality. My goal is to clearly describe the actual documentary history of such a belief, not to prove its viability, but to demonstrate how such a belief acts to support larger theories of human identity and metaphysical coherence in a meaningful world of shared experience. In the end, it is perhaps not a matter of belief as much as a matter of encounter and exploration of what is possible in a world of contestations about death and afterlife. I believe that what

matters is not the truth claims of any life-after-death theory but what emerges as meaningful directives for how to live in this world, now, how to form attitudes that will improve and enhance our human relations and provide guidelines for more mature human action. Reincarnation is a theory that can motivate a more ethical way of life, as suggested by various schools of thought, or a more flexible view of natural cycles of life and transformation. Perhaps our willingness to learn, to discover newness that can offer enhanced perspectives on the possible, on the gap between what we know and what we believe, can lead to a willingness to engage others with new respect and appreciation. Perhaps our degree of tolerance for differences and our generosity of spirit that accepts difference with respect can lead to a more mature world of human relationships. This book is simply a contribution to that process of discovery.

[A History of the World's Religions, 14th Edition by David S. Noss and Blake R. Grangaard {Routledge, 9781138211681}](#)

This workhorse of a one volume historical study of world religions appeared in its first edition of 1949 and has now outlived its original author in its last two editions. Grangaard has taken over with some necessary and judicious reworking of the sections to reflect a shifting focus of religious studies, but also sticking to primary textual sources and self-consensual sources. The volume works well in undergraduate survey courses and few texts have remained popular. Perhaps only Huston Smith's more conceptually oriented [The World's Religions](#) [HarperOne, 9780061660184], current now in its 30th Anniversary Edition could rival it. Though teacher's who have used both texts are adamant that Noss's text serves more diverse pedagogical approaches.

[A History of the World's Religions](#) bridges the interval between the founding of religions and their present state and gives students an accurate look at the religions of the world by including descriptive and interpretive details from original source materials. Refined by over forty years of dialogue and correspondence with religious experts and practitioners around the world, [A History of the World's Religions](#) is widely regarded as the hallmark of scholarship, fairness, and accuracy in its field. It is also the most thorough yet manageable history of world religion available in a single volume. [A History of the World's Religions](#) examines the following topics:

- Some Primal and Bygone Religions
- The Religions of South Asia
- The Religions of East Asia
- The Religions of the Middle East

This fourteenth edition is fully updated throughout with new images and inset text boxes to help guide students and instructors. Complete with figures, timelines and maps, this is an ideal resource for anyone wanting an accessible and comprehensive introduction to the world's religions.

"Over the last few decades, the professional study of religion has fetishized difference and denied sameness. It has also chosen to focus on the local and to ignore the global. As a field, we have allergically avoided the "big picture." But not

here. Noss and Grangaard have given us a marvelous text on precisely this big picture and this more generous view of human history." Jeffrey J. Kripal holds the J. Newton Rayzor Chair in Philosophy and Religious Thought at Rice University, USA, and is author of [Comparing Religions: Coming to Terms](#), with Ata Anzali, Andrea R. Jain, and Erin Prophet [Wiley-Blackwell, 9781405184588]

Having utilized many editions of [A History of World Religions](#) in undergraduate Religious Studies classes, I eagerly await each new edition. The updates, glossaries and encyclopedic information are invaluable. I won't assign any other textbook but this one! Amy Fisher, Interfaith Center, Suffolk University, USA.

[A History of the World's Religions](#) is particularly valuable in that it traces the historical evolution of the world's religions. It also answers three crucial existential questions: What do adherents of each religious tradition think? What do they feel? And how do they act? I have yet to find a better resource to introduce the major world religions. Dr. Mark Etling, School for Professional Studies, Saint Louis University, USA.

Now and then some wag might greet a new discovery with, "They're gonna have to rewrite the history books!" It isn't time to "rewrite" this book, but it is time to update it and to take note of some suggested changes to the story. In several places, the reader will find text boxes labelled "An Alternate View." Their purpose is to acknowledge that history is always being written and rewritten, learned and relearned, in light of new evidence and new interpretations of old evidence. These "Alternates" are not comprehensive presentations but rather teasers to point the interested students toward an area of their own possible investigation.

What's new to this edition

- updated statistics throughout are based on the Pew Research Center study, *The Changing Global Religious Landscape*, released in 2017
- maps have been updated to correct borders and population percentages
- text boxes introduce "An Alternate View" of a religion's origins
- material that interrupts the flow of the historical narrative now appears in shaded sidebars

What is not new to this edition is a change of focus. The book remains a one-volume history of religions, directed to teachers and students. Two special needs identified by John B. Noss in the first edition continue to guide this composition: to include "descriptive and interpretative details from the original source materials" and "to bridge the interval between the founding of religions and their present state."

Fairies, Demons, and Nature Spirits: 'Small Gods' at the Margins of Christendom by Michael Ostling [Palgrave Historical Studies in Witchcraft and Magic, Palgrave Macmillan, 9781137585196]

This book examines the fairies, demons, and nature spirits haunting the margins of Christendom from late-antique Egypt to early modern Scotland to contemporary Amazonia. Contributions from anthropologists, folklorists, historians and religionists explore Christian strategies of encompassment and marginalization, and the 'small gods' undisciplined tendency to evade such efforts at exorcism. Lurking in forest or fairy-mound, chuckling in dark corners of the home or of the demoniac's body, the small gods both define and disturb the borders of a religion that is endlessly syncretistic and in endless, active denial of its own syncretism. The book will be of interest to students of folklore, indigenous Christianity, the history of science, and comparative religion.

Excerpt: Where've All the Good People Gone?

A fairy tale haunts the foundation of my discipline, religious studies. In a central passage of the book which was to set the agenda for religious studies for the next half-century, Mircea Eliade recounts the story of a south Slavic villager who had slipped and fallen from a cliff on the eve of his wedding, dying from his injuries. A few decades sufficed to transform this "commonplace tragedy" into a ballad rich in mythic allusion: the young man had been loved by a vila, a mountain fairy, who pushed him from the cliff in a jealous rage. Everyone in the village except the wouldbe bride—including several eyewitnesses to the events in question—preferred the eternal, archetypal, mythic version embodied in the folk ballad to the prosaic incidents of actual history: "It was the myth that told the truth: the real story was already a falsification."

Eliade draws from this anecdote wide implications about the "resistance to history exhibited by traditional spirituality" and thus by homo religiosus more generally. His fairy story is intended to illustrate the ahistoricism of the mythic mode, which folds the ephemerality of contingent events into timeless structures of meaning. We need not follow Eliade's lead on this point. The present volume intends to inject fairies (and goblins, brownies, huacas, motobil, seti, huldufólk, tont, banakaka, etc.) firmly back into space and time and context—into history and culture. Whatever other ontological status they may or may not have, for the purposes of this book such creatures are created in discourse; through argument, ritual, gossip, and sermon; by scientific, theological, and magical contestations of their being. Discourses both religious and scholarly tend to expel them from this temporal world, but by focusing on these indubitably human discourses themselves we return the small gods to the ever-changing human world.

In examining "small gods," we explore an unfrequented scholarly backwater. Compared to the vast ocean of demonology, which Stuart Clark has demonstrated to have been an inexhaustible resource for thinking about history and politics and science and gender in early modern Europe, fairy lore resembles a nymph-haunted forest pool, reed bordered and shallow. Few of the rituals, texts or traditions examined in

the present volume put fairies and their ilk at center stage: instead one finds allusions, illustrative examples, metaphors, asides. Small gods are found in the margins. And yet these margins illuminate not only the folklore of fairies but also larger questions of continuity and change, tradition and modernity, indigenous religion and its redefinition, under Christianity, as paganism, diabolism, or old wives' tale.

Scholars from a number of disciplines have begun to ask interesting questions of the "small gods" in recent years. David Frankfurter's ground-breaking work on the ancient Mediterranean area has illuminated the importance of scribal practices (Babylonian, Judaic, and especially Christian) for the condensation of demonic taxonomy from the ephemeral mists of folk belief. The discipline of "monstrophy" has allowed Medieval Studies to cast fresh eyes on the social, racial, and religious geographies of Christianity in the age of the Grail romances (and the Crusades). Early modernists have found angels, demons, and ghosts especially helpful for understanding the European Christian colonial imagination and indigenous resistance to it; a similar dynamic of mission or reform characterizes Catholic and Protestant clerical encounter with vernacular culture in Europe itself ó Bringing things up to the twenty-first century, anthropologists of Christianity are following paths pioneered by Charles Stewart and Joel Robbins, finding in Christian reformulations of indigenous "small gods" a fertile ground for inquiry about the nature of Christianization across the globe. Scholars in these wide-ranging fields have not always talked to each other: one goal of this book is to initiate such a cross-disciplinary conversation. But first we must ask (and fail to answer) a basic question: What is a small god?

WHAT IS A "SMALL GOD"?

This book was inspired by a failed attempt at translation. While researching the representation of witches and witchcraft in early modern Poland, I happened across a peculiar line of verse from the picaresque drama *Ngdza z Biedq z Polski idq* (*Poverty and Dearth Depart from Poland*, ca. 1624). An old woman is chasing away the titular personifications of misfortune with a curse:

Be off with you to all the skrabtów, you infernal
smokestack
Where any old evil spirit can bite you in the ass.

The untranslated word above (its reconstructed, unattested nominative singular would be *skrabet or *skrzabet) seems to have been formed as a portmanteau of diabet (devil) and skrzatek (hobgoblin, house-elf, brownie). This untranslatable skrzabet came to embody an issue central to my work on Polish witchcraft: the complex and contradictory ways in which indigenous, local folklores articulate with cosmopolitan Christian demonology. The present project explores such hybrid articulations across a wider European and indeed global arena, and through two millennia of Christianization. Ever since the earliest Gospel repurposed Jesus's exorcism of a local ghoulish as a symbolic expulsion of the occupying Roman legions," the redefinition of indigenous spirits has been a fruitful method of Christian self-construction.

The skrzabel's conflation of goblins and devils also calls to mind a more famous failure of translation: Margaret Murray's derivation of devil not from its true root in the New Testament or Septuagint ("accuser, slanderer"), but from a diminution of the Latin root *div* (whence "divine" and "divinity"). The devil was thus, on Murray's interpretation, a "small god," affectionately so named by his devotees, the witches. Though her etymology was faulty and her conclusions untenable, Murray's assertion points toward a fruitful field of inquiry: the "ontological preservation" of local ghosts and goblins within the universalizing Christian framework. Although devil never really meant small god, Christian thinkers have characteristically re-labeled small gods as devils. This book attempts to transcend the usual modes of understanding such conflation of devils with local small gods: the theological mode of collapsing the distinction entirely into its infernal component, and the folkloric mode of disambiguation, recovering the indigenous fairy from underneath its devil mask. In preference to such attempts to capture the thing itself, we will want to analyze such strategies of categorization as moments in Christian and post-Christian self-definition. We will attempt to listen with equal care to those voices tending to venerate, negotiate with, or appease the small gods as to those which demonize them—confining them to hell, marginalizing them in the past or the countryside, or denying their real existence altogether.

Jeffrey Jerome Cohen declares that a related type of creature, the monster, is an object of "pure culture," that it "always signifies something other than itself." This goes too far: elves and their ilk are often metaphors, allegories, indices for credulity or exoticism or evil or the wild; but they are also, sometimes for some people, real beings with whom real people understand themselves to interact. From the subjectively real experience of sleep paralysis that may lie behind some accounts of incubus and nightmare attack, to the "tangible, embodied, felt experiences" by which contemporary Borneans sense the presence of local spirits, small gods are often less believed in than encountered as real. Nevertheless, Cohen is right to emphasize that monsters (and fairies, *skrzatowie* and vile) are more cultural than are many other culturally constructed objects of taxonomy. Unlike a river or a bird or even so culturally mediated an entity as a witch, small gods cannot, in general, be pointed to: whatever private self-revelation they might occasionally vouchsafe to this or that person, their interpersonal reality exists only insofar as they are culturally categorized and conversed about. As Roger Lohmann notes, "We cannot show our friends a spirit the way we can show them a rock." For Diane Purkiss, this inherent indeterminacy of the small gods is what makes them so useful for insider metacultural reflection and for scholarly analysis of that reflection: "The ontological dubiety of fairies is precisely what makes them natural and even inevitable symbols of other things that cannot be said, or cannot be acknowledged, or cannot be believed." As Olivia Harris argues in a related context, uncertainties and contestations (both *emic* and *etic*) on such points should be treated as an opportunity not an obstacle, as pointing toward something interesting about fairies as such and about Christianity itself as the site of their perennially repeated denial and revival.

The chapters below encounter fairy-like beings in a bewildering array of contexts: from fifth-century Egyptian exorcistic charms to twelfth-century German vernacular poetry, seventeenth-century Scottish natural history, nineteenth-century Estonian folkloristics, thence back again to exorcism, this time in twenty-first-century Zambia and the Amazon. The variety of beings considered and the diversity of sources used—philological and demonological, folkloric and ethnographic—threatens to mire the project in insurmountable methodological difficulties before it is fairly begun. The first and most pressing question raised is also the simplest: What counts as a "small god"? What commonality justifies treating, say, the mischievous Scottish brownies and Polish *skrzatki* alongside the Sicilian "ladies from outside," the French forest *follets*, or the noble courts of ties side in the fairy mounds of Ireland—to say nothing of the *motobil* and *bataliya* of Papua New Guinea, the *seti* of Sulawesi, the Andean *huacas*, the demon snakes of Zambia? It will be difficult to proceed, or indeed to begin, without some preliminary answer to this question.

We have here to do with what G. S. Kirk has mischievously described as the problem of the red-headed girls. Confronting questions about what stories should count as myths, scholars often propose Platonic Ideas of "true myth" that misleadingly, Kirk argues, allow them to:

go straight for the essence without first consciously considering and delimiting the instances. That is one sort of defining process, but not one to which we can resort in the case of myths. It might be possible so to approach, say, the character of red-headed girls, because at least there is no doubt (if we ignore the problem of marginal cases) about what red-headed girls are and which are the red-headed ones. In the case of myths we do not know that to begin with.

All the more so with goblins, fairies, and the many other beings that I have so far lumped together under the umbrella term "small god." Attempts to find the "essence" of such beings lead very quickly into trouble. Consider the example of a concrete (if fictional) red-headed girl: Pippi Longstocking. It would not be difficult to show that Pippi fits many standard definitional characteristics of the goblin: she appears and disappears suddenly, spends a great deal of time in a hollow tree, guards vast hordes of treasure with which she rewards those who show her proper respect; she abducts children, displays disproportionate strength, combines capricious destructive tendencies with an inclination to clean house, and so on. And yet one might doubt the value of a definition, or even a constellation of motifs, which places a character such as Pippi into the "small god" category when no one has traditionally so treated her.

It won't do to confine ourselves to "supernatural spirits," a recondite Christian theological category foreign to many vernacular Christians. As Lorraine V. Aragon has argued, the beings with whom the Indonesian *Tobaku* people interact are locally conceived of as having thoroughly "natural" powers: a *seta*'s animal metamorphosis, for example, is no more (or less)

extraordinary than a caterpillar's transformation into a butterfly. Turning from supernature to "nature spirits" seems more promising: the *motobil* and *isan-ese* and *aiyalma* of New Guinea, the Russian *leshii*, the French *follets*, the ancient satyrs and fauns and *silvani*, the Biblical *sé irī m*, the selkies and finnfolk of Scotland, the Cornish *pixie*—all inhabit forests or deserts or swamps, wild mountains or turbulent seas; all represent the dangers but also the bounty of undomesticated wilderness. However, the beings studied here are as often domestic as wild, more comfortable behind the stove or in the attic or a roadside shrine than in the desert or forest or ocean. For if fairies and their ilk are marginal or exotic in some senses, in others they stubbornly remain within domestic space (conceptual and otherwise): they are "distant strangers in the very vicinity of home, living across the field from the farmhouse and yet in another world."

One is tempted to make their indefinability definitional of the small gods. As David Frankfurter has cogently argued, "in the local landscapes where people really tangle with demons [...], there is actually little or no organization or system to these beliefs" until they are systematized under the influence of scribal elites. Mark Harris makes a similar argument concerning the *encantados* of riverine Brazil: they do not form a "stable cosmological order. Instead there are a range of entities around which meanings gather." The same is true elsewhere. Despite the cataloguing tendencies of missionaries, exorcists, demonologists, anthropologists, folklorists, and historians, folk demons "flow into one another"; their characteristic "motifs wander quite freely" between various named beings, to such a degree that "very often taxonomic categories misrepresented the beliefs of a given area."

Even within relatively circumscribed literary traditions and despite scribal efforts at consolidation and organization, "small gods" tend to remain ambivalent and ambiguous. As Noel Williams argues through a painstaking study of the word "fairy" and its cognates in medieval English texts, the term "exists as a fuzzy point on not one but several intersecting continua"; so much so that analysis of that fuzzy point "serves only to disguise the continua and distort the object of study." Jacqueline Simpson, reviewing a much narrower set of sources than here assayed, reminds us that the "range and contradictoriness" of fairy beliefs is a partial artifact of too wide a comparative framework: "no single community held all of them at once." But she also notes that the "contradictoriness" of the fairies across many cultures and centuries forms, as it were, one of their most stable attributes: they consistently escape the procrustean categories into which demonologists, poets and folklorists attempt to place them. Simpson emphasizes the theodicean utility of these evasive beings. And yet if "the ambiguity of elves had its uses," these extend well beyond theodicy. Indeed, as I will endeavor to demonstrate, the question "What is a small god?" cannot be answered even tentatively without engaging far larger questions such as "What is Christianity?"

Keeping such problems in mind, a few parameters might nevertheless be offered. Katharine Briggs provides a concise definition of fairies that fits many other "small gods" as well: they are "a race of creatures, either superhuman or slightly

sub-human, who are neither gods nor, strictly speaking, ghosts and who have much in common with humanity, but who differ from men in their powers, properties and attributes." Catherine C. Tucker's characterization of the *angeles de tierra* is even more concise and useful: they are "generous but easily annoyed spirits" with whom human beings interact with trepidation and care.

Such interaction is integral to the mode of religiosity still unfortunately labeled "animism"; wherein "natural beings possess their own spiritual principles and [humans] establish with these entities personal relations of a certain kind—relations of protection, seduction, hostility, alliance, or exchange of services." If this book is not to range endlessly through vast catalogs of "animistic" beings, we must limit our scope. We will do so, perhaps counter-intuitively, by treating demonization and contestation as necessary (but not sufficient) conditions of the definition of "small gods": they are found within the encompassing, totalizing framework of a world religion that tends to find problematic the relationships characteristic of animism, and therefore seeks to condemn, contest, or marginalize continued belief in "small gods" among some adherents of the world religion in question.

Our focus on Christian contestations removes from notice the minor *devas* and *peey* of Hinduism and popular Buddhism, the *kami* of Shinto, or the *jinn* of Islam—not to mention the innumerable "other-than-human persons" of shamanistic, animistic and totemistic cosmologies of indigenous traditions worldwide. Such beings draw our attention only insofar as they enter into (or trouble the margins of) Christian or post-Christian cosmologies. This is not to say that a non-Christian *peey* or a pre-Christian *motobil* or *satyr* lack fairy-like qualities (most would fit both Briggs's and Tucker's definitions quoted above), but rather that they become what we here call small gods only when their relationship to the hegemonic religion becomes problematic. Like the allergic itch by which a body becomes aware of insignificant trace elements in its environment, "small gods" become objects of critical reflection only as symptoms, as animistic "survivals" problematically present within a Christianity that attempts to exclude them. Small gods are (imperfectly) definable as objects of an endless effort at exorcism by which some Christians seek to expunge them beyond the margins and to locate them firmly in hell, in the pagan past, or in the foolish minds of babbling "old wives." A "pagan" or folkloric itch; they get noticed in the act of theological scratching.

Narrations and classifications of the small gods are here treated, therefore, primarily as occasions for metacultural reflection—for insider comparative thinking about "the way things are now" in relation to "the way things were then" and thence "the way things should be." The marginalization of the small gods is re-enacted continually as a Christian mode of imagining Christianity: the border they mediate is the border between Christendom and its imagined pre-Christian past.

VANISHING

This introduction surveys typical strategies of such Christian self-reflection by focusing on a peculiar paradox of "small gods" within Christian (and post-Christian) cosmologies: their

extraordinary longevity and their chronic imminent demise. As Katharine Briggs noted long ago, the fairies are "always vanishing and always popping back up again." An examination of this tendency within Christian thought and practice will provide occasion to consider the origins of the "small gods"—not indeed their original origins in the misty prehistory of human consciousness, a topic about which we must admit total ignorance, but their origins in Christian strategies of dealing with local spirits during Christianity's two-thousand-year history of mission and conversion. Indeed, the vanishing and survival of the fairies is of a piece with the vanishing and survival of "paganism" as such. Within Christianity, Joao Pina-Cabral has suggested, paganism undergoes a "perpetually impending demise": it has been anachronistic, old fashioned, and on its way out the door for the past two thousand years.

To examine this effort of expurgation and its after-effects, let us turn to a more or less recent, more or less secular poetic image: T. S. Eliot's *Prufrock* strolling melancholy on the beach, trousers rolled:

I have seen the mermaids singing, each to each.
I do not think that they will sing to me.

Eliot's mermaids are present but inaccessible, audible but beyond the reach of communication. They are on the point of vanishing; they indicate a path it is already too late to take. They are also, of course, metaphors: neither really mermaids nor objects of Christian concern—one is not intended to suppose that either *Prufrock* or Eliot himself believes in their physical reality. They represent an impossible nostalgia. If we go back another hundred years or so, we find a similar nostalgia, now tinged, if not with belief, than at least with the belief that belief was once possible, and perhaps desirable—I have in mind such poets as Keats, who worries that "cold philosophy" will "Empty the haunted air, and gnomed mine," or Wordsworth, who in a passage on which Eliot seems to be commenting, declares:

Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

It is tempting to disregard such poems as embodiments of Romantic longing for a sublime and terrific paganism of their own imagining, but then one finds similar sentiments in surprising places, such as Milton's impeccably pious *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*:

From haunted spring and dale
Edg'd with poplar pal
The parting Genius is with sighing sent.
With flower-inwov'n tresses torn
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets
mourn.

Here we clearly see the small gods: minor "pagan" spirits caught within a Christian matrix and thence expelled, albeit not without a trace of regret. But of course Milton's eviction of the nymph from her thicket is not entirely successful: across reformed Europe, fairy ladies continued to comb their hair and entice unwary menfolk into the water well into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—as they still do in Christian West Africa.

One might attribute the fading of the fairies to a process of Weberian disenchantment: the double process by which peasant ghosts and nature spirits were first demonized, then ridiculed and denied existence altogether. Several chapters below examine such processes of disenchantment in detail. But such processes are extremely long term, not necessarily associated with enlightenment or modernization, and often ambivalent. As Jane Schneider has argued, Western social scientists and historians (and I might add, western poets), themselves the inheritors of Reformation and Enlightenment, are left with two contrasting accounts of the enchanted world left behind: a romantic model celebrating "the permeation of everyday life by the sacred," and an enlightenment model decrying "superstition and idolatry—the 'idiocy' of rural life." In Milton we see both models inextricably mixed: something is lost when the oracles go dumb, but for Milton, at least, far more is gained—a purer and a better faith. And yet this purer faith needs to measure itself against something, needs to prove itself against some negative standard. Here the small gods come into play as the sort of thing rejected but nevertheless ever-present among the under-reformed—old wives, peasants, Catholics, crypto-pagans. The vanishing of the fairies, like other sorts of vanishing, instantiates "the movement of something passing away, gone but not quite, suspended between presence and absence, located at a point that both is and is not here in the repetitive process of absenting." This repetitive process characterizes not only recursive self-construction but other sorts of metacultural reflection as well. Milton's verses hint that the use of small gods to reflect on modern absences ought perhaps be recast as a particular instance of a wider pattern: vanishing fairies as opportunities for the thinking of Christian conversion—what it gives up, what it gains, its inevitable incompleteness.

Valdimar Hafstein notes the similarity of a 13th-century story about the huldufólk departing Iceland at the coming of Christianity (the story is set in the tenth century), and a nearly identical story from the same island in the 1960s: the fairies are always leaving but always still around. Barbara Rieti calls this phenomenon the "perpetual recession of the fairies," and argues that it functions as a motif through which to reflect on "how times have changed." But times have been changing forever, and so does fairy recession. As Lizanne Henderson argues, "The notion that the fairies were slightly out of reach, slipping beyond human ken as they vanished into the mists of time, is exceedingly tenacious and of long duration. Almost every generation has apparently been convinced that the fairy belief was stronger among its predecessors."

We find the conviction well before Milton: Chaucer reminisces in the *Canterbury Tales* that the elf-queen used to dance in England, but thanks to "the grete charitee and prayeres" of

monks and friars, "This maketh that the ben no fayeryes." A century and a half later, Reginald Scot reminds his reader of the various "urchens, elves, hags, fairies, satyrs, pans, fauns, sylens" other creatures that terrified bygone generations—his implication is that nobody fears them anymore, and in like manner one should not believe in witchcraft. Two centuries after Chaucer and half a century after Scot, William Cleland explicitly connects Christian reform with the fading of the fairies:

About mill-dams, and green brae faces,
Both Elrich elfs and brownies stayed,
And green-gown'd fairies daunc'd and played:
When old John Knox, and other some, Began to plott
the Hags of Rome;
Then suddenly took to their heels,
And did no more frequent thes fields.

Driven out by Chaucer's monks, Scot's mockery, and Cleland's reformers, the fairies hung about the British Isles, as Henderson notes, to be exorcised anew by Methodist preaching in the nineteenth century, or to be revived as symbols of a re-enchanted world in the 20th and 21st. As W. B. Yeats put the issue in his usual portentous manner, "the faery and ghost kingdom is more stubborn than men dream of. It will perhaps be always going and never gone." And yet even if Elfland is a place where nothing, nothing ever happens, the sort of nothing not happening changes over time: nostalgia has a history. What is noteworthy about the fairies is less their ever-deferred vanishing than the shifting modes in which that vanishing is recurrently re-imagined.

It is always an honor and a privilege, as well as a pleasure, to be asked to contribute some reflections on a collection of essays as important as this, which is virtually certain to move its subject forward into a new place. Like the most ambitious of its kind, it has a global reach and spans the two Christian millennia; indeed, it not only comes right up to the present in some contributions, but in that by Sabina Magliocco, nudges forward perceptibly into the future as well. Such a vast catchment area for material normally causes a loss of focus in a collection, which the editor can only remedy—if at all—by dividing the book into different facets. In this case, however, all the contributions really do reflect the same phenomenon: the manner in which Christian societies cope with a continued belief in lesser spirits that have no obvious place in orthodox Christian cosmology other than by being shoehorned into the polarized categories of the angelic and the demonic.

One obvious conclusion to be drawn from the result is that, across the world and across time, such an accommodation has taken different forms, matching the extremely varied function, reputation and importance of the spirits concerned; but Michael Ostling is able to make other and better suggestions from the data he has edited. His collection does indeed put its host of fairy-like beings back into history and culture; explore the way in which indigenous local folklores articulate with cosmopolitan Christian demonology; engage with discursive practices of reporting, labeling and contestation; demonstrate that the

marginalization of "small gods" is enacted as a mode of imagining Christianity; recognize the paradoxical status of such entities, in that they are at once very long lived, and usually recorded as being on the edge of extinction at any one time; and show that their survival usually takes the form of an ambivalent demonization that uneasily recognizes that they pose no threat to the centrally valued tenets of the new religion. He also proposes an entirely convincing fivefold model of modes of survival of belief in such beings, on a spectrum from outright demonization to re-enchantment. All this I regard as sound, valuable and important. So what else might an interloper such as myself conclude from this collection?

One simple answer is the realization that, worldwide, small gods tend to be for small people, and small things. They are overwhelmingly part of the belief systems of the poorer, or at least more ordinary, members of society, and tend not to feature in those of the rich and powerful, or even, to a great extent, the urbanized, except as objects of study in the culture of other people. They also tend to have little or no relevance to the mainstream concerns of religion: with the fate of the soul, the place of humanity in the cosmos, or issues of obedience to divine law or the keeping of the general balance of nature. They are mixed up instead with the accidents and joys of daily life, which can be momentous enough for individuals—if, for example, a goblin blights your household, a puck leads you into a hole in which you break your leg, or a fairy purloins your baby—but not for society as a whole. Even more than saints, they are often accessible, and humble, enough to make productive relationships with them practicable for ordinary folk, or at least to make the aversion of hostile relationships relatively easy. All this provides another major reason for their near ubiquity and stubborn tendency to persist. They are local, accessible and relatively tractable, as far as generally disempowered humans are concerned.

The whole point about a collection as good as this one, however, is that it should enable a commentator to see a bit further into the subject, because it now supplies a place of vantage from which the terrain can be surveyed better than before; and that I shall now attempt. A starting point is provided by the dictum, prominent in Michael Ostling's introduction, that on the Christianization of a society "small gods" survive while major deities disappear. This is apparently true across most of the globe, and in the extensive Baltic and Slavonic regions of Europe, and at the level of ordinary people in the remaining portions of that continent: in other words, in precisely those areas of concern with which this book is preoccupied, which entirely justifies Michael's use of it. It is also, however, spectacularly wrong with respect to elite culture across most of Europe, and this is the result of a historical accident: that in the period before Christianization, a knowledge of the art and literature of pagan Greece and Rome had become one of the main qualifications for acceptance into the elite of the Roman Empire. As a result, when Christianity arrived, respect for classical pagan culture was too deeply embedded to be discarded and remained a feature of European civilization in all ages until the present. The major Graeco-Roman deities may have been neutered by being deprived of their cults and temples and turned into

allegorical, literary and artistic figures, but they remained major players in the European cultural imagination. Moreover, this process had a knockon effect in parts of northern Europe such as Ireland and Iceland, where the classical example caused leading native pagan deities to be preserved as prominent figures in medieval literature. At the elite level, therefore, the opposite effect to that studied in this book occurred: the "small gods" (such as Lares and Penates) disappeared, while the larger, thanks to their impressive literary and artistic footprint, endured.

It is worth pausing for a moment to consider what this meant in terms of Christianization. Two notable artists at either end of the early modern period of European history, Sandro Botticelli and Diego Velazquez, are both famed for painting pictures of the pagan Roman goddess Venus. So, are these works, to use the ringing phrase with which Michael ends his introduction, "Christian creations with which to think the limits of Christianity"? In one sense the reply must be a clear affirmative, for both artists were devout and orthodox Christians, of the Roman Catholic denomination, and operated within a society (and served clients) that shared that faith. On the other hand, they were emphatically not drawing on Christian tradition to create their pictures, but on both a set of associations linked to a pagan goddess and a pagan iconography that had been developed to portray her. Moreover, they were doing this in order to achieve a particular effect—to make a lifelike image of a gorgeous naked woman, and induce feelings not only of admiration but also potentially of desire and erotic arousal—for which Christian tradition not only provided no historic resources but also which it had often striven directly to discourage. To describe these works as "pagan survivals" certainly seems inappropriate, confusing and obscuring too much of what is going on in them; but to put them indiscriminately and without any sense of difficulty into the general carton of Christian culture is to miss much of the point of them as well.

My issue here is that I sense that much of the same effect may attach to "small gods" as well, though it is harder to identify and document because we know less about how they were regarded in pagan times to compare with their status in the Christian period. It does seem, reading through the case studies in this collection, as well as taking into account the broader literature on fairy-like beings, that those beings survived in Christian culture because they usefully plugged gaps in Christianity, and did so the better in that they were ultimately products of an older and pre-Christian world. This is, of course, why—as Sabina Magliocco illustrates—modern Pagans often find them amenable figures with which to think—because they seem to represent, and to a great extent probably do represent, aspects of the ancient world that Christianity never quite managed either to obliterate or to digest. In many respects, modern Paganism consists of a checklist of such phenomena: ideas and images taken over by Christian societies from paganism but not entirely assimilated by the new faith, and so the more easily filtered out of it and recombined to develop a modern Pagan identity.

As Sabina has also pointed out, however, the fairies of modern Pagans are not those of the ancient world but very much those

that feature in modern literary works. Here Michael's punchline that small gods are Christian creations has a particular force, because this collection opens a door to enable scholars to think harder about the way in which Christian societies have not merely preserved concepts of essentially non-Christian beings but actually developed them. I would draw attention to what I believe to be three examples of this effect, drawn from my own archipelago of the British Isles. The first concerns the medieval British fairies. The Anglo-Saxons clearly believed in beings they called elves, and credited them with the ability to blight humans with ill health and fortune, but to whom they perhaps also attributed physical beauty and a willingness to aid favored humans. During the high Middle Ages this tradition was preserved, and around it a looser sense of similar beings of different kinds, similar to humans but not human and inhabiting the terrestrial world or a parallel one. The distinctive development of the later medieval period was that the English, Welsh and Lowland Scots (though not the Gaelic peoples) came to believe in an organized kingdom of such beings, with a king and queen, the latter often being more prominent. This new concept was linked to a change of terminology, by which the beings concerned became generally known as "fairies." The term was borrowed from high medieval romantic literature, along with the idea of the fairy kingdom, and seems to have permeated from elite culture through the whole of society by the fifteenth century. It remained a part of general culture throughout most of Britain through the early modern period. The early modern fairy tradition was therefore at once directly rooted in ancient Pagan beliefs and a late medieval creation.

Something similar, though at an earlier period, seems to have happened with another famous medieval tradition to which reference is made in the present book: that of humans, mainly women, who claimed to ride or fly at night in a retinue of usually female spirits, often led by a superhuman female with a name like Diana, Herodias, Holda or Percht. At first sight this looks like a classic Pagan survival, but closer inspection reveals problems with such an easy (and hitherto generally drawn) conclusion. For one thing there is no known ancient Pagan deity who was associated with night journeys joined by living humans; not Hecate, or Diana, or Epona or the Matres or Matronae, all of whom have been suggested as superficially attractive candidates for the origin point of the medieval leader of the night journeys. For another, these night travels do not feature in any of the earlier medieval clerical denunciations of popular beliefs and customs, but appear in the ninth-century Rhineland, at least three centuries after the conversion of that region to Christianity. Moreover, it then had a distinctively medieval trajectory of wax and wane, being apparently confined to the Rhineland until the twelfth century, from which it spread to cover most of Western Europe during the high Middle Ages. After that it contracted, and split into three distinctive regional traditions that endured until modern times: a German one in which the night rides have a leader and humans do not join them; an Alpine one in which the rides have no leader and humans join them; and an Italian one in which they have a leader and humans join them.

Whatever its source, therefore, this was a flourishing and widespread medieval popular belief system, which engulfed a

large area of Europe without any discernible elite input at all or any contact with orthodox Christian thought.

My last example is peculiar to the Gaelic areas of the British Isles, Ireland, Man, the Hebrides and parts of the Scottish Highlands, and focuses on the figure of the Cailleach. She is a major character across this cultural region, as a mighty and venerable superhuman female closely associated with striking features of the land: in this respect, apparently a classic Earth goddess. She features as such, however, only in its modern folklore.³ There is a female character in a medieval text who occupies the same physical location as one of the later stories of the Cailleach, Bui of Beare, but she has otherwise nothing in common with her and there is no other reason to associate the two of them. This matters because Ireland has one of the richest vernacular medieval literatures in the world, which makes copious mention of superhuman beings, some of whom are clearly former Pagan deities. Indeed, it has a whole subdivision, the metrical and prose *Dindshenchas*, which are texts devoted to explaining placenames, especially those attached to prominent natural features of the sort subsequently associated with the Cailleach; but she is not there. Irish medieval stories abound with powerful and aggressive superhuman females whom one would suppose even less palatable to orthodox medieval Christian taste than the Cailleach, such as the Morrigan, Babh and Nemain, so her absence cannot plausibly be accounted for in terms of repugnance on the part of the authors. The economical explanation for the anomaly is that she evolved as a major folkloric figure subsequent to the medieval period, among commoners and by word of mouth.

Michael Ostling's tag of "Christian creations" may therefore be seen to have even greater force in these cases, which the quality of this collection enables us now to see with greater clarity than before. They seem to indicate that Christian Europeans were not merely capable of retaining and developing belief in non-human beings rooted in a pre-Christian past and with no obvious relevance to a Christian cosmos, but of imagining—or discovering—new kinds of being of a similar sort. It may be questioned, indeed, whether the leader of the nocturnal bands, the Cailleach and even the fairy queen could really be described as "small gods": they seem rather large. It may be of significance in addition that all three seem to relate to an attraction to the divine, or semi-divine, feminine. I do, however, have a persisting unease about the religious labeling that can be attached to them.

Over a quarter of a century ago, I adopted the expression "Pagan survivals" to describe elements of ancient Pagan culture that had persisted in later Christian societies. In doing so, I was drawing a distinction between such survivals, of which there seemed to be many, and "surviving Paganism"; that is the continued self-conscious practice of the older religions, of which there seemed to be none. This point was worth making because even in the 1980s, there was a persisting belief, based on outdated academic texts, that Paganism had survived as a living force among the common people in much of medieval Europe: it was widespread in other scholarly disciplines than history, let alone among the general public. My formula and approach was adopted by other authors in the 1990s. During

that decade, however, a reaction set in against it among historians who preferred to stress the comprehensive Christianization of medieval European societies and to relegate elements that had hitherto been identified as of pagan origin to categories of religiously neutral folklore or of lay Christianity. Some emphasized that the undoubted tendency of some Christians at the time to condemn such beliefs and practices as pagan was a hallmark of a highly atypical, reforming, intolerant and evangelical strain of churchman.

Michael's system of classification, in this volume, may be said to take its place in this, apparently now dominant, set of scholarly attitudes. Revisiting the issue myself, I am inclined to meet it halfway. I am starting to agree that to speak of aspects of medieval culture as "Pagan" might indeed be misleading and inadequate. Moreover, it would be especially inappropriate to characterize figures such as the lady of the night rides, the fairy queen or the Cailleach as "Pagan survivals" when they seem like medieval or post-medieval creations. However, I have equal difficulty in describing them simply and straightforwardly as "Christian" because of their total lack of reference to any aspect of Christianity, including theology, cosmology, scripture and liturgy; all of them would indeed fit far more comfortably into a Pagan world-picture. This problem links up with that outlined earlier, in treating the Venuses of Botticelli and Velazquez as "Christian creations." It may be that the old polarized labels are becoming inadequate to describe a medieval and early modern religious and quasi-religious world that is coming to seem even more complex, exciting and interesting than it had seemed to be before. That such a perception is possible, however, is due in part to the gifts of this splendid collection, upon which Michael and his contributors are warmly to be congratulated.

Evil, Spirits, and Possession, An Emergentist Theology of the Demonic by David Bradnick, [Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, Brill, 9789004338494]

In *Evil, Spirits, and Possession: An Emergentist Theology of the Demonic*, David Bradnick suggests that the demonic arises from evolutionary processes and manifests as non-personal emergent forces that influence humans to initiate and execute nefarious activities.

Excerpt:

Discerning the Spirits

Belief in demons or the demonic has endured throughout the two-thousand year history of Christianity. Church Fathers, including Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Augustine — to name only a few — advocated that demons are real and relentlessly active within the world. Convictions about the demonic, however, are not simply antiquated mythologies of the past. These beliefs continue to persist today, especially among conservative Christians and those living in the Global South, but late modern presuppositions grounded in science and philosophy challenge the existence of demons. For many late moderns, the demonic is, at most, a representation of human evils. So how should we evaluate these beliefs? Does the demonic refer to an existing reality, or is it simply metaphorical language meant to express

the negative side of human existence? Are beliefs in demons valid in our contemporary setting, or are they vestigial remnants from the past that society needs to discard?

In this book I argue that the demonic is real, that it exerts influence within the world, and that beliefs concerning the demonic are plausible within a late modern context. More specifically, I propose that emergence theory provides a philosophically, and scientifically, informed framework for an ontology of the demonic that can account for its causative effects within the physical domain.

The four parts of this opening chapter introduce the challenges of constructing a contemporary theology of the demonic and unfold the book's development. First, this chapter considers how popular Western culture perceives beliefs in the demonic. Second, this chapter clarifies and examines the primary theological, phenomenological, and philosophical challenges facing the construction of a contemporary theology of the demonic in order to suggest why a viable option must be multidisciplinary. The third section sketches Amos Yong's emergentist approach to the demonic as pointing forward, beyond the impasse between supernaturalism and metaphysical naturalism. Finally, I outline the rest of this book, offering a summary of the subsequent chapters and the goals for each one. This will provide an overview of how my overarching argument unfolds.

The Demonic in Popular Culture

A 2013 YouGov poll conducted in the U.S. revealed that 57 percent of respondents affirm belief in the devil, and 51 percent believe that the devil, or some evil spirit, can possess a person. Additionally, when asked "How often do you think people are possessed by the devil?," only n percent responded that this event never occurs. For those who believe that possession happens either frequently or occasionally, there was only a 2 percent difference between respondents who claimed to be religious and those who denied any religious affiliation. From these statistics we can infer that views of possession have no direct correlation with religious beliefs. Further, in response to exorcism, 46 percent of those surveyed expressed a belief in its power.'

A 2013 Harris Poll found similar results with 58 percent of American adults believing in the devil. While these convictions have slightly decreased over the past eight years — down from 61 percent in 2005 — Gallup polls show an increase in such a belief from 55 percent in 1990 to 70 percent in 2007.³ It is evident that a majority of American adults affirm the existence of the devil and/or demons, and a significant number maintain a belief in possession and exorcism. So, despite the effects of modernization, convictions in the existence of diabolic beings, and in their ongoing activity throughout the world, continue to occupy a prominent place within the collective social psyche.

Interest in demons and demonic phenomena also permeates American pop culture. Hollywood continues to release movies regularly that feature demonically-related topics, including but not limited to *The Rite* (2011), *The Possession* (2012), and *The Devil Inside* (2012). Together, these three movies have grossed over \$303 million. In addition to these films, *Paranormal*

Activity attracted millions of people to the box office in 2007, leading to three sequels from 2010-2012, and generating two spin offs — *Paranormal Activity: The Marked Ones* (2014) and *Paranormal Activity: The Ghost Dimension* (2015). This franchise has generated over \$889 million, not including profits earned from foreign remakes and digital comics.⁵ These productions represent only a small sample of recent movies concerning the demonic, and this does not include low-budget and independent films, television shows, books, video games, and comics. Topics, such as demons, possession, and exorcism, have proven to be very lucrative for the silver screen. This glance at popular culture further substantiates that the minds of many Americans continue to entertain ideas about spiritual beings, especially diabolical ones.

Notwithstanding this fascination with the demonic, discussions of these topics within the public forum are predominantly taboo. In February 2012, for example, many ostracized U.S. Presidential candidate Rick Santorum for his comments about Satan in a speech made four years earlier. In this 2008 speech that was given at Ave Marie University, a Roman Catholic institution, Santorum remarked:

This is a spiritual war. And the Father of Lies has his sights on what you would think the Father of Lies, Satan, would have his sights on — a good, decent, powerful, influential country — the United States of America... Satan has done so by attacking the great institutions of America, using those great vices of pride, vanity, and sensuality as the root to attack all of the strong plants that has so deeply rooted in the American tradition.

These statements generated a flurry of media attention, and as a result, many grew skeptical of Santorum's viewpoints and his capacity to be President. Eventually, Santorum relinquished his bid for the White House and dropped out of the Republican race just two months later. A number of political commentators blamed his "propensity for verbal missteps," including his remarks about Satan. These events suggest that public conversations about the demonic are considered unseemly and have no place in American politics, especially among those bidding for the highest office in the land.

Given this stark contrast between American pop culture and American politics, we can make several observations regarding the public perception of the demonic. First, the manner and timing in which people address diabolic spiritual beings can generate a vast array of reactions. There is a fascination with the demonic, as evidenced by the regularity of such themes within media entertainment, but society may lambast public officials, such as Santorum, for suggesting that Satan literally exists and is active within the world. Hollywood ostensibly creates a safe place to explore the demonic — perhaps because it allows individuals to imagine and consider a world with other possibilities. In these environments, one is not constrained by social conventions whereas other situations are not so free and forgiving. To be sure, some still use religious language to demonize political and ideological opponents. In these instances, however, individuals use demonic language rhetorically and presumably resist ontological references.

Indeed, identifying one's opponent as the embodiment of evil is a powerful political tool.

Progress in modern science has also challenged popular beliefs in supernatural beings, including demons. Science has created naturalistic explanations for many phenomena that people formerly attributed to spiritual forces. Ancients blamed natural events, such as droughts, upon the nefarious work of gods and/or lesser spirits. But science has replaced these supernatural accounts with naturalistic descriptions that have arisen, at least in part, from reductive physicalism (or metaphysical naturalism) — the belief that reality is solely composed of and influenced by physical particulars. This view tends to dominate the way that many people understand causation; hence, according to science, spiritual explanations are no longer necessary in the contemporary world.

Philosophical views of causation also tend to exclude from consideration the efficacy of spiritual agents, including the demonic. After all, even if they do exist, how can beings composed of spiritual substances interact with a world constituted by physical substances? Presumably, these substances are disparate and incompatible. According to many philosophers, spiritual substances, if they exist at all, cannot initiate the movement of objects in the physical domain. Therefore, if spiritual entities are real, their relevance is negligible. Spiritual agents, such as angels and demons, would be unable to exert causative effects of any subsequence to us.

In many ways contemporary Western sensibilities straddle two distinct means of thinking. One rejects beliefs in supernatural entities in favor of metaphysical naturalism. The alternative accepts the reality of spiritual beings, despite naturalistic explanations. Often those who choose the latter position do not reject science altogether. In fact, most of them use modern technologies on a daily basis, and scientific advancements make these technologies possible. The latter group, however, tends to accept both views by compartmentalizing the various areas of their lives. This type of reaction appears to have functional purposes, as evidenced by the polls cited above. It seems that many people believe in the existence of diabolical beings, but a number of them are hesitant to proclaim these beliefs publicly or within certain spheres of public life. After all, pollsters conducted these surveys anonymously and offered participants safe places to express these beliefs without subjecting themselves to ridicule.

Not only does American culture take an ambiguous and capricious stand on matters pertaining to the demonic, but in many ways, this also reflects the temperament of contemporary religious thought in the West. In some theological circles, discussions concerning the demonic are entirely normal and even expected, yet other circles consider the notion of diabolical beings preposterous. Many conservative Pentecostal churches, for example, engage in spiritual warfare against demons on a regular basis, and they believe that discounting the existence of evil spirits allows the enemy to gain a strategic foothold. Indifference; according to these Pentecostals, can have detrimental consequences in both the spiritual and physical realms.

Numerous liberal and mainline churches, on the other hand, rarely use language that references demons, and more often than not, Christians of these persuasions shun or discount this topic as merely ancient mythologies. When they discuss the demonic, it primarily functions metaphorically to express human evils. Some liberals warn that preoccupation with diabolic spiritual beings can be detrimental to one's mental and social wellbeing. Religion scholar Harvey Cox, for instance, makes this claim in relation to the Pentecostal movement. He asserts, "Still, this 'excessive and unhealthy interest' in demonology can not [sic] be dismissed as a harmless fascination. It has become a dangerous obsession, especially when it is combined with the newly awakened commitment of American pentecostals' participation in politics." Taking these positions into account, we can assert that the theological landscape concerning beliefs in demons is very diverse, and in some instances it is even contentious.

It should be clear that many Christians straddle these two ways of thinking. Large numbers of Church-goers believe in the existence of the demonic, but simultaneously, their late modern context generally questions such considerations. In the YouGov poll referenced above, 70 percent of Protestants and 66 percent of Roman Catholics believe in the existence of the Devil. Meanwhile, though, modernity has attempted to "exorcize" the world of these beliefs. Preaching, denominational teachings, and Church creeds often instruct Church members that they are supposed to believe in the reality of evil, but modern presuppositions undermine these ideas, even as contemporary science and philosophy overwhelmingly ignores them — if not explicitly denying such realities.

Herein lie the problems that this book attempts to address. Given challenges from modern science and philosophy, what does Christian theology have to say about the demonic in the present Western context? Asked differently, are beliefs in the demonic justifiable or should we abandon them? Is there a way to construct contemporary demonology in dialogue with philosophy and the sciences? If we ascribe to the reality of the demonic, though, how does it exercise causative influences? And, if the demonic does exercise causative influence, then to what extent?

An Emergentist Theology of the Demonic: Thesis and Overview

My thesis is that an emergentist ontology offers a cogent philosophical and scientific framework for a viable contemporary theology of the demonic. Such an emergentist approach presents resources for considering demonic causality beyond reductionist anthropological models or traditional supernaturalistic options. An interdisciplinary framework that accounts for historical perspectives, engages with contemporary social scientific research, and takes seriously the biblical witness will also inform my thesis. The argument will unfold along three movements: a historical assessment, a multidisciplinary analysis — which includes psychological, anthropological, and philosophical considerations — and a theological construction.

First, the Christian tradition will ground my approach. Therefore, the next three chapters of this book are devoted to

exploring notions of the demonic throughout the history of Christianity. Chapter 2 explores patristic and medieval views of the demonic. This chapter looks at demonology according to the early Apologists, the early ascetics, Augustine, and classic medieval views. Chapter 3 examines understandings of the demonic throughout the modern era. This examination will include sections that cover demonology in the early, classical, and late modern periods. Chapter 4 analyzes late modern theologies of the demonic, focusing attention upon the theology of the early Pentecostals, Rudolf Bultmann, Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, Walter Wink, and Gregory A. Boyd.

The historical overview presented in these chapters functions in several ways. First, it grounds this work within the Christian tradition by showing how the Church has historically understood the demonic. Second, it underscores the variety of methods that others have taken to theologize about the demonic. Third, it highlights demonological views throughout history that establish the systemic and material character of the demonic. These points will supply the groundwork for my thesis that the demonic is constituted by and emerges out of physical and social domains.

The second movement of this book draws on research from a number of disciplines, including the social sciences and philosophy. Implications from these fields of study make significant contributions towards expounding a more robust demonology — one in which scriptural and theological insights are complemented by other academic and scientific perspectives. Chapter 5 examines the social sciences, focusing upon psychology (including the contribution of Sigmund Freud, Carl G. Jung, and dissociation theories) and anthropology (specifically, spirit-possession through the lens of cultural anthropology). Here we will look for contributions that these fields can make to a theology of the demonic while also looking for areas where such a theology can complement the social sciences. Chapter 6 examines causation in modern philosophy. A historical and critical engagement with philosophical and scientific positions, particularly substance dualism and reductive physicalism, will clarify the hurdles that one must overcome when thinking about "spiritual" realities in the present time. Additionally, an analysis of divine causation set forth by participants in the Divine Action Project will suggest how emergence theory is helpful for formulating a theology of the demonic in the contemporary context.

The third and final movement of this book, which is constructive in nature, proposes an emergentist theology of the demonic. In Chapter 7, I unfold the philosophical theory of emergence and explore its plausibility for our purposes along the following three lines: (1) the demonic as emerging from the evolutionary process, (2) a demonology that avoids the pitfalls of substance dualism and reductive physicalism, and (3) the demonic as a higher-level ontological reality that is irreducible to anthropological phenomena and is capable of exerting causal effects upon lower-level physical, biological, and social realities.

In Chapter 8, I examine the explanatory power of an emergentist theology of the demonic in relation to the biblical traditions. I consider ways that this approach can more fully illuminate scripture in ways that previous demonologies have

been less successful at doing. Along the way, I will explore how an emergence demonology responds to traditional notions such as a pre-adamic angelic fall. The second part of this chapter will examine scripture passages that reference the activity of demons to demonstrate how an emergentist approach can expand upon interpretations grounded in previous demonologies.

Finally, Chapter 9 considers implications of this proposal and trajectories for further investigation. An emergentist theology of the demonic entails that we reexamine aspects of practical theology, Church history, systematic theology, biblical interpretation, and anthropology.

Conclusion: Binding the Spirits

I began this book by asking: Are beliefs in demons valid in our contemporary setting or are they vestigial remnants from the past that we need to discard? In the introductory chapter, I outlined four challenges to constructing a contemporary theology of the demonic. These challenges are as follows: (1) Theological concerns over the polarization of views across the liberal-to-conservative spectrum; (2) Phenomenological issues, given the beliefs and experiences of people groups in the Global South, especially in relation to spiritual phenomena such as spirit-possession; (3) Philosophical apprehensions based on the sustainability of metaphysical frameworks, particularly interventionist supernaturalism; (4) Philosophical and scientific questions over the feasibility of the demonic to exercise causation in the physical domain.

By building upon Yong's emergentist proposal, I have argued that such an approach offers the most plausible contemporary framework for understanding the demonic. First, an emergentist theology of the demonic resolves many theological concerns that polarize views across the liberal-to-conservative spectrum. It takes significant strides in bridging this theological impasse to assert the reality of the demonic without subscribing to a "spooky" spiritism that is not in touch with contemporary concerns. Second, given the beliefs and experiences of people groups in the Global South — especially in relation to spiritual phenomena, such as spirit-possession — an emergentist approach resolves numerous phenomenological issues that have hindered development of a contemporary theology of the demonic. We can validate certain experiences as legitimate cases of possession, while also recognizing the legitimacy of the social sciences. Third, an emergentist theology of the demonic resolves philosophical apprehensions that, historically, intellectuals have directed toward the sustainability of metaphysical frameworks, namely substance dualism and reductive naturalism. Emergentist metaphysics allows for the reality of the demonic without asserting that the demonic is a disparate substance, yet it resists reductive physicalism. Finally, an emergentist theology of the demonic addresses philosophical and scientific questions over whether the demonic can exercise causation in people, including the social domains. An emergentist approach reasonably asserts that demonic is both real and active in the world.

I have not merely developed a possible theology, but arguably, I have expounded a theology of the demonic that addresses each of these concerns with greater success than any

theological approach proposed heretofore. Thus it would be advantageous for theologians to take serious consideration of the proposal set forth herein. The implications that have resulted from this thesis, however, generate areas that require further exploration. This final chapter introduces these areas.

Implications and Future Trajectories

Although the arguments presented in this book present a foundation for maintaining an emergentist theology of the demonic, several implications deserve additional consideration. Specifically, an emergentist theology of the demonic bids us to reexamine aspects of Church history, systematic theology, biblical interpretation, anthropology, and practical theology. I examine each of these areas below.

First, an emergentist theology of the demonic requires a re-evaluation of Church history. Before careful deliberation, we should not reject narratives that purport experiences and interactions with the demonic since they may reflect genuine events and encounters with the demonic. Given the thesis of this book, it is reasonable to assert that humans throughout recorded history have encountered the demonic, and an emergentist reading of these texts could shed new light upon their interpretation. Moreover, it may further illuminate an emergentist theology of the demonic since historical accounts may provide novel insights that are applicable to our contemporary context. I am not suggesting, though, that we naively accept every narrative. Perhaps we should not assert, as Jerome testified, that demons offer a distinct smell. So here is an area where discernment may apply. Nevertheless, we may glean new understandings as an emergentist approach to history can bring to life Church traditions that the early and classical modern worldviews largely discounted.

Second, an emergentist theology of the demonic presents several implications for systematic theology. Specifically, an emergentist proposal suggests that, in addition to demons, angels may also be emergent realities. Yong originally put forth this thesis, and while I focused upon expanding his view of the demonic, theologians need to engage in more research and thought in the area of the angelic. We need to consider the implications that an emergentist approach produces for perceiving angels in such a framework. This raises questions, like: In what way do angels engage in the world? Can angels exert downward causation? And in what way? Do angelic realities engage the demonic in spiritual warfare?

Furthermore, the preceding chapters raise questions about how an emergentist approach to the demonic affects theological understandings of other Christian doctrines, such as the Fall, redemption, theodicy, and eschatology. How might my proposal fit within the wider framework of Christian theology?

Also, how might an emergentist approach supplement and/or challenge contemporary theological thought in these areas?

The thesis of this book also reveals the need for comparative theology to consider theologies of the demonic across a broad spectrum of religious beliefs. A significant amount of interreligious dialogue has centered on questions about the nature of transcendent powers (e.g., god/gods) and religious ends, such as salvation, but few of these conversations have explored the demonic. This lacuna begs questions concerning

what an emergentist theology of the demonic may contribute to interreligious dialogue and what insights that other religions may contribute to my proposal. Exploration of the demonic across religious boundaries is poignant when we consider that spirit-possession and trance manifest in a majority of cultures.

Third, we need a reassessment of a broader range of scriptural texts. An emergentist theology offers an alternative lens through which to understand scripture, so we must parse out all of the consequent implications. In Chapter 8 we examined Ephesians 6 and Mark 5 to explore how an emergentist approach can procure a fuller understanding of these texts. But we should not stop here. There are many more texts concerning the demonic that we could have examined, such as Genesis 1-2, and an emergentist framework has the potential to deepen our understanding of these scriptures.

Fourth, I maintain that an emergentist theology of the demonic can supplement the social sciences. I do not intend that an emergentist explanation should nullify contemporary theories in psychology and anthropology; they can co-exist. It is my hope, though, that through an emergentist framework, psychoanalysts would consider the demonic as a viable explanation and diagnosis. By recognizing a variety of diagnoses, we may assist more people in securing fullness of life. Well-being obtained through a variety of methods — including psychoanalysis, psychiatry, and exorcisms — are equally valid in the proper context. All of these methods are means through which Christ and the Spirit work.

Finally, provided that the demonic emerges within individuals and systems, Practical theology requires reexamination, especially how an emergentist theology of the demonic may enhance the manner in which we understand discernment, possession, and exorcism. Discernment is important because God calls the Church to confront evil wherever it may reside. For those coming from traditional theological backgrounds, it means discerning the activity of the demonic beyond merely manifestations within individual persons. Conversely, individuals who more closely identify with mainline theology may need to accept the feasibility that individuals are sometimes possessed. They may have to resist the tendency to dismiss these cases categorically as instances of neurosis. Thus, we need to be aware of and detect demonic realities that are operative within individuals as well as social structures, including political, economic, and religious systems. No matter where the demonic emerges, the Spirit of God calls the Church to recognize and oppose it. An emergentist perspective contributes to the discernment process because it unveils the presence of the demonic in places that may have gone unrecognized heretofore. With a broader understanding of the demonic, we can wage new spiritual initiatives to discern and overcome its parasitic hold.

An emergentist framework also requires us to reflect upon the nature and the cause of demonic possession. As I suggested in Chapters 5 and 7, the demonic may not exclusively possess and act from "within" individuals, as regularly assumed by traditional demonologies. Rather emergent diabolic forces from the "outside," meaning systems that have become demonic, may be the impetus for ecstatic demonic manifestations in individuals. We should comprehend spatial

references to the demonic metaphorically, since they do not necessarily convey anything in relation to the ontological status of the demonic. On some occasions, the demonic may manifest through its victims in a particular time and space, but the demonic is not limited to a specific locale, as traditionalist views assert (e.g., within the body of its victim). The power of the demonic, as an emergent reality, extends beyond spatial categories. Those who are not in the immediate "presence" of the demonic may still experience and display signs resulting from the diabolical grip of the demonic.

Given this expanded understanding of possession, phenomena that we have typically labeled as demonic possession, at times, may be more appropriately a pointer towards that which is truly demonic — emergent forces that possess social systems and subjugate the vulnerable. As in the possession cases analyzed by Ong (Ch. 5), spirit-possession did not point to diabolic forces within the Malay women factory workers; these women were not guilty of any wrongdoings, although such accusations are commonly made by some Christians. Rather their possession indicts the factory supervisors and their neglect, as evidenced by the poor conditions given to the workers. In this case, the system gave rise to the demonic, and from that system the demonic needed to be bound and exorcised.

Demonic forces centralized in social systems often precipitate possession phenomena. In these cases, the presence of the demonic should be "located" in the act of the oppressor, not the oppressed. Those labeled as possessed are victims, more often than not, and the Church should treat them appropriately. Too frequently those possessed are blamed for some type of depraved behavior, and such hasty conclusions are misguided, as mentioned above with the Malay factor workers. If we limit ourselves to traditional views of demonology, we may miss the impetus behind many possession occurrences. Traditional views tend to identify demonic realities within the person acting out, but an emergentist framework accepts the authenticity of demonic manifestations in both individuals and systems.

Third, an emergentist theology of the demonic demands a reconsideration of exorcism practices. Our shifting views of discernment and possession require a multidisciplinary approach to exorcisms. The Church should move to incorporate the assistance of experts and authorities who are proficient in the areas of psychology, anthropology, and psychiatry. This will help us to discern when traditional approaches to exorcism may be appropriate and when alternative means may be necessary. As I noted in Chapter 5, we should accept that there are legitimate cases of neurosis, but also many who display symptoms of possession exhibit a high level of mental stability. Mental health professionals can provide proper assessments to determine the stability of certain individuals, who church officials suspect of being possessed. Certainly, the Holy Spirit must be involved in the discernment process, but this does not preclude that the Spirit can operate through the assistance of the social sciences.

Multidisciplinary approaches to exorcisms may prevent tragedies, such as the infamous failed exorcism of Annalise Michel. In this case the presiding priests failed to recognize that Michel was suffering from epilepsy and mental illness. They

misdiagnosed her as being demon-possessed and abandoned the Roman Ritual. By engaging in questionable practices, they disregarded Michel's physical needs, and she eventually died from malnutrition and dehydration.¹ It would be wise to constitute teams of competent individuals from a variety of disciplines to assist in discerning and exorcizing the demonic.

Furthermore, an emergentist framework emphasizes that exorcisms must extend beyond traditional rituals. Given the systemic nature of the demonic, entire systems must be exorcized, so alternative methods need to be explored and enacted. Because social, political, and economic systems are vulnerable, the Church should view deeds of social justice as exorcismic activities. Certainly, countless Christians are already involved in humanitarian efforts, but an emergentist lens may emphasize the need for expediency, thus reinvigorating its participants. An emergentist perspective may also call to action certain Christians who tend to neglect these areas. Many Christians already engage in spiritual warfare prayer, but some are inclined to shirk political, economic, and social initiatives. An emergentist understanding of exorcism supplements this method by encouraging involvement in social justice efforts on local, national, and global levels.

The systemic nature of the demonic also means that successful exorcisms, ideally, need to involve more than one person or a small group of people. All Christians, not solely priests, are morally obligated to exorcise the demonic. Exorcisms will need to include entire communities. Overcoming demonic strongholds in the world will require communities of action to expose the vast extent of the demonic and to exorcise it. Considering the relative regularity of possession in the Global South, Western Christians may need to examine their relationship to and participation in political and economic systems that may serve as catalysts for the demonic to manifest. This implication does not imply that traditional exorcisms are invalid or unnecessary. Depending upon the circumstances, they may be appropriate. I am also not advocating that untrained individuals engage in exorcising individuals. We should leave traditional exorcisms to skilled professionals. Rather, I am asserting that multiple forms of exorcism are necessary — both traditional and corporate forms — and they need to be explored within an emergentist framework.

Finally, mobilizing the Church to engage in overcoming the demonic necessitates the use of exorcismic liturgy. Historically, Christians have employed exorcism as an essential part of their liturgy. As early as the second century, the Church connected exorcism to baptism, and by the third century, Christian baptismal liturgies were used to exorcize demons from catechumens in the days leading up to their initiation. Martin Luther included exorcism as a part of his catechism, and modern Roman Catholics continue to issue prayers of exorcism as a part of the baptismal rite for catechumens. The contemporary Church may benefit from reestablishing a more prominent place for exorcismic liturgy. This shift should extend beyond initiation rites to incorporate exorcismic practices more regularly within worship, including corporate prayers and responsive readings. By doing so, the Church will be reminded of its mission to resist evil in all of its forms, and the Church will be encouraged to align itself with those who suffer from and

are oppressed by the Powers of this world — including political and economic Powers that jeopardize the ecological well-being of God's creation. Through exorcismic liturgy the Spirit initiates an active partnership with us to dispel these Powers and to reveal It is my hope that the thesis of this book is not merely an academic exercise conducted from an ivory tower but a theological work that inspires ministry to the oppressed throughout the world. Horrific acts of evil pervade God's creation, and I have argued that we should not reduce these acts to human freedom gone awry. Instead, demonic forces are at work within the cosmos, and humanity immeasurably suffers from the oppressive nature of these forces. Yet we should not sit idly without responding. This investigation into the demonic does not absolve us from a responsibility to act. Neither does it strip us of all optimism concerning human existence. Conversely, this study reminds us of our duty to dispel evil. It offers hope that we can confront and defeat the powers of darkness. However, we must acknowledge that the demonic cannot be overcome through human deeds alone. God's redemptive power is necessary to overcome evil in all of its forms. So humans have a responsibility to partner with the Spirit of God to redeem her creation, and with a greater understanding concerning the nature of the demonic we are able to more effectively ally with God. Given the current state of affairs in our world, we need to consider the implications produced by a theology of the demonic, perhaps now more than ever. We cannot fully counter the demonic alongside God, unless we recognize both its existence and how it operates. An emergentist theology of the demonic brings us to a more robust apprehension of the demonic and places us into a better position to participate in God's redemptive work.

Sociology of Exorcism in Late Modernity by Giuseppe Giordan and Adam Possamai [Palgrave Macmillan, 9783319717722]

This book provides a sociological understanding of the phenomenon of exorcism and an analysis of the reasons for its contemporary re-emergence and impact on various communities. It argues that exorcism has become a religious commodity with the potential to strengthen a religion's attraction to adherents, whilst also ensuring its hold. It shows that due to intense competition between religious groups in our multi-faith societies, religious groups are now competing for authority over the supernatural by 'branding' their particular type of exorcism ritual in order to validate the strength of their own belief system.

[Sociology of Exorcism in Late Modernity](#) features a detailed case-study of a Catholic exorcist in the south of Europe who dealt with more than 1,000 cases during a decade of work.

Excerpt: Abstract This chapter not only introduces the book but describes the increase in the belief in the devil and in demonic possession. It uses the theory of de Certeau on exorcism and social changes and adapts his theory from what happened in Loudun in France in the seventeenth century to a late modern context. It grounds this research within the sociological literature on popular religion and on the supernatural.

Satan, Lucifer, Baal, Moloch, Leviathan, Belfagor, Lilith, Chernobog, Mammon, Vitra, Azazel, Loki, Iblis, Mara, and Angra Mainyu are only a few of the names given to demons from various religions. For those who believe in the demonic being, he or she is an entity that brings evil into the world and is working, often from a distance, to push humanity towards temptation and, sometimes, destruction. To protect themselves from this evil influence, people have used the most varied practices. They may pray, lead an ascetic life and/or use protective talismans. But what happens when we are convinced that we are face-to-face with the devil? Or even with someone that is possessed by this entity? Although the ritual of exorcism is practised in many religions, social scientists, apart from anthropologists in post-colonial countries, have, so far, given it little attention in today's western societies. Sociologists of religion, perhaps considering that in industrial societies the figure of Satan is merely a legacy of the superstitious and obscurantist past, seem to have shelved this issue, probably believing it to be totally out-dated.

Actually, in recent years, reports of interest in the occult world and in the rituals that release individuals from demonic possession have increased, becoming more and more widespread among broad segments of the population, thus justifying a renewed interest on the part of certain religious institutions. In the US, Gallup polls show that the percentage of people who believe in the devil has increased from 55 per cent in 1990 to 70 per cent in 2004. Baker analysed the data collected by the first wave of the Baylor Religion Survey which was conducted in 2005, and discovered that in the US African Americans tend to have a stronger belief in religious evil than do whites. Women have a stronger degree of belief than men. Net of religious controls, younger Americans hold stronger belief in conceptions of religious evil than older Americans. Finally, social class plays an important role in how certain an individual is about the existence of religious evil, with those of higher social class having weaker confidence about the existence of religious evil. However, these effects are conditioned by church attendance. For those exhibiting a high level of participation in organized religion, the influence of social class is neutralized. For those not actively participating in organized religion, the influence of social class is more pronounced.

The 1998 Southern Focus Poll in the US, which had a sample of 1200 people, posed a question much closer to the notion of exorcism. In this poll, close to 59 per cent of respondents answered in the affirmative to the question: 'Do you believe that people on this Earth are sometimes possessed by the Devil?'. The second wave of the Baylor Religion Survey, in 2007, posed the question: 'Is it possible to be possessed?' In answer, 53.3 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it is possible. Among those who attend church once or more than once a week the proportion of respondents answering in the affirmative increased to 77.9 per cent. Republicans (65.9 per cent) were more likely than Democrats (42.7 per cent), and Protestants (62.9 per cent) were more likely than Catholics (53.3 per cent) or those professing to follow no religion (19.5 per cent) or the Jewish population (3.6 per cent) to agree or strongly agree that it possible to be

possessed by the devil. In Italy, according to the Association of Catholic Psychiatrists and Psychologists, half a million people per year would undergo an exorcism.

It is difficult to find accurate figures for the number of people who have been subjected to exorcism, and so proving in a rigorous way that the incidence of the practice is increasing is extremely problematic. Even if we were able to show a statistical increase, would this imply an increase in actual numbers or just in visibility? Indeed, many exorcisms take place 'underground', but if they become more public and hence noticeable, this does not necessarily mean that more are being conducted. We also need to agree on what exorcism means. Do we include only the rituals concerned with removing an unwanted spirit from a person's body, or does exorcism also include a ritual or practice that protects people from a demon's influence? Should we take into account the ministry of deliverance (see Chap. 5) among Pentecostal groups, that is directed towards delivering people from the presence of the devil, rather than from physical and mental possession by the devil? This ministry is certainly gaining popularity and is becoming more mainstream, but it is a specific practice that is not defined by everyone as exorcism.

Instead of demonstrating an increase in instances of exorcism, we can show evidence of an increase in people's sense of the normality of this practice. More and more, people are believing in the presence of the devil and in the possibility of being possessed. For example, to help move the debate forward, this book turns to new data resources provided by Google (and, more specifically, Google Ngrams) which has plans to digitize every book ever printed. According to Alwin, this site had, at the time of his comment, more than 15 million scanned books, representing 12 per cent of books ever published. There are, of course, certain issues to take into account when using these new internet social research methods, but we invite the reader to access Groves and Savage, for example, to explore this matter further.

We typed the key words 'devil', 'Satan' and 'ghost' into the Ngram Viewer on Google Books, which reports the proportion of references to a given word or combination of words as a percentage of the total corpus. Among all the books held in Google Books, the word 'devil' has been slightly more popular than 'ghost' and 'Satan'. However, the usage of these terms has been in decline since the 1840s. Thus, it could at least be argued that people are discussing the notions of the devil, Satan and ghosts less in books and this indicates that these notions are less relevant or important today than they were in the past. Unfortunately, Ngram Viewer offers no way to understand how these words were used in the literature, and the use of the word 'devil' can be questioned. Does it refer to a demon, as a specific type of religious entity, or to a person who has some devilish characteristics reflecting a cruel side. Google Trends gives an analysis of the use of keywords entered into the Google search engine since 2004. On our entering the same three key terms, it was shown that use of the term 'devil' peaked when the movie *The Devil Wears Prada* was released in 2006, and the term 'ghost' was most popular when the Playstation game 'Call of Duty: Ghosts' was released in 2013. Since the outcome of this kind of analysis is not

relevant for this present research, Google Trends was not used as a research method. Returning to Ngram we can see that since the mid nineteenth century the usage of these three words (whatever they may mean in their particular contexts) has been in decline, though since the 1980s they have made a slight comeback; it is clear that the nineteenth century was the heyday for their usage.

However, with regards to 'exorcism', the case is quite different. As this word is less ambiguous than 'ghost', 'devil' or 'Satan', the data collected here are more meaningful. If we compare the term 'exorcism' to the three above-mentioned terms, its number of instances is too low to appear on the graph. Therefore, this term is analysed on its own that shows that, in contrast to the decline in the use of 'devil' and 'Satan' in the books scanned by Google, the use of the word 'exorcism' has been on the increase since the 1940s and again since the 1970s. Although there was an important peak at the end of the nineteenth century, it is clear that this word is used today more than at any time since the 1800s.

Popular culture, especially the 1973 movie, the Exorcist, and the 1975 account of Malachi Martin's 1992 Hostage to the Devil: The Possession and Exorcism of Five Living Americans, has been instrumental in revitalizing a belief in exorcism in the western world, touching and impressing millions of readers and viewers and bringing the notion of exorcism back into people's consciousness. However, rather than seeing these works as a causative factor in this renewed interest, it might be more appropriate to see them as catalysts to wider social and cultural changes brought about by late modernity.

In our post-industrial society, despite the increase in education, urbanism, and scientific knowledge, science no longer dominates our way of thinking and expert scientists are no longer believed implicitly. We have also entered the era of a globalized world, and multicultural and multi-faith scenarios are part of our everyday lives. Religions, also, are not static, but have had to change as they adapt to (or sometimes reject) social and cultural transformations. For example, although the canons of the seventeenth-century Church of England with regards to exorcism were repealed in 1969, a revival in interest in this phenomenon has emerged from the Church hierarchy as New Age movements (seen as a manifestation of uncontrolled spirituality) have grown. Collins points out how, importantly, these groups have fed into an occult revival which has led to an increase in interest in the issues of the supernatural, including exorcism, among Christians.

The historical research by Sluhovsky into medieval Europe is of great interest for us, in understanding our contemporary situation and showing how the practice of exorcism can change through the years, depending on social and cultural contexts. Sluhovsky discovered that in continental Europe, exorcism (before it became bureaucratized and codified by the Vatican in the seventeenth century) was a common practice conducted by both priests and lay people (for example, guaritore and magara in Italy, Zauberer in southern Germany, devin and guérisseur in France, ensalmadore in Spain and curandeiro in Portugal). Almost like attending a mass deliverance rally, people used to go on pilgrimages and remain at the sacred sites for days to be cured of their possession by the devil or of

their various ills. It was only in 1614, when the official rite was promoted, that the task of the exorcist became professionalized and codified. Thus, what had been seen as a common event was changed into one which was more exceptional and regulated by canon. In a Catholic country, people then had to follow the regulations issued by the Vatican. During this period, also, when Protestant groups were on the rise, Catholics used to perform exorcisms in order to demonstrate and validate the strength of their religion, as a form of propaganda. Sluhovsky's research also reveals that around the same time a growth in spirituality was occurring (i.e. quietism) and it was believed that when untrained people got in touch with their spiritual selves, they became more vulnerable to attacks from the devil. Along with the increase in the number of practitioners of the new spirituality came an increase in the number of people deemed to be possessed; we can see here a parallel with our current period and the belief that with the growth of personal spirituality (especially alternative spirituality) there is a higher risk of people becoming victims of the devil.

In the Catholic ambit, belief in the devil, like many other traditional religious beliefs, has been scientifically explained during modernity (for example, through psychology or psychiatry) to the point where such belief has nearly disappeared from the scope of theological deliberation. At the same time, however, in people's everyday lives, this belief has spread considerably, so as to force religious authorities to restore the profession of exorcism that had virtually disappeared. In this context, the figure of the Catholic exorcist has undergone a truly renewed professionalization process, through the foundation of an international organization of exorcists and the provision of training courses.

Changes now occurring are not only limited to belief systems concerning devilish possession but are affecting exorcism rituals as well. During research on religion and Indigenous peoples in Australia (see Cox and Possamai 2016), an interview was conducted with a woman who was following the Aboriginal traditional ways and yet was a practising Catholic. The interview was often interrupted by people calling her or coming to her place. During a casual discussion of her recent activities she stated that she had recently performed an exorcism. Her version of her ritual was a hybrid of the two religions. She had also found a way to innovate the ritual and make it more effective: she emptied a bottle of Windex and put some holy water in it. Apparently, the spray made it easier and more efficient to disperse the water for the ritual. In his research on exorcism in Sri Lanka, Kapferer (1991) found that such rituals are indeed not static and unchanging; while some elements of the past can be retained, the rituals are adapted to new and current situations. We come back to Kapferer's research.

The intriguing way in which the practice of exorcism is spreading can be considered an interesting indicator of the changes taking place within the contemporary religious field which, beyond any pretence of secularization, is being unpredictably renewed and transformed. The ritual of exorcism can therefore serve the social scientist almost as a 'litmus test' to identify trends and features of contemporary religiosity.

A RETURN OF EXORCISM?

Despite the claim made above concerning the difficulty in pinpointing exactly what exorcism is, can we still make reference to a return of exorcism? If we can, this would imply that exorcism 'left'. In his analysis of the devil, although it is not directly connected to the rituals of exorcism, Muchembled claims that the devil has never really 'left', even after the French Revolution — he simply became less central to people's religious consciousness, although developed in works of popular culture during the boom of the pulp fiction of the nineteenth century. Could the same be said about exorcism? Indeed, it continued to be practised in a low-key manner until it became a central component of mainstream popular culture in the 1970s, with the release of the famous movie, *The Exorcist*. Stories of people being possessed by ancient entities, such as in the weird fiction of Robert E. Howard's *Conan the Barbarian* in the 1930s were, of course, common in the literature. One should remember the classic story by Edgar Allan Poe, *Ligeia* (1838), in which the soul of a former wife takes control of the new wife, or H. P. Lovecraft's *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward* (1927), in which the spirit of a maleficent ancestor takes over the body of a young descendent. *The Exorcist* came onto the silver screen at the right time and made exorcism realistic (rather than just part of a weird tale) to the public. No longer was possession experienced only in an obscure land, during an atavistic time, or by an adventurer. This movie was about an ordinary girl in an upper middle class setting, in a normal and industrial town.

There have been various periods in our history in which the practice of exorcism has been a part of people's everyday lives. The era of modernity, the most secularised period in human history, relegated exorcism to the shadows, but never quite got rid of it. We claim, in this study, that there have been periods of high activity, but never a total eradication of this phenomenon. Indeed, as we explain in the next section, Young sees that, within Catholicism, the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were the golden age of the practice of exorcism and describes our contemporary period as a second golden age. He also lists other important periods, such as late antiquity — exorcism being one of the most important practices of the early Church, aimed at getting rid of the old pagan gods and proving the power of the Catholic saints against demons — the early Medieval era, and the Late Middle Ages.

During the Enlightenment period, the Christian Church attempted to rationalize its doctrine and kept away any superstitious elements, such as contacts with the supernatural, but exorcisms still took place. John Wesley, in the eighteenth century, practised exorcism himself and used these rituals to rebut Enlightenment scepticism and to demonstrate the reality of demonic possession and hence the need for religion, who was involved in the *Eglise Gallicane* in the early twentieth century, was a popular healer and an expert in exorcism. The German, Johann-Joseph Gassner, was famous in the eighteenth century for practising a type of charismatic exorcism. Pia makes reference to Catholic Sisters at the hospital where Charles Baudelaire spent his last days at the end of the nineteenth century. Even while Haussman was modernizing

Paris, these nuns brought an exorcist to 'clean' the room of the mentally ill poet.

Rather than seeing exorcism as an atavistic practice coming back, one should instead see it as a common phenomenon that comes and goes in intensity depending on social and cultural context. Religion has never disappeared, even during the Enlightenment, but has changed over time, and the same is true for magic.

To develop this point, we now cover the relationship between the three fields of sense/meaning-making which are found in our society: magic, religion, and science. These domains are difficult to define, as they are socially constructed and not impermeable to each other's influence; for example, one can believe that science will, almost magically, solve all problems. Exorcism can therefore be seen as both a magical and a religious act. When an exorcism does not follow a scripted theological process, it is often seen as a magical process aimed at healing the patient. When an institutionalized and rigorous ritual is enacted, it is more about a religious fight against the devil than just a ritual for healing. We discuss these ambiguities further throughout this book.

Today, we are witnessing processes of secularization and de-secularization in various parts of the world; that is, religion is waxing and waning in the public sphere, rather than fully disappearing or becoming fully theocratic and anti-scientific (see below). We can no longer follow the social evolutionist belief that our society evolved from a focus on magic (the age of unsystematic beliefs dominant in pre-historic times) to a focus on religion (the age of systematic beliefs and the advent of theology, which was dominant until the scientific revolution), and finally to thinking scientifically (supposedly, since the Enlightenment). Instead, we need to study periods of history and places in the world taking into account that these three elements — magic, religion and science — exist together at different levels of intensity, without any one eliminating the others. If any of these three elements appears to be missing during a certain period in a specific context (for example, science during the heyday of the Inquisition, religion during the French Revolution, or magic during the development of institutionalized religion in early twentieth-century China (Goossaert 2003)), they are, in fact, simply hiding. Nietzsche can 'kill' God, but religion and magic will live on; it is not a question of progress or regress, but rather of different mixes of the three elements occurring at any given time.

Even though religion is present in today's public sphere, it must be noted that its presence is not as strong as it used to be in the Middle Ages. Religion is no longer an overarching cultural system; it is now seen as a sub-system of our society alongside other sub-systems (such as education, health, commercial or scientific institutions), such that any all-encompassing claims made by religions have much less relevance. Religion no longer has pride of place in our societal structure and is no longer the dominant voice when it comes to, for example, politics, welfare and education. Even if religion is still strong in our culture, it is no longer the pillar of western social structure. Moving beyond this fait accompli, Martin's work advances our understanding of the process of secularization by underlining its various dynamics, rather than offering, as many previous sociological

studies have done, the simplistic assumption that there is a single dynamic at work — as in the evolutionist belief that society moves from magic to religion, and from religion to science. The fundamental argument of his work is that secularization is not a clear-cut process that occurs in all western societies homogeneously or that will necessarily occur in all developing countries. Indeed, as the author argues in relation to Christianity, instead of regarding secularization as a once-for-all unilateral process, one might rather think in terms of successive Christianizations followed or accompanied by recoils. Each Christianization is a salient of faith driven into the secular from a different angle, each pays a characteristic cost which affects the character of the recoil, and each undergoes a partial collapse.

There is no one secular ending to western history, but rather various phases of secularization and sanctification. In *The Exceptional Case*, Davie questions whether modernization and secularization are necessarily connected. After considering case studies from around the world, with a particular focus on North America, Latin America, Africa, and Christian communities in the Far East, she concludes her book with this sentence: 'Secularisation is essentially a European phenomenon and is extrinsic rather than intrinsic to the modernising process per se'. The project of modernity started from Europe and spread around the world. Religion, from the Old Continent's point of view, had no place in it, but this was not the case for all other countries that embarked on this project, and which did include religion.

Freud, Marx and Durkheim all claimed that religion has disappeared, and we are today debating how to manage the links between religions and non-religions in the public sphere through the frame of what we call, in sociology, 'post-secularism'. This is, in fact, a misnomer, because while it is true that our society in its present phase is more open to religious thought and activity than before, it is still secular.

Weber referred to the disenchantment of society in the early twentieth century and he saw this as a discontent of early modernity. Now, in the early twenty-first century, magic is back in popular culture and in our everyday lives and we can speak about the re-enchantment of late modernity. But has magic (including exorcism) ever been absent?

The practices of exorcism will not only be different across times, but across world regions as well. When Young writes about the twenty-first century as being a new golden age of exorcism, he refers to Europe and North America, but not to the rest of the world since elsewhere this practice did not go into hiding to the same extent. He thus echoes Davie's comment that Europe is the exceptional case, when compared to other regions, regarding the effects of secularization.

One of the leading Catholic exorcists of this century, Father Gabrielle Amorth, makes the claim that '[w]hen faith in God declines, idolatry and irrationality increases; man [sic] must then look elsewhere for answers to his meaningful questions'. In this comment, the priest puts religion far above magic and does not include science. A secularist would claim instead that this same trend occurs when trust in science declines, and that one has simply to replace the word 'God' with 'Science' in the

sentence for it to have a quite different slant. We, the authors of this book, are aiming to be as rigorous as possible when dealing with science, magic and religion and do not value any one over the others. They each have aspects which are positive (science and development, religion and quality of life, magic and enchantment) and negative (the irrationality of religion and magic, and the irrationality of scientific rationality, as in the 'iron cage' of bureaucratic rationality). Below, we detail our phenomenological noumenalist approach which allows us to follow this path of neutrality.

Father Amorth also claims that exorcism existed before Christianity and that it was known in 'practically all ancient cultures'; he even states that ancient magical rituals were simply the precursor to Christian rituals (that is, in his interpretation, religious rituals) when they became 'illuminated by the truth of Christ'. Although we do not claim that exorcism is universal, we can state with confidence that this practice can be found in many parts of the world and at many times in human history.

Instead of questioning when (or if) the practice of exorcism has vanished or reappeared, we are instead asking when it is likely to be at its peak in the public sphere and in people's everyday life consciousness. To answer this we turn to the work of de Certeau.

THE DEVIL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

De Certeau dedicated a whole book to the famous case of the mass possession of Loudun in France in the seventeenth century. The case lasted from 1632 to 1640 at the time when Descartes' *Discours de la méthode* (1637) was published. It was claimed that a whole convent of Ursuline nuns had been possessed, and the rituals of their exorcism were conducted in public, attracting crowds of visitors not only from many parts of France, but from elsewhere in Europe as well. Father Urbain Grandier, a priest and Huguenot, was accused of having made a pact with the devil, causing the mass possession. He was condemned at trial and subsequently executed, thus allowing the powerful Cardinal Richelieu to weaken the strength of this Protestant group by getting rid of a charismatic priest who was opposed to his political schemes. The possessions and mass exorcisms still continued after Grandier was burned at the stake.

In his research, de Certeau differentiates between the 'possessed' and the 'possessionists', those who are convinced of the reality of possession. In opposition to these stances, we find the 'antipossessionists', that is, those who are confronted by events for which they do not have a rational explanation, but who still do not regard these events as being supernatural. In his study of Loudun, de Certeau referred to people who witnessed the mass possession of the Ursuline convent and who could not explain it in a rational way; they argued that science was not yet well developed enough to shed light on the phenomenon, and that it was only a matter of time before reason would develop sufficiently to provide the correct answers. We have argued, above, that the number of possessionists has certainly increased in late modernity; however, as to the number of 'possessed' people, we are unable to provide any concrete data, since this would depend

on what we take 'possessed' to mean and include. For example, does it (or should it) include people who attend the Pentecostal Ministry of Deliverance, even if the devil is not considered to be inside them?

De Certeau argues that religious activities of the type of the exceptional event at Loudun are symptomatic of a time of change in French society, when it was moving from a feudal society to a nation, and when Catholicism was struggling with the presence of Huguenots and libertines. Sorcery and possession, for, de Certeau, encapsulate a type of underground system of beliefs and practices that emerge when social cracks are opening wide. From an anti-magical viewpoint, this would be a type of social virus that turns into an infection when the social body is run down and is too weak to fight from the inside. Diabolic crises signify both a culture in disequilibrium and a set of transitory solutions. De Certeau makes reference to a society dominated by religion but in which science was slowly developing. But what of a society that is dominated by magic? Would a crack in the belief system push people towards the demonic in a society that already believes in demons? Would it bring reason to the fore and have a countereffect or would it push the demoniac even further? To attempt to answer this question, we apply de Certeau's theory to the periods of history when exorcism was at its apex in Europe.

Late antiquity and the early Middle Ages saw an increase in the practice of exorcism in Europe due to the threat of Paganism. When the tension with this old religion was reduced, so was the need for exorcism. Later, in the thirteenth century, it was revived to fight against what was seen as the heretical doctrines of the Cathars.

The sixteenth century was a century of crisis in the Church; the Counter-Reformation found some utility in exorcisms practised with theatrical liturgical forms. It was useful for the Church to spread the word among the people that the devil flees from the relics of saints, from the exposed Eucharist, and at the priests' commands. The Protestants still believed in exorcism but did not use sacred objects or a ritual with specific formulas. They aimed to excise the magical and the superstitious elements — such as following the cult of saints and using holy water — from the act and their methods were mainly prayer and fasting. For the Protestants, only God could expel the devil or demons, and their aim was more to save the possessed person from eternal damnation than from possession. This was in line with the Protestant doctrine of the cessation of miracles, expounded in the writings of Luther and Calvin; miracles, including the magical aspect of exorcism, ceased with the end of the Apostolic time and the conversion of Rome to Christianity — there was no need for new miracles.

During this period, also, a fight was being waged against the threat of witchcraft. The famous case in Aix-en-Provence in 1610-11 is quite interesting here and the trial of the accused, taking place a year after the assassination of Henri IV, was clearly an indirect attack against the Huguenots in France. This trial, also, condemned to death a Catholic priest who was suspected of witchcraft. Fanlo writes that those leading the trial were strong supporters of a type of conservative Catholic revivalism (La Ligue) which was pitted against perceived 'non-

authentic' forms of Catholicism. As with the latter case of Loudun, de Certeau saw in this event, also, a reflection of the polemic between the Catholics and the Huguenots. Muchembled's history of the devil confirms that in some regions where Huguenots lived in the seventeenth century, the Catholic possessed often let their demons claim collusion between the Protestants and Satan and prophesy that the 'heretic' religion of the Protestants would soon collapse. We also find during that time that missionaries were utilizing exorcism in their work of conversion in China to demonstrate the superiority of Christianity (Catholicism) over Buddhism and Daoism when it came to driving away the evil spirits with holy water.

With the Enlightenment in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, exorcism was discouraged — although the practice was continued in the New World and was still supported in the Old World by the Jesuits and Capuchins who were promoting their missionary and political agenda. This discouragement was not only a result of the influence of the development of rationalism, but also of changes from within the Catholic Church, such as the development of sceptical Augustinian theology. Indeed, in 1744 Pope Benedict XIV urged the bishops in Italy to use caution when dealing with the rite of exorcism.

Young makes an interesting analysis of the conflict over exorcism in early nineteenth-century England. Around that time, British Catholics were a minority in a Protestant regime that was strongly opposed to the French Revolution. Although Enlightenment views were against the offering of exorcism by the churches, especially Catholic churches, people did not necessarily stop believing in possession. A schism developed within the British Catholics; the Ultramontanes were not opposed to the practice of exorcism and were seen by the Cisalpines as superstitious. The argument was that continuing this ante-Enlightenment practice could lead to religious and political scandals and fuel anti-Catholic propaganda. The Cisalpines, on the other hand, were seen by the Ultramontanes as being disloyal Catholics and selling out to the Protestant establishment.

The ritual of exorcism saw another revival at the end of the nineteenth century, instigated by Pope Leo XIII, who believed that a global Satanist conspiracy led by Freemasons was threatening the Vatican. With the overthrow of the Papal States in 1870, the Pope became an opponent of state secularism and saw these social and cultural changes as a conspiracy by the devil that needed to be opposed. In this period, exorcism was employed to protect the Church as an institution rather than its human adherents. Despite this attempt by the Pope to appropriate exorcism and promote it in a different way, it never caught up with the population at large, at least not in the same way as in the previous periods of crisis.

Exorcism is thus more likely to appear at times of crisis — mainly when religious groups are competing against each other — something that did not happen in modernity — and not when scientific discourse is dominant. Indeed, during modernity, scientific views were imposed on faith and forced religions to get rid of any magical component in order to maintain their relevance in this new world of calculative and scientific reasoning. This, also, was a time of crisis; adapting large

populations to changes brought about by industrialization created difficulties. There were problems of overpopulation, rural exodus, rapid urban growth, and famine in the early stages of the industrialization of society. Exorcism still existed at that time, but it did not emerge sufficiently from the social underground for any growing trend to be perceived. One should note however that many new occultist and esoteric groups developed during that period (see, for example, McIntosh and his study of the rebirth of magic in France in the nineteenth century).

At the present time, science is no longer the dominant paradigm and must engage more and more with religions; and religions, themselves, have to take magic on board. In late modernity, in this post-colonial, postindustrial, post-Fordist world, we, also, are experiencing crises, and exorcism is again coming to the fore. Science is today not dominant enough to curb the revival of exorcism, and, further, the new competition between Pentecostalism and the Catholic Church (with the Anglican Church and various groups as other key players in this religious market) is creating conditions conducive to this development).

What does it mean when people believe they are confronted by the supernatural in their everyday lives and understand it to be demonic? In this book, while we are exploring the social construction of this phenomenon, we are nevertheless also investigating, more specifically, the elementary form of this religious experience in a late modern context, a period since the 1980s which has been touched by globalization, post-colonialism, post-Fordism, and post-industrialism. Some authors refer to this period as 'postmodernity' to demarcate it from modernity and its ethos of progress and reason. We have not moved beyond progress and reason, but the present era is different from the early eighteenth century, in that it is more open to religion and re-enchantment.

AIM, METHOD AND STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

In this book, rather than using a theological definition of exorcism, we will follow the social definition used by Sluhovsky: 'exorcism is defined as a curing technique against evil spirits that have taken over a possessed person, an animal, or an object'. However, this definition is still problematic as it does not reflect current practices, especially with regards to recent Pentecostal rituals. Should the ministry of deliverance be included as part of our understanding of exorcism? If the answer is 'yes', this means including the concept that the evil spirits are not just taking over a person, but are also afflicting him or her from outside.

This understanding is in line with the work of sociologists of religion, who tend to use a methodological agnostic approach when conducting research. This means, for example, that we do not analyse the veracity of claims of possession from a theological perspective. We study what people do with or against this belief, and how this belief affects them.

This book does not delve into an analysis of exorcism from a psychological or medical point of view. Such analysis is not something to be ignored but it is not part of the focus of this piece of work. It is indeed worth noting, from the research of the anthropologist, Goodman that demonic possession is not just

about scary stories but can sometimes involve actual and disastrous physical and psychological changes. Bowman (1993) refers to people with multiple personality disorder who took part in a ministry of deliverance, sometimes in front of hundreds of people, and had feelings of rage, humiliation, and suicidality. We are, however, aiming to understand this phenomenon sociologically in the current western and late modern world.

This book does not address the antipossessionist discourse; it focuses on the possessionists' viewpoint. Although we cannot claim that there has been an increase in the number of possessed people, we have put forward our view that there has been an increase in the number of possessionists. Our research method follows what Garret (1974) has called a phenomenological noumenalist approach; this approach admits subjective reality as an independent variable in social analysis and focuses its research on the consequences of belief and the behaviour generated by religious experiences. This school has its roots in the work of Rudolf Otto (1936), a German theologian, philosopher and historian of comparative religions, who focused his research on the non-rational aspect of the religious dimension. Being both theologian and scientist, Otto's purpose was to embrace the scientific paradigm and the religious interpretation of the world. He sought to determine the kind of rationality that is relevant to religious study, and found in Immanuel Kant the pertinent pair of 'noumenon' and 'phenomenon'. The noumenon is, in Kant's philosophy, the thing-in-itself (*das Ding an sich*), as opposed to what Kant has called the phenomenon, the thing as it appears to an observer. Though the noumenal holds the contents of the intelligible world, Kant has claimed that humans' speculative reason can only know phenomena and can never penetrate to the noumenon. The phenomenological noumenalist school accepts the noumenal as irreducible experience and as producing effects at the individual and social levels. Indeed, when the second co-author of this book conducted fieldwork on New Age at the end of the twentieth century, informants were asked about their experience of this alternative spirituality. While it was expected that replies would be framed in terms of 'social experience', many told about their 'mystical experiences' which had changed their life trajectories. By taking this 'supernatural component' as a variable of analysis, it was possible to discuss key sociological findings. We apply this perspective to this current research on exorcism by aiming to understand, not this extraordinary experience, but its consequences on people's lives; we are not aiming to debunk this phenomenon, nor to explain it in psychological or medical terms.

The aim of this book is not only to provide a sociological understanding of the phenomenon of exorcism, but also to analyse the reasons for its re-emergence and its impact on various communities. To reach this goal, in Chap. 2, 'The Sociology of Exorcism', we give an account of a sociological understanding of what exorcism is. Using functional (what religion does for people and/or community) and substantive (what religion is for people and/or community) definitions of religion, we analyse this phenomenon through the ages, through classical Durkheimian, Marxian, and Weberian lenses. In this chapter, we also explore the fluidity of understanding

concerning what this practice is, and, more specifically, how people understand when an entity is or is not a demon. Acknowledging the difficulty of reaching a substantive understanding of exorcism and its rituals, we move to a social constructionist perspective on this phenomenon. By analysing the social history of ghosts and demons, we demonstrate the fluidity of understanding not only by the average lay person, but also by theologians, when interpreting whether an entity is the devil and when this entity needs to be expelled. We argue that, however the devil and exorcism are understood, there has been an increase in the level and occurrence of belief.

In Chap. 3, 'Case Study of Catholic Exorcism: Visiting an Exorcist', we move to a case study and analyse the data, covering a ten-year period, which was provided by an experienced Catholic exorcist in the south of Europe. The data comprise a sociological analysis of the more than 1000 cases dealt with and reported, in a document of more than 200,000 words. This chapter reports on the data analysis for those cases (95 per cent) which did not lead to an exorcism.

Utilizing the same data, Chap. 4, 'Case Study of Catholic Exorcism: Undergoing Exorcism', specifically focuses on the analysis of the 5 per cent of cases which have led to a formal exorcism. It also details the observations made by the authors during their attendance at one of these rituals.

In Chap. 5, 'Religious Competition over Exorcism', we start to question, sociologically, the increase in the visibility of this practice and the belief behind it. We argue that, due to intense competition between religious groups in our multi-faith societies, these groups are now branding their particular type of exorcism ritual in order to validate the strength of their own belief system. Comparing this case study with other cases from the Pentecostal and the Anglican Churches, this chapter develops the theory of the branding of exorcism. It argues that in a competitive religious market, religious groups are increasing their interest in the devil in order to justify their relevance and strength, but that each does this in a different way — for example, the Pentecostals have their ministry of deliverance and Catholics embrace the ritual of exorcism. Drawing on the data from our fieldwork, we also show a move by the Catholic Church to a type of ministry of deliverance, which, in late modernity, is a more popular way of dealing with the devil.

As part of an elective causation, the number of professional exorcists has increased over the years, and Chap. 6, 'The Over-Policing, and Decriminalizing, of the Devil', claims that as more experts are pointing out that the devil is among us, more people are believing in him. We call this process 'the over-policing of the devil'. Our claim is that because of the increasing number of religious experts on the devil, in various religions, and the increased reporting, by these same professionals, of the presence of the demon, more and more people will come to believe in the need for deliverance and/or exorcism. This chapter also includes an analysis of the court cases resulting from two exorcisms gone wrong (R v Vollmer and Others — 1996 in Australia, and R v Lee — 2006 in New Zealand), and discusses discourses emerging from the secular courts with regards to the decriminalization of the devil.

Pantheon: A New History of Roman Religion by Jörg Rüpke and translated by David M. B. Richardson [Princeton University Press, 9780691156835]

From one of the world's leading authorities on the subject, an innovative and comprehensive account of religion in the ancient Roman and Mediterranean world

In this ambitious and authoritative book, Jörg Rüpke provides a comprehensive and strikingly original narrative history of ancient Roman and Mediterranean religion over more than a millennium—from the late Bronze Age through the Roman imperial period and up to late antiquity. While focused primarily on the city of Rome, *Pantheon* fully integrates the many religious traditions found in the Mediterranean world, including Judaism and Christianity. This generously illustrated book is also distinguished by its unique emphasis on lived religion, a perspective that stresses how individuals' experiences and practices transform religion into something different from its official form. The result is a radically new picture of both Roman religion and a crucial period in Western religion—one that influenced Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and even the modern idea of religion itself.

Drawing on a vast range of literary and archaeological evidence, *Pantheon* shows how Roman religion shaped and was shaped by its changing historical contexts from the ninth century BCE to the fourth century CE. Because religion was not a distinct sphere in the Roman world, the book treats religion as inseparable from political, social, economic, and cultural developments. The narrative emphasizes the diversity of Roman religion; offers a new view of central concepts such as "temple," "altar," and "votive"; reassesses the gendering of religious practices; and much more. Throughout, *Pantheon* draws on the insights of modern religious studies, but without "modernizing" ancient religion.

With its unprecedented scope and innovative approach, *Pantheon* is an unparalleled account of ancient Roman and Mediterranean religion.

Excerpt: At the core of this book lies the conviction that a survey of the history of ancient religion that does not take collective actors such as Rome or "the Romans" as its starting point, but rather individual actors and how they lived religion, produces not only a different view of religion, but above all a new awareness of the mutability of religious conceptions and practice. My own research and the chance to work made possible by an Advanced Grant from the European Research Council (no. 295555), enabled me to put that conviction to the test. This team's share in the outcome distinctly exceeds what I have been able to indicate in the notes and the bibliography. This also applies to the many colleagues who have collaborated in this undertaking, as contributors to meetings, as guests at the Max Weber Centre, as fellows of the research group "Religious Individualization in Historical Perspective," financed by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Science Foundation, no. KFOR 1013), or as co-editors of the journal *Religion in the Roman Empire*, which arose from this project...

A History of Mediterranean Religion: What Is Meant by a History of Mediterranean Religion?

It is the intention of this book to tell the story of an upheaval epochal in its impact. This is the story of how a world well beyond the understanding of most of us was transformed into a world very like our own, at least in one particular. To put it succinctly: we will describe how from a world in which one practiced rituals, there emerged a world of religions, to which one could belong. This is no straightforward story. The changes I shall relate were not inevitable; no one could have foreseen them. Nor were they irreversible: quite the contrary.

To speak of religions—in the plural—seems to us today quite normal. We may in fact define ourselves in terms of a religion. A religion may open doors for us—access to officialdom, to the mass media, to tax offices when it is a question of tax exemptions—or in some cases the doors of a prison. But, although we as individuals may belong to one religion, we can no longer "unthink" the plural form of the term as a concept for describing both present-day and historical societies. And yet, with ever-greater frequency, trends arise that defy such categorization. "New Age" has been one such concept. "Spirituality" increasingly appears to be another, and "mysticism" has a long history as a phenomenon of this kind. Countless Christians, Muslims, and Hindus talk quite straightforwardly of themselves as belonging to one (only rarely several) of many religions, but there are good grounds for wondering whether, in many cases, we should not speak of culture and cultural differences rather than of membership of different religions.

When a concept has many different meanings, windows of comparison are opened across space and time, and in many cases it is only then that a meaningful conversation becomes possible. A history, moreover, can be communicated successfully only when the number of concepts in play is limited, when recognizability is vouchsafed to all participants, despite small differences; otherwise, we are faced with a multitude of disparate, sometimes conflicting histories, with results that may be entertaining (think only of the "Thousand and One Nights"), and thoroughly informative and revealing (a thousand everyday stories adding up to a "microhistory"), but with no end, no "moral." This is all the more true of a long history such as the one being attempted here, where the actors change repeatedly, or at least often more frequently than the parameters of religious practices and concepts.

Conceptual harmonization can, of course, add to the difficulty when an effort to achieve such harmony superimposes an appearance on continuity that masks on-going changes and transformations. It then becomes critical to refine our concepts, to notice differences. We begin to see that the world we are describing comprises many geographical spaces, where many different kinds of development are underway: a change that we note in one location may also have taken place elsewhere, but there is no guarantee that it had the same consequences in both settings. Thus, although a history of Mediterranean religion is not a universal history of religion, it must nevertheless always take into account other geographical spaces, must ask what happened there, and must notice instances where ideas,

objects, and people broke through those walls erected in our imagination by the metaphor of separated spaces.

My Mediterranean narrative recognizes that comparable transformations with similar outcomes (in religions, in assemblages of practices, in concepts, and in symbols) took place in other epochs and in other realms, where they were perceived by the peoples they affected as being distinctive. I think particularly of western, southern, and eastern Asia. And yet, in the past half-millennium, religion in many of these regions was very different. I maintain that the institutionalization of religion characteristic of the Modern Period in many parts of Europe and the Americas, and the conflict-ridden rigidity of the "religions" or "confessions" of which one may be a member—but only one at a time—rests on the particular configurations of religion and power that prevailed in antiquity, and on their legal codification in Late Antiquity. Not only the Islamic expansion, but above all the specifically European developments of the Reformation and the formation of national states, reinforced the confessional character and institutional consolidation of supra-regional religious networks. This model was exported to many, but certainly not all parts of the world in the course of colonial expansion, and frequently in a spirit of arrogance.

It is circum-Mediterranean and increasingly Euro-Mediterranean history post-antiquity that draws our attention to Rome. But our choice of Rome as a hub is mistaken if it is origin myths that we seek. Ancient polytheism and its narrative worlds did not develop anywhere near Rome, but rather in the Middle East, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. The monotheistic traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam connect in Jerusalem, not in the city on the Tiber. Moreover, we have Athens to thank, not the Seven Hills, for the polemical separation of philosophy and religion, virtually a unique marker of Western religious thinking. Even the Latin-language codification of the law, the *Corpus iuris civilis*, which left its mark on many modern legal systems, emerged from Constantinople, the Rome of the Byzantine Empire, and not from its Italian predecessor. Certainly, the word *religio* had its origin in Rome. But that has only slight relevance to the change that is the subject of this present narrative.

Origin is not everything, however. Rome was situated in a part of the world with a long history of absorbing cultural impulses rather than initiating them. From the end of the 1st millennium B C onward, the city exported multiple conceptions of religion throughout the Mediterranean. And with the destruction of Jerusalem, Roman power politics became a central factor in the history of various religious identities. The growth of the empire into a multicultural space with a newly stratified power structure, the accelerated exchange of ideas, goods, and people within such a space, the attraction its center had for prophets no less than for philosophers, all of these factors combined to assure that Rome would be a focal point of the first millennium AD. In the centuries prior to this, Rome is to be seen more as one instance of Mediterranean development, one with its own history and timeline, with the consequence that we must constantly question what is to be regarded as typical and what is untypical for other regions. The distinctive strand that will be represented by Rome in the present narrative will thus

only slowly emerge from a consideration of Italian and Mediterranean beginnings.

Our attention is thus set free to range widely over religious conceptions, symbols, and activities, an entire spectrum of cultural practices from ancient oriental high cultures to Late Antiquity (and beyond), viewing them all as they undergo substantial processes of development, and all with a multitude of facets in common. From a long-term and global perspective, the development of particular forms in the fields of architecture and the media here assume considerable importance. The Buddhism that emerged from India owes a considerable degree of its imagery to Greek modifications of Egyptian archetypes as can be seen in the art of the Gandhara region. Moreover, the concept of a "pantheon" of deities interacting in a hierarchy, a concept that once again originated in western Asia and the ancient Orient, played an important role in defining the form and personification of Greek and Roman conceptions of the divine, and their adoption in Christianity. The religious history of the Roman period had far-flung ramifications. In the Mediterranean world we have the formation of Judaism with the emergence of Christianity from it, and the dissemination of Christianity's Romanized form via Rome and Constantinople, while Islam arose at the southeastern periphery of the same world, and, with its expansion across the south, increasingly toward the east and even the northeast of that space, in many ways marked the end of antiquity. The processes of dissemination, or more precisely those of mutual exchange on the eastern frontiers and along routes of contact—the Silk Road to Central Asia, shipping routes to southern India—still lie in the shadowy regions of scholarship, and frequently lack even elementary appraisals: a situation that cannot be altered by a focused history such as is intended here.

In any event, however, one decided advantage attaches to a focus on Rome. Already in the Hellenistic Age, the final two centuries BC, Rome was probably the biggest city in the world, growing in the early Imperial Age to a population of half a million, many say one million inhabitants. Such numbers would not be equaled until the High Medieval Period, with cities such as Cordoba in Moorish Spain and Bian (now Kaifeng) in central China, or Peking in the Early Modern Period. When it comes to the function of religion in the life of the metropolis and the role of megacities as intellectual and economic motors, Ancient- and especially Imperial-Age Rome provides a historical "laboratory" with which few other cities in the ancient world can compare. The closest would be Alexandria, the new foundation of Alexander the Great and cultural melting pot on the Nile Delta, and perhaps Antioch, with Ptolemais and Memphis next in size. The Latin pejorative term *pagani* did not describe people merely as non-Christians, but also identified them as country folk. The sentiment that whatever is important takes place in cities—and especially metropolises—is not new, but it has never been thoroughly studied in the case of religions. And so my story of religion here ventures onto new ground. But what exactly is religion?

Religion

When it comes to describing transformations in religion, unexamined preconceptions should not be allowed to stand.

We normally base our thinking about religion on its plural, "religions." It is even maintained by some that religion actually exists only in terms of that plural form. Religions are understood as traditions of religious practices, conceptions, and institutions, in some contexts even as business or business-like enterprises. According to an important strain of sociological thought that goes back to Émile Durkheim (1858-1917), we are dealing here with social products, products of societies comprised of groups of people normally living together within a territory, for whom the central core of their common existence, their shared orientation, is shielded from daily discussion by being vested in symbolic religious forms. There emerges a system of signs whose immanence is safeguarded by the performance of rituals, and which seeks to explain the world in images, narratives, written texts, or refined dogma, and to regulate behavior by the use of ethical imperatives or by an established way of life, sometimes by recourse to an effective apparatus of sanctions (for instance through the power of the state), but sometimes even without that implied threat.

Such a conception of religion can explain a lot; it meets its limits, however, when it seeks to explain religious pluralism, the enduring coexistence of different, mutually contradictory conceptions and practices. It can find itself at a loss also when it must decipher the quite distinctive relationship between the individual and his or her religion. It is repeatedly accused of being too closely oriented to "Western," and above all Christian religious and conceptual history, and criticized for its unquestioning "colonialism" in superimposing Western concepts onto other cultures.¹ There are similarly problematic ramifications when we seek to apply this conception to antiquity.

The reason for this, too, lies in the present. The dissolution of traditional allegiances that we so frequently observe in our time is read as religious individualism or as the decline of religion, or even as the displacement of collective religion by individual spirituality. This perspective then becomes associated with the complementary assumption that early societies and their religions must have been characterized by a high degree of collectivism. We shall see how this assumption, already problematic in respect of the present day, creates a highly distorted picture of the past.

This does not, however, compel us to abstain from speaking about religion. What we need, rather, is a concept of religion that enables us to describe, with precision, changes both in the social aspects of religion and in its significance to individuals. This can be achieved successfully by conceiving of religion from the standpoint of the individual and of his or her social environment. I shall not focus on the mental systems that have been constructed by both insiders and external observers, for these can in any case never yield more than fragmentary and incomplete particulars about a religion. Instead, my starting point is lived ancient religion—in all its variants, its differing contexts, and social configurations. Only in rare instances—and these will, of course, be given due attention—do the activities of people dealing with one another coalesce into networks² and organized systems, or find their way into written texts, so that they take on a life of their own and develop into the

massive, autonomous, and often long-lived structures that we normally categorize as religions.

How, then, is religion to be comprehended? We can only hope to gain a perspective on changes in religion, on the dynamics embodied in it and how these produce changes in the social and cultural contexts of religious actors, if we do not assume at the outset that what religion is self-evident. We must, then, seek out boundaries for our subject that take in what it is about religion that interests us—namely those aspects of it that conform to our view of the subject—but at the same time the boundaries must be broad enough to include the deviant, the surprising in the religious practice of a particular time. I see the religion of the epoch we are considering from a situative perspective, as including actors (whether they be described as divine or gods, demons or angels, the dead or the immortal) who are in some respect superior. Above all, however, their presence, their participation, their significance in a particular situation is not simply an unquestioned given: other human participants in the situation might regard them as invisible, silent, inactive, or simply absent, perhaps even as nonexistent. In short, religious activity is present when and where, in a particular situation, at least one human individual includes such actors in his or her communication with other humans, whether by merely referring to those actors or by directly addressing them.

Even in ancient cultures, communicating with or acting in relation to such beings was not simply accepted as a matter of course. In respect of the present day, this will scarcely be disputed: the assertion that transcendent actors are participants, either actual or to be invoked, would be viewed askance in many parts of Europe, would indeed appear quite implausible to many people. Even when a particular human actor is firmly convinced of the immanence of a god, or of something divine, in the presence of others he or she will frequently abstain from making such a claim, in either word or action, for fear of inviting ridicule. Since, in my view, religion consists primarily in communication, I would have to say that in such a situation religion does not occur. The reluctant modern European believer I have described is, however, not a universal figure. The presence of the transcendent is entirely noncontroversial in other regions, and was so in other epochs.

Nevertheless—and this is my point—making such an assertion and/or taking actions compatible with it would be problematic even in the ancient world. It would risk damage to the credibility of the speaker and might put his or her competence into question. This is because the assertion would never be couched as a general statement that gods exist. Instead it would take the form of a claim that one particular deity, whether Jupiter or Hercules, had helped or would help the speaker or other individuals, or that Fortuna (fate) stood behind the speaker's own actions. Such a claim might be borne out, or it might not. "You of all people?," "Venus?" "We want to see that for ourselves!" "But you're not normally so very pious!": the possible demurrals were legion. And religious authority could not simply be acquired by mere prayer: some individuals were successful in their claims and earned a livelihood by them; for others, priesthood remained a spare-time occupation, and in the end might not even secure election to the local

council. Ascribing authority to invisible actors and exercising corresponding circumspection in one's actions appears, as postulated by evolutionists, to have been conducive to survival and accordingly favored in human development; but it was a tactic that provided an opening for challenges by fellow humans and its systematic use could provoke organized dissent.

In a Germany (and to some extent a Europe) that, with either satisfaction or horror, sees itself as largely secularized, it is easy to forget that regular church attendance and church marriage, knowledge of the catechism, and generalized church tax were not widely imposed until the nineteenth century, and that this was done in an attempt to use religion as an instrument of social discipline, to instill in all and sundry the awareness of belonging to a particular Confession, and to make church membership and services available and obligatory for everybody, even in far distant places. It is not simply the case that the past was more pious. Countless thousands brought small gifts to Roman temples to show their gratitude or to give emphasis to their requests; millions did not. Millions buried their deceased children or parents with care, and even provided them with grave goods; countless millions contented themselves with disposing of the corpses. The question we must ask in respect both of present-day religion and the religion of the past, of the ancient Mediterranean world, is: In what ways did religious communication and religious activity enhance the individual's agency, his or her ability to act, and to carve out a space for initiatives? How did it strengthen his or her competence and creativity in dealing with everyday problems and with problems that went beyond the everyday? In other words, how did reference to actors who were not indisputably plausible contribute to the formation of collective identities that would enable the individual to act or think as part of a group, of a social formation that might vary greatly in its form and strength, no matter whether it existed in actuality or only in the imagination or fevered awareness of a few people? If we are speaking of strategies here, however, we must think not only of dealings with other people, and of implied learning processes and gains (or losses!) in social status, but also of strategies for dealing successfully with those who stood outside the everyday, or who intervened unbidden in that everyday; namely, of the transcendent actors, the gods. Their attention must be sought. They must be called to listen. A divine "power" about whom and with whom nobody speaks is not a power. Without invocations or ritual, inscriptions and religious infrastructures, visible images and audible priests, religion does not happen. And this has consequences. In a society without institutional memory, religious developments (and not religious developments only) can very quickly dissipate.

To look back into the past from the standpoint of the present and detect traces of such developments is no simple matter. We must keep our eyes and ears open. A religious history of the ancient Mediterranean world must use multiple approaches and consult a wide range of sources. To unearth a lived ancient religion demands that we pay attention to the voices of individual witnesses, to their experiences and practices, their distinct ways of appropriating traditions, to the way they communicate and innovate. For example, the use of a god's name in a particular situation does not mean that there was a

structured "pantheon" with fixed names and roles, although of course we must search carefully for other, similar utterances overheard by our particular witness, for comparable utterances known to him or her, and for later imitations or variations. Such information may be gleaned from ancient histories, poetry, memoirs, and plays; it may often comprise the imaginings or inferences of ancient authors, rather than direct attestations of other people's thoughts. Ancient religion, too, was rooted in individual experience and agency. At the same time, it was subject to constant change, in a constant state of becoming. In spite of the impressive traces it has left to us in the form of texts and monuments, and information about religious institutions, it stubbornly eluded attempts to freeze it, to fix it as a ritual system with a stable pantheon of gods and a rigid system of beliefs. Only by narrative can this ancient Mediterranean religion be called forth and given shape.

Before the advent of Judaism and, especially, Christianity, both religions that are strongly oriented to the individual, the notion of an individual religion was so foreign that some further clarifications may be in order." Ancient religion consists in what is said about it, what we tell of it. It does not simply lie to hand in the debris of archaeological digs, or in inscriptions and literary texts, waiting patiently to be expounded and revisualized. A description of what the lived religion of antiquity looked like, and how far its reach extended, will begin in chapter 2. Some readers may wish to jump ahead to this discussion.

Facets of Religious Competence

It is difficult to catch sight of an individual at a distance of two thousand years. It is only with difficulty that we can fathom the innermost soul of someone still living, even though we have available to us interviews and journals. The surviving remnants of an ancient everyday life and of its attempts at communication present us with far greater challenges. It is all the more important to develop at least a model conception of how ancient Mediterranean people went about developing strategies of religious behavior in their constant interactions with one another, to determine what facets of that process were of particular significance, and how these came to define religion in the final centuries of the first millennium BC and the first centuries of the first millennium AD. I will next look more closely at three facets of "religious competence," by which I mean the experience and knowledge necessary for successful religious action, and the authority hence attributed by others. These facets—religious agency; religious identity; and techniques and media for religious communication—while closely linked, allow us three different perspectives from which to examine what appears to us as familiar and what seems alien in ancient religion.

Religious Agency

Interpretive social and cultural sciences have characterized human agency as a meaningful process, to be understood against a background of socially created meaning. The socio-philosophical theory called Pragmatism has refined such analyses: agency is claimed to be above all a process of problem-solving. The individual is constantly confronted by new situations, which he or she attempts to overcome in ways that

are not entirely based on preconceived notions. The meaning of agency and its goals evolve in the very course of exercising agency, undergoing some measured degree of change despite the fact that the agent is restricted by social contexts and traditions. Within this concrete yet changeable arena of possibilities, creativity in actions is possible.

Competence in the exercise and scope of agency is developed in the course of exercising agency. Agency is in this sense "the temporally constructed engagement by actors with different structural environments ... through the interplay of habit, imagination, and judgment, both reproducing and transforming those structures in interactive response to the problems posed by changing historical situations." It is the constantly renewed and also repeated interactions between people that create the structures and traditions that define and limit the subsequent exercise of agency, which in turn also alters or even challenges those same structures and traditions.

It is characteristic of religion that, by introducing "divine" actors or authorities, it enlarges the field of agency, offering a wider range to the imagination and a wider choice of ways to intervene in a given situation. By attributing agency to "divine actors" (or the like), religion enables the human actor to transcend his or her situation and to devise correspondingly creative strategies for action—perhaps by initiating a ritual, or as a person possessed. But the converse is also possible. The same mechanism can also trigger a renunciation of personal agency, resulting in impotence and passivity, with agency being reserved for the quite "special" actors. Over time, agency thus comes to be delineated along increasingly definite lines and is enhanced in its effectiveness, so that ever more successful and sophisticated "schematizations" are undertaken. These are predicated on past exercises of agency; routines are thus established that facilitate ever more sweeping projections as to the future consequences of agency. This process happens in the context of hypothesis-framing and yields ever more apt "contextualizations" that aid in the practice-orientated assessment of the present state of the facts on the basis of social experience. It is not the single actor who "has" agency. Rather, in concrete negotiation with his or her structural environment, the individual finds spaces for initiatives and is imbued by others with the responsibility to act. Structures and the individual as actor reciprocally configure one another.

On the basis of such reflections, we might now feel prompted to sift the evidence for forms of religious learning and means of acquiring religious knowledge. Where could young people observe religion, and participate in it? How did they learn to interpret experiences as religious? Where was training in self-reflexion, the contemplation of an autonomous self, to be obtained? How could new religious roles or a religious name be assumed, so as to influence one's further interactions?

These and other questions will be addressed in the following chapters with an eye to opening new perspectives on religious agency.

Religious activity was also closely connected to the structuring of time by means of calendars, month-names, and lists of feast-days, a structuring based on "hypotheses" that designated particular days as especially suitable for communicating with

the gods and reflecting on the affairs of the community. Contrary to common assumptions, we shall see that none of this was carved in stone; rather it was ever susceptible to innovation and adjustment. Prophets and prophetic movements were able to exert enormous influence on future expectations, both individual and collective.

But it is also true that "contextualizations" in the here and now provided considerable scope for the creative exercise of religious agency. The character of space and time could be changed by acts of sacralization; distant actors, too—enemies behind city walls, fugitive thieves, travelers—could be reached remotely by means of rituals, oaths, and curses, or by inserting pins into dolls. By the transfer of religious capabilities and authority or the invocation of oracles, new directions could be given to political decisionmaking processes.

Religious Identity

The individual seldom acts alone. More often, he or she has the notion of acting as a member of a particular group: a family, a village, a specialinterest group, or even a "people" or "nation"; a notion that may be strongly situation-dependent, emphasizing now the one, now another identity, as a mother, a worshipper of Bona Dea, an adept of the Bible or of Stoic philosophy. Such notions, even when vaguely formed, can influence individual behavior. But we must always be clear that these are first and foremost notions of belonging, often failing to take

into account whether the group in question exists in the notions of others, or whether others count this person as belonging to the group. It is thus a matter of self-classification; of the individual's assessment of his or her membership and the significance he or she assigns it, in common with others insofar as such membership is discernible by them. It is an identity forged from a felt emotional connection and dependence (to the extent of a considerable overlapping of the personal and this collective identity), and its importance rests in the degree to which membership is embedded in everyday practice and characterizes personal behavior. Finally, it consists in the narratives associated with such notions, and a knowledge of the values, defining characteristics, and history of the group. In view especially of the gradual character of the development of religions in antiquity, it must be stressed that the term "group" does not imply an established association. A situation-dependent grouping of (not only human!) actors, among whom the individual in question does or does not number himself or herself, is sufficient. The many ancient inscriptions recording family relationships, citizenship, or place of origin can also be read as declarations of membership. For many, of course, this could lead to highly complex collective identities, involving various affiliations (and also dissociations).

It is precisely when our evidence of "religion" is confined to a few archaeological traces, a statuette here, fragments of a vase there, dogs' bones, or the post-holes of a suspected temple, that we must beware of reifying and essentializing these groups and communities. They are not simply defined by the close distribution of houses, identical practices, the same language, or similar votive gifts or gods. "Community is ... something that you do," and it is individuals who do it: ... how

people feel linked to particular places, just as who people think they are, and equally who they are not, determines how they associate themselves with others in space and through time, over generations, in shared memories or in agreed forgettings." The apparently archaic stability of the social context, of the locality, is often deceptive; it is only a snapshot of a reality in flux. The history of ancient religions cannot be described as a process that turned "tribal religions" into "world religions," as handbooks have had it until very recently.

Religious Communication

The issue of competence in communication provides a third way of looking at how an individual brings "religion" into play in his interaction with other people. But the fact that religion may at the same time be understood to be communication allows us to associate enhanced possibilities for communication with the growing variety of religious practices that existed in antiquity.

We do not know how and how often the majority of the inhabitants of the Roman Empire spoke with their gods or their God, or what they spoke about. But we have a considerable number of ancient texts that describe such communication, and tens or rather hundreds of thousands of direct witnesses to it, in the form of the remains of gifts, as well as visible documentation, intended to be permanent, in the form of votive inscriptions and dedications. This points to the dual character of much, although not necessarily all communication with the divine: the religious act is also a message to the actor's fellow humans, his audience or readership, to give witness by eye and ear. To cry *O Iuppiter, audi* ("Oh Jupiter, hear"), also means: "Look. I am pious. I am in league with the gods. Jupiter listens to me. Whoever is against me is also against the god and the divine order!"

We shall have to return later to the interpersonal functions of religious communication. It suffices at the moment to understand that this reaching out to the divine by participants in an action gets attention and creates relevance. In this latter term lies the key to understanding communication. In order for a communication to be successful, attention must be created by the promise of relevant information. This must be given credibly and audibly by the speaker, whose audience must indicate to him or her that they apprehend and believe the promise before the communication can proceed. In the rush and tumble of everyday affairs, only the promise of relevance (whatever form that promise takes) can attract attention to a communication that then changes those addressed (in ways that are never predictable!), and in this sense meets with success. It is not surprising that human beings extend these ground rules of communicative success to their communications with nonhumans.

To reach the gods, then, it is necessary to attract and retain their attention. The religious history of antiquity is also the history of how formal strategies were developed and employed in the Mediterranean world, in Italy and in Rome, to achieve that end, and how they were then refined or even radically questioned. In order, however, to understand these practices and the alterations they underwent, we must keep one ground rule in mind: "Hey, you ..." is more effective than "I should like to say ..." The key to success does not lie in making the correct selection from a catalogue of prayers, vows,

offerings, blood sacrifices, types of processions, and circus games (all according to the size of one's purse), but in how effective a combination of such communicative techniques one adopts. Here, the categorizations in classic Religious Studies texts give a quite false impression. Addressing a deity almost never involved merely a prayer, or only a sacrifice.

The very first consideration seems to have been location. An already established sanctuary testified to the success of others' efforts to communicate. It suggested the proximity of a deity, who lived in this place, or at least visited it quite frequently. Naïve confidence in the presence of the deity might in rapid order be replaced by philosophical considerations as to what conditions were conducive to the presence of an omnipotent deity: repeated reports of statues nodding to a supplicant do not mean that the deity and the statue were equated in conversation outside the temple. It was common for a deity to be invoked in another's sanctuary, and not considered unthinkable to document that successful act of communication by means of, say, an image of the alien god in that same place. On the other hand, it must be pointed out that the choice of an established time, perhaps the feast day of the particular sanctuary or god, was a far less important issue. The critical considerations were how urgent a need was, when a cult site could physically be reached, and whether one was even available. In many towns, for example, cult spaces dedicated to Mithras were not accessible for individual worship, or certainly not all of the time; if someone nevertheless wished to turn to this god, other public sanctuaries were available, as dedications to Mithras left in them testify.

Well-nigh every choice of location was preceded by the question as to how the divine was to be brought into the place. Systematizers like Fabius Pictor in the second century BC and the subsequently muchcited Marcus Terentius Varro in the mid-first century BC sought to assign a specialized deity to cover every possible source of danger, sometimes perhaps inventing them for the purpose (or perhaps, more precisely, inventing names of divinities that could readily be invoked), but in everyday reality recourse was held to a manageable number of popular deities that were present either at cult sites or in the form of images. The situation might remain even more amorphous, especially in rural areas and in the northwestern and western European provinces, where the divine might always be addressed in the plural, as a set of related figures (lunones, Matres, Fata), depicted in an idiosyncratic combination of iconographically standardized (and only thus recognizable to us as "identical") figurations. Accessing the divine in an architectural sanctuary, moreover, was not the only option, for a spring or a painted house-altar within one's own four walls was still a viable and in some situations preferred venue.

The invocation to the god or goddess was not just one of several elements within prayer, but rather the very foundation of the act of communication. It required intensification and could be extended in many ways so as to arouse increased attention and further charge the act with relevance. Foremost among the methods used was acoustic enhancement. The invocation was isolated from the bustle of the everyday by stillness. It was not made in everyday language. Formal speech

helped to ritualize the act of communication, elevating it above the ordinary. The effect was furthered by singing instead of merely speaking, and by instrumental music. By the choice of instruments, it was possible to connect with particular traditions, attract the attention of a specific deity, and signal that special connection to those present. We often come across the double-reeded tibia; but trumpet-like instruments, organs, and percussion instruments were also used. It seems that there were actual musical themes connected to certain sanctuaries.

Care was taken over choice of clothing, especially when the act of communication involved a high degree of public visibility. What was critical might be the color of the clothing, as for example the wearing of white in processions dedicated to Isis; or the type of garment chosen, such as the toga worn by Roman officials in the late Republic and early Imperial Age, and probably by Roman citizens generally on festive occasions. These very examples show that it was less a question of indicating a specific affinity than of signaling simply that a special kind of ritualized communication was in process; the toga was in fact normally white. But, on the other hand, even the choice of foliage for wreaths worn on the head was capable of expressing fine distinctions.

The attention of both the deity and of any passers-by could also be attracted by coordinated movement. Processions, either small or large, walking in step, were common. In the larger cities there was scarcely any other way of drawing large crowds of both participants and onlookers. Dances of highly varying degrees of exuberance, such as the "three-step" dances of the Roman salii (jumpers), and the more abandoned dances to Isis depicted on reliefs in Latium, also played a role. Self-flagellation, sometimes in public, was first practiced by monks in the eastern Mediterranean; and writers reported the castration of priests of Cybele; although this was surely not a public ritual open to observers.

Wide scope for communication was also provided by the custom, borrowed from the interpersonal realm, of bestowing gifts, which, by their material value, would heighten the relevance of the spoken message. These were chosen with a view to the intent of the communication (the fulfillment of a request, a demonstration of gratitude and praise, enduring harmony with the divine) and they had the capacity to secure that message in lasting form, at least until the object was cleared away. Both aesthetics and material worth could play a part in the choice of gift, but mass-produced miniaturizations were not unusual, and were apparently sufficient to attract divine attention. But lasting visibility was not necessary. Small gifts (accompanying the utterance of an oath, or documenting its success) might also be directly deposited in pits, sunk into rivers, or thrown into the fire and so destroyed or melted down. These practices will be treated in the next chapter on the early period. Unlike inscriptions, written messages (on stone or wooden tablets) in such cases would no longer be legible to others, excepting deities. On the basis of a specifically theological judgment as to what religion should be, modern scholarship has wrongly postulated that the term "magic" could be applied to these variant practices.

The gift did not have to be durable. The burning of incense, the presentation of selected foodstuffs (many different kinds of

cakes, for example), the odor from the preparation of animals that had been slaughtered and dedicated to the deity: all these were performance, enactments underlining the importance of the attempt at communication. Theatrical performances as gifts to deities were a specialty of the Greeks and then the Romans from the fifth century BC onward. They became quite elaborate, but were not without parallels in Central American and Southeast Asian cultures. In addition to dance and song, we should mention the phenomenon called in Latin *ludi* (games). These were competitions offered to the gods, usually to whole groups of gods, whose busts would be brought in procession to the circus and placed on special seats. Scaenic games (*ludi scaenici*) were dramatic productions staged for the gods; in Greece, and soon afterward in Rome also, we even find structures erected especially for these occasions.

We must keep in mind that such enormous architectural (and, of course, financial) endeavors were not funded by religious organizations, but as a rule relied on the initiative of individuals who wished, by such an undertaking, to give proof of their exceptional gratitude to and intimacy with a deity. Authorities such as city councils had to give their support for the projects and there was public wrangling over building sites, but it was individuals who took it upon themselves

to donate some of their war plunder or other gains to cover the costs, and it was they who decided on the architectural forms structures should take, and which particular deity would be honored. They thus established the religious infrastructure, and by their choices shaped the cult and decided which gods would be most easily accessible. In a word, they defined the "pantheon." We must also inquire into the social rules that determined which particular forms of communication should be employed. Who had access to these modes of communication? Did access depend on ethnicity, the office an individual held, prestige, or simply financial means? What monopolizing forces were operative, from the burning of unauthorized oracles to decisions regarding the architecture of amphitheaters? We must never forget, however, that the broad range of religious practices we have just surveyed offered a wide field in which individuals could obtain success, authority, respect, or even simply a living that was not available to them in other areas of social, political, or merely domestic activity.

As ancient religion increasingly came to comprise visible public acts, the private religious communication of individuals also began to draw audiences, who might either be present at a proceeding or, if absent, could hear about the event through metacommunicative means, through discourse about the proceedings by word of mouth or via secondary media (such as inscriptions or texts). The animal sacrifice required a feast committee; vows were spoken out loud; and many forms of divination took place in public. As a result, the act of communication in addressing a deity was received by an audience beyond the intended addressee. The vow spoken aloud by the army commander not only reached the deity, but also demonstrated the commander's religious competence to his soldiers, who were likewise his intended audience.

But the public character of religious communication not only had the effect of giving further levels of meaning to

communication between humans and gods. Public exposure also played the role of a witness, lending extra weight to a communication that was otherwise so asymmetric and so liable to failure, or at least subjecting it to the scrutiny of socially tested rules of obligation, reciprocity, and deference. Where the element of public witness was absent, written forms were available quite early in the Greco-Roman world, as is attested by curse tablets and inscribed votive texts.

Religion as a Strategy at the Level of the Individual

I have defined religion as the extension of a particular environment beyond the immediately plausible social milieu of living humans: and frequently also animals. Such an extension may involve forms of agency, ways of structuring identity, and means of communication. What enters into any given milieu that is beyond the "immediately plausible" can vary in ways that are entirely culture-dependent; plausibility, "worthiness of applause," is itself a communicative rhetorical category. In one instance it might apply to the dead, in another to gods conceived as having human form, or even to places whose location is not fixed in terms of mere topography, or to humans beyond a sea. What in a particular culture may be understood as not normally plausible depends on the boundaries drawn by the student of religion observing that culture. This is evident in the concentration on "gods" discernible in my own examples; but it can also be seen in demarcations such as my radical rejection of a boundary between religion and magic.

A high degree of investment in the construction of initially implausible actors as "social partners" consistently produces in the person making that investment an "excess" of confidence, power, or problemsolving capacity, an outcome that in turn becomes precarious on account of the way it disadvantages others, who may then seek to defend themselves against it. Sacralization, declaring objects or processes in the immediately plausible, visible environment to be "holy," is one element of such an investment strategy. The investment metaphor can easily be illustrated by the enormous outlay religions regularly devote to media, cult images, and sanctuaries, as well as to complex rituals and texts as strategies for communication, a topic I touched on above, under the heading "Religious Communication." We should also, however, think about the ways in which religion reinforces inferior status. This is a process that some affected individuals counter by efforts at social change within the religious context, while others turn their backs on religion to pursue social mobility on their own (when they do not turn to quietism).

With these introductory observations, I have not sought to provide answers to the question of the great religious transformations, but rather to indicate the questions that still remain to be posed, the observations that yet need to be wrung from source material that is often all too sparse. I have also hinted at interdependencies and mechanisms of reinforcement in the field of religious development: the acquisition of competencies both strengthens communication and lowers the thresholds confronting it, and a denser communication network intensifies the need on the part of the individual actor to develop more complex collective identities

This is not to say that this model describes a stable pathway, a definite evolutionary trajectory, or a system in equilibrium. Rather, over the course of time in many of the areas we need to consider, it is possible to observe movement in different and even contradictory directions. The processes we observe—individualization, mediatization, and institutionalization—are all commonly regarded as indicators of modernization rather than as facets of the religious history of the ancient Mediterranean. But, by observing these processes, and working with the concept of religion as we have defined it, we shall be able to accomplish our goal; namely, to observe and explicate the highly unstable phenomenon that is the religion of the ancient Mediterranean world in all its guises: the entire Pantheon. Time after time in the following chapters, we shall see how each of these facets turns into an epochal process.

Our attention will turn first from the Mediterranean and Italy to various locations in central Italy and Etruria (chapters II—IV), where evidence is to be found that will ease our understanding of Iron Age religious practices. Only then will the narrative turn to Rome under the middle and late Republic (chapters V—VI) and in the Augustan Age (chapter VII). But Rome was never isolated, as will be made clear time and again in these chapters. It engaged in exchange and competition with other central-Italic centers and with actors around the Mediterranean. We will therefore turn our attention increasingly to this wider arena as we come to consider the Imperial Age, beginning with religious practices during the early part of that period (chapter VIII). Many developments regarding both the available store of religious signs (chapter IX) and the evolution of religious expertise and authority can be understood only in the context of the Mediterranean region as a whole, and the exchange of people, goods and knowledge that was given extra impetus by the Roman Empire (chapter X). This same broader context also becomes critically important when it comes to the self-conceptions and orientations of individuals and local groups, and continues to affect their religious conceptions and practices into Late Antiquity (chapters XI—XII). My narrative ends in the mid-fourth century: not with the end of Roman religion, nor with the privileging of Christian groups, nor with the expansion of Islam. Rather, the end-point, the culmination of all the far-reaching changes undergone in the course of history by the practices, conceptions, and institutions covered here, consists in the phenomenon now associated worldwide with the concept of "religion." And yet my epilogue (chapter XIII) seeks to demonstrate how open the situation still was in the fourth century, and how contingent has been the historical course since taken.

Empire and Religion Religious Change in Greek Cities under Roman Rule edited by Elena Muñoz Grijalvo, Juan Manuel Cortés Copete, Fernando Lozano Gómez [Impact of Empire, Brill, 9789004347106]

[Empire and Religion](#) reflects on the nature of religious change in the Greek cities under Roman rule. The fascinating and fluid

process of religious transformation is interpreted in this book in line with the logics of empire.

When peace is brought about, we do all those things which are not only most pleasant for mortals but also tokens of happiness: we bedeck ourselves with garlands, offer sacrifice, and hold high festival. DIO CHRYSOSTOM, *To the Nicomedians on concord with the Nicaeans*.

All the studies in this volume, which expounds the nature and extent of religious continuity and change in the Greek-speaking cities of the Roman Empire as a consequence of their integration in the imperial framework, were presented and comprehensively discussed at a workshop held in Seville in November 2014. In addition to the stimulating and pleasant atmosphere of those days, the workshop seemed to the organizers, from its inception, an auspicious initiative that brought together a lively group of scholars eager to engage in two somewhat disregarded subjects: Greek civic religion in Roman times and the impact of the Roman Empire on traditional religions.

This book seeks to lend weight to the assertion that, as Susan Alcock put it at the beginning of the 1990s when speaking about research on Greece under Roman domination, 'times are changing.' The fact that Greek traditional religion remained apparently immutable in Roman times (already a reality since the Hellenistic period) is the reason behind the lack of interest shown by modern scholars in the subject. Up until the last decades of the 20th century, civic religion was interpreted as zombie of sorts, a living corpse whose meaning was anything but religious. It is ironic that scholars living in a religious environment as insusceptible to change as the Christian milieu seemed happy to conclude that ritual continuity should simply be interpreted as a lack of religious momentum. However, continuity is never mere survival: faced with a new context, it ought to be analysed as change. Those participating in apparently archaic rites in the Greek cities of the Roman era were immersed in an essentially new framework of meaning. Hence, the study of post-classical Greek religion ought to be worth the effort because, seen from this quite underestimated perspective, it begs an almost endless range of questions. To give just one example, religious continuity included such interesting developments as the instrumentalization of traditional religion by the elites as a means of maintaining civic control and accessing central government. From this point of view, the performance of evidently ancient rites in allegedly the same way as they had been done for ages probably meant different things to the various social groups taking part in them. Thus, this book offers a wealth of suggestions about how ritual continuity might be analysed to obtain a clearer picture of religious life in the Greek world under Roman sway.

But, needless to say, there is more to it than the mere continuity of seemingly old-fashioned rituals. The integration of the Greek cities in the wider context of the Roman Empire contributed to produce countless alterations in their religious life as a whole. On the basis of epigraphic sources, recent studies have shown deep shifts in the actual practice of rituals, in the management of cults, and even in religious feelings. In this book, we will be dealing with changes relating, in one way or another, to the Roman presence in the Greek cities, which

have somehow been overlooked until only recently. Particularly thought-provoking are those transformations which were not caused by the direct intervention of Rome in the religious affairs of the Greek provinces, either as arbitrator or as the ultimate authority. There are extraordinarily interesting examples of such changes, including, for instance, those analysed by A. Chaniotis in a recent volume of the series *Impact of Empire*.⁵ Certainly, there was indeed one outstanding change directly related to Roman rule: the introduction of imperial cult. Its profound impact altered the religious life of all the inhabitants of the Empire once and for all. However, our main interest here is to highlight those changes in which the hand of Rome was not so visible, such as the transformations within Roman cults (including imperial cult) as a consequence of their contact with traditional Greek religion.

The approach to imperial cult studies may serve as a good example of the kind of perspective taken in this book. Some recent developments in what has been referred to as the 'Romanization debate' offer us interesting insights into cultural transformations in Roman times. Instead of addressing the subject in terms of imperialism, colonialism, or related topics, and setting aside centreperiphery models, emphasis is now put on those 'homogenising elements' which are 'differentially incorporated into local cultures,' and on the simultaneous universalization of local developments. From this angle, it is easier to understand how imperial cult in the provinces was not merely an imperial undertaking or even an initiative of the provincial elites, but a far more complex issue which included among other things the establishment of essentially different imperial cults in the cities, depending on essentially different outskirts. 'Imperial cult' may be understood, as the rest of the cultural processes comprising Romanization, as a wider phenomenon which included, for instance, the influence of local interpretations of the ruler cult on imperial designs, the integration of the new cult into the network of pre-existing civic rituals, or even profound internal mutations within traditional religions.

To our mind, the presence of Rome in the provinces might explain a number of developments which can hardly be understood otherwise, even though it was not apparently the driving force behind them. The proliferation of supracivic networks as by-products of imperial logic is perhaps the most obvious and significant one, as it fostered the exchange of religious ideas all over the Roman Empire. Other processes were more specifically related to the Greek-speaking cities and their elites. Two of these processes, widely known as 'oligarchization' and 'Hellenization', have already been interpreted in recent works. Let us now dwell briefly on the first of these. Generally speaking, Rome concentrated more and more power—also religious power—in the hands of the elites. Rather than producing radical shifts in the development of traditional Greek rituals, oligarchization led to, among other things, an intensification of the dynamics of religious euergetism, as had been the case in Rome, especially since Augustus closed ranks in the promotion of (his own interpretation of) classical Roman religion. Apart from the material consequences of euergetism, one of the religious

repercussions of oligarchization might have been the growing divide between traditional religion, increasingly dominated by the elites, and the people at large.

To a certain degree, the so-called 'Hellenization' helped to create a similar effect. 'Hellenization' could be defined here as the (political, literary, artistic, and also religious) process of elaboration of an unequivocally Greek identity in Roman times, which encompassed archaic and traditional implications intersected with Roman concerns. The extent to which Rome played an active role in the construction of Greek identity is open to debate. In any case, it is interesting to note that, as pointed out by S. Lambert, rather than 'archaizing', it might be better understood as 'modernizing', given that it had to do mainly with modern (i.e. Roman) times. From a religious point of view, it is also important to underline wholly artificial aspects. In an attempt to emphasize the conservative and pious image of the Greek part of the Empire, as well as its 'Greekness', Greek cities applied themselves to the task of displaying their (genuinely Greek) mythical origins, of resurrecting long forgotten rites, and even of inventing supposedly archaic traditions. Always open to the introduction of the 'Roman factor' (emperors and other Roman gods), this version of Greek traditional religion consolidated the position of Greek elites as champions of the established order. So far, so good, though one question still remains: to what extent was the reinvented religious life resulting from this process shared by members of the different social strata existing in the cities.

The real scope of religious change is just one of so many questions that still remain unanswered. Religious continuity and transformation in the Greek cities of Roman times were the result of oligarchization, Hellenization, and a vast number of related processes. Through the analysis of different case studies, this volume aims to underline some specific factors which also contributed to transform the overall picture: firstly, the enhancement of local features of religious life in the cities, somehow paradoxically related to Roman rule (Heller, Muñiz, and Camia); secondly, the active role of Hellenism (in the new, 'Hellenized' version typical of Roman times) in the design of imperial religious policies which were implemented in other provinces (Rosillo-López, Gordillo, and Galimberti); and, thirdly, the different local consequences of central religious initiatives and their influence in other imperial contexts (Cortés, Melfi, Lozano, and Rizakis).

The Enhancement of Local Aspects of Religious Life

In a detailed analysis of honorific titles in Roman Asia Minor, Anna Heller concludes that local priorities seemed to have been first and foremost in the minds of the people distinguished in inscriptions. The impact of Rome can be glimpsed in the increasingly widespread custom of displaying honorific titles in inscriptions and, indubitably, in the proliferation of titles such as *philosebastos*, *philokaisar*, or *philoromaioi*. However, on the strength of an examination of over 20,000 Greek inscriptions from Asia Minor, dated from Hellenistic and Roman times, a number of unexpected conclusions can be reached. The most documented offices were *archiereus* and *hiererus*, both ranking at the top of the pecking order of title-holders. But the honorific titles most frequently attached to them emphasized their links to their home cities:

philopatris and son (of the city, the people, the council, and so on) are more frequently attested than other titles relating to the emperor. Some interesting local peculiarities in the overall picture further invite us to consider that the city and its ideology remained the main focus for most of the notables.

The presence of Rome is also central to understand an apparently minor change in the Athenian 'prytany decrees', a series of 200 inscriptions of the Hellenistic and Roman periods honouring prytaneis in general, and their tamias in particular, for having successfully performed their duties. From the 1st century BC, the decrees increasingly emphasized the importance of the tamias and his funding of public sacrifices, to the detriment of other public institutions, such as the demos.

Quite a time ago, Oliver put forward an explanation for the changes in the decrees grounded on strictly local factors, focusing on the widespread economic crisis in Athens and the general reluctance to assume religious duties. In her paper, Elena Muñiz offers a different explanation by linking epigraphic developments to a more general change in the dynamics of evergetism, ultimately related to Roman influence and to the construction of the image of the local elites. On the one hand, the growing importance of religious offices and honours had to do with Roman standards; on the other, the instrumentalization of sacrifice by the elites which may be deduced from the prytany decrees was an idiosyncratically Athenian phenomenon, which brought with it some highly local consequences, such as a fundamental shift in the meaning of public sacrifice in Athens.

An extremely well-balanced equilibrium between religious continuity and change, and also between Roman intervention and local interests, could be seen at the sanctuary of Eleusis. Francesco Camia provides an updated panorama of the activities of Roman emperors at Eleusis: personal initiation; appointment to Eleusinian offices; and numerous evergetic activities, including the promotion of imperial cult and other related imperial undertakings. Imperial initiatives at Eleusis, though, may not be properly understood unless they are measured against the parallel instrumentalization of the sanctuary by the Greek elites. Eleusis had always been, and was increasingly so in Roman times, an exclusive stage on which the elites flaunted their social status. Under Roman rule, some local peculiarities, such as the annual election of children as hearth-initiates, became increasingly popular among the principal Athenian families. Local religious life, once more, was reinforced as a consequence of imperial dynamics.

The Promotion of Hellenism Under the Imperial Aegis

A close study of the relationship between Rome and the Greek sanctuaries affected by the abuses of Roman magistrates is the subject of Cristina Rosillo-López's contribution to this book. Both extortion and spoliation by Roman magistrates and disputes with tax collectors over levies constituted the basis of the assiduous communications between Roman masters and Greek subjects. As a rule, the importance of Greek sanctuaries in Roman communication strategies regarding the Greek world, as well as the avowedly common historical and religious origins of Greeks and Romans, guaranteed better results for the Greeks than for the rest of the provincials. However, in the 1st century BC a standard procedure for dealing with Roman

abuses was devised, thus signalling the end of the privileges the Greeks had enjoyed (at least theoretically), since they were subject, thenceforth, to a legal procedure that they themselves had decisively contributed to shape.

In ancient times, few things were perceived by the people as more 'Hellenic' than the agonistic rituals. Nevertheless, this characteristically Greek reality was intellectually colonized by the Romans in a similar fashion. Through an analysis of a series of imperial measures related to the management of the agones, Rocío Gordillo sheds light on the ambiguous relationship between Hellenism and Roman culture. At first sight, it was the agonistic imagery that had invaded Roman life, rather than vice versa. From the time of the Republic onwards, agonistic rituals were absorbed into very traditional Roman festivals, such as the triumphus, or were performed in Rome within the context of imperial cult. However, when the emperors undertook the reorganization of the agonistic associations, or granted privileges to the agones at the expense of other games, or regulated the calendar of the different agones that took place in the Empire, they were not merely integrating Greek elements into Roman public spectacles, but also creating an essentially different ritual which was not only Greek but Roman as well or, more concisely, 'imperial'. No doubt imperial support contributed to expand and reinforce the world of the agones and, therefore, Hellenism. But the imperial version of Hellenism, as represented by the agones which had been reorganized by Trajan and Hadrian, was a new Graeco-Roman product.

Hellenism was also a substantial element of a well-known imperial device: the cult of Antinous. On the basis of a report on the trial of a Roman governor, probably a prefect of Egypt, conventionally known as Acta Maximi I and II, in which a certain Maximus is charged with, among other things, corrupting young boys, Alessandro Galimberti shows that the memory of Antinous was widespread enough to constitute one of the factors that might explain such texts, be they historical or not. The echoes of Antinous' affaire had reached every corner of the Roman Empire by way of his cult. Exclusively designed under Hadrian's auspices, it included several deeply Hellenic factors: it might be understood as a new heroic cult; the foundation of the city of Antinopolis in Egypt followed the parameters of any Greek city, the name of its demoi recalling, among other things, the initiation of Hadrian at Eleusis; games in honour of Antinous were established all over the Empire; and the pais was assimilated to several Greek gods and maybe also the recipient of some sort of mystery rite. When the Greek cities (and the cities of the Empire at large) embraced the new cult of Antinous, therefore, they believed that they were receiving a high measure of Hellenism in return. However, what they were in fact receiving was a Roman selection of some specific features of traditional Greek religion.

Local Versions of Central Religious Initiatives ... and Back

As we have seen, imperial dynamics may have been behind the dissemination of Roman versions of Greek religion. The following papers also use imperial logic as a key to analyse different local reactions to central initiatives and the spreading of these local 'products' across the Empire.

Juan Manuel Cortés Copete focuses on the kind of homage paid to the Emperor Hadrian by his Greek subjects, which may be a good example of the above. His frequent travels and sojourns in the cities all over the Empire were an unprecedented way of ruling, which made a deep impression on his people. In the Greek world, Hadrian's generally beneficial presence gave rise to a characteristically Greek way of honouring him. The emperor was assimilated to several Greek gods particularly well-disposed towards humankind, all-powerful, and, at the same time, close and attentive to men. Asklepius, the Dioscuri, and Heracles represented that kind of god, dispensers of gifts to humanity and themselves initiated, as Hadrian, in the Eleusinian Mysteries. The homage paid to the emperor in the Greek cities included this characteristically Greek way of understanding his power, which fitted in perfectly with his own choice of the title of Olympian in 129 an. The cult of theos Hadrian was fully integrated into the structures of Greek civic religion and included different local initiatives, such as the worship of 'Hadrian among the gods' endorsed by the Spartan Theophrastus, whose impact on the construction of an imperial theology ought not to be overlooked.

The integration of this new cult into the Greek 'pantheon' constitutes a further example of essentially different responses to central devices. Milena Melfi analyses a series of altars in the sanctuary of Asclepius at Epidaurus, two of which were dedicated to the 'pantheon'. She interprets these unusual dedications as a Greek way of integrating Hadrian's initiatives around the idea of the pantheon, varyingly developed in Rome and Athens. While in Greece the new cult was never related to imperial cult, in the western part of the Empire it probably was closely linked to that of the Augusti, as suggested by the dedication Pantheo Augusto or by the fact that some dedicants were *seviri augustales*. Melfi concludes that the new 'pantheon' promoted by Hadrian might have meant 'all things to all men'.

The way of organizing imperial cult in the Empire also differed from place to place. After a historiographical review of the customarily accepted equation 'koinon = province', Fernando Lozano concludes that local and regional traits were taken into account and willingly accepted by the emperors. As a consequence, a much more complex reality emerges: for instance, provinces with more than one koinon; cities from different provinces joining the same koinon; or twin provinces where at least two different koina coexisted. This complex situation was not only accepted, but also cultivated by the emperors, who also acknowledged the higher status of certain cities within the leagues. Thus, local idiosyncrasies did not only form part of the organization of imperial cult in the provinces, but were also reformulated in Roman terms. The emperors fostered a particular territorial hierarchy, leading to an uneven distribution of power among and within the different koina which was aimed to serve Roman interests. Pre-existing local situations helped to shape imperial innovation, while at the same time being transformed in accordance with supra-civic dynamics.

Lastly, Athanasios Rizakis deals with the specifically local development of a wholly Roman initiative: the religious evolution of the Roman colony of Philippi, in Macedonia. As to

the customary reorganization of the cults that followed the foundation of any Roman colony, Philippi did not resort to the federal divinities that had usually acted as 'bridges' between the previous local situation and the new Roman status. Thus, at first, Philippi was more Roman in aspect than any other colony in the area. From then on, however, Philippi followed a path entirely of its own design. Both topographically and chronologically, the Macedonian colony's heterogeneous religious aspects followed an increasingly more indigenous pattern that, nonetheless, had been deeply influenced by its Roman history.

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Excerpt:

Some Thoughts on the Cult of the Pantheon ('All the Gods?') in the Cities and Sanctuaries of Roman Greece by Milena Melfi

A large number of small stone altars, not more than one metre tall and 30 to 40 cm wide, were dedicated in the Sanctuary of Asklepios at Epidaurus between the 2nd and the 3rd century an. Beyond their size, what they had in common was the inscription of very short dedicatory formulas and a sparing use of decoration. They were dedicated to Asklepios and his family as much as to the most disparate gods, heroes, and

personifications. Distributed in various parts of the sanctuary, there are good reasons to believe that there were over 100 specimens in the sacred area by the 4th century an, when the altars were inventoried and marked with numbers and symbols. The numbers are in a sequence that ends in the high nineties, while the symbols seem to identify the divinity to whom the altar was dedicated.

Some of the altars can safely be dated between 128 and 355 an because they were all dedicated by sacred officials at different stages of their religious careers (mostly pyrophoroi and hiereis) and adopted very accurate dating formulas, all starting from the year of Hadrian's visit to the sanctuary in 124 AD. References to the life and deeds of the emperor were so precise that one of the most important pieces of chronology of Hadrian's reign is preserved on one of these altars, dedicated to Epione and Asklepios by the priest Euthyches, dated three years after the dedication of the Temple of Zeus Olympios at Athens and the foundation of the Panhellenion, and 10 years after the emperor's visit to Epidaurus. The fact that Hadrianic dating formulas are used until as late as nearly 200 years after their first introduction confirms that the emperor (and/ or his visit) must have played a special role in the inception of the practice.

The great majority of the altars cannot be precisely dated, but, nonetheless, certainly belong to the same period. Among them are two unusual dedications to the pantheon both by priests of Asklepios: Hierokles son of Aphrodeisios dedicated after a dream, while a hieresus Daos records the setting up of an altar.⁴ The recipient of the dedications should be understood as the collective body of all gods, rather than a single syncretic entity under the name of Pantheios. This is suggested by the fact that both altars are marked with the same symbol, as is a third one bearing the much clearer and more common dedication to Pasi kai Pasais. The dedication is dated to 166 an and the symbol is in itself very clear: a circle connecting 12 points.

The only other dedication to the pantheon known to me from the Greek world comes from the sanctuary of Demeter at Pergamon. It is once again placed on an altar of similar shape and size, and is dedicated by another cult official, a Marcus Aurelius Menogenes, hierophantes and prytanis.⁵ Its date should be placed between the second half of the 2nd and the beginning of the 3rd century an. Here, again, the recipient of the dedication is clearly intended as the collective body of all gods, since, as noted by Fraenkel, the name is preceded by the definite article.

The Nature of the Cult

Both the Pantheon, as an abstraction, or Pantheios, as a single divine personification of all gods refer to a fundamental concept in Greek religion, that of the body of the 12 gods of Olympus or Dodekatheion. Yet all studies of the concept performed to date have failed to describe which deities should be included in the 12 and whether these were ever considered to be a coherent unit. Unsurprisingly, Charlotte Long's most recent research provided a list of 54 divinities which, at one time or another, were identified as members of the 'twelve'. This further emphasizes the difficulty of identifying

Dodekatheion and Pantheon as being identical concepts, and of speaking of a single Pantheon/Dodekatheion applicable to diverse and often distant communities. The pantheon of the Greek cities, or of larger ethnic communities, was in fact the reflection of their history, politics, and territorial arrangement. Cults were physically woven into the fabric of the settlements they belonged to, and religion 'embedded' in the life of the community, following the much debated, but still fundamentally valid, models proposed by De Polignac and Sourvinou-Inwood. Ultimately, every community had its own pantheon that might have consisted of 12 or more gods, chosen from a vast array of divinities, and could be manipulated according to political or social needs. For most of the history of ancient Greek communities, the pantheon was therefore an abstraction, an empty container that could be filled with a much more substantiated, and very flexible, number of gods according to the specific context. This might be the reason why, in contrast to the numerous dedications to 'all gods' or to 'the twelve gods' throughout the most disparate periods of ancient history, very few dedications to the Pantheon/Pantheion as such survive, and the first appearance of the name in Greece, at Epidaurus, is extraordinary to say the least.

The only time in history when that of the pantheon developed into a fairly uncommon, but well-established, form of worship was the Hadrianic period, when the most famous monument dedicated to its cult was rebuilt in Rome by the emperor (118–125 AD). This was originally erected by Agrippa in the 20s BC, possibly as a dynastic monument to celebrate the gens Iulia and its patron gods on the very site of Romulus' apotheosis. Only under Hadrian's impulse, nevertheless, did it become a radically innovative cultic building that reflected the emperor's tastes in monumental architecture and religious speculation. Its large, unprecedented, semicircular dome symbolized the vault of heaven and immediately provided the vision of a space harmoniously inhabited by all gods together. Since it is known that Hadrian sat under the same dome to hold court, the cult building must have served at the same time as a way of creating a direct link between the emperor and all gods of heaven.

The rebuilding of the Pantheon in Rome and the promotion of its cult seem to have triggered, to a certain extent, its diffusion in the west of the Empire.

From Rome itself comes a small number of Latin inscriptions from altars, bearing the dedication Pantheo Sacro, and in one instance Pantheo Augusto Sacro. They attest to the existence of the cult during the reign of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, if not a little later. But the most coherent and consistent group of inscriptions comes from Spain. In Hispalis, Munigua, and Complutum, altars bear dedications to a Pantheo Augusto,¹⁵ while a longer inscription from Astigi records the offering of a bronze statue of Pantheus, possibly as a single syncretic god. These dedications were all dated between the 2nd and the 3rd century an, offered in public civic spaces by freedmen holding various public offices, and have all been interpreted as connected to the figure of the emperor. This is suggested by the use of the epithet Augustus, and by the fact that at least three of the four dedicants are Seviri Augustales, in attendance to the cult of the emperors.

In the East, the reconstruction of the Roman Pantheon was paralleled by the erection of an equally authoritative sanctuary at Athens dedicated to 'all gods in common'. We know practically nothing about the building, probably completed at the time of Hadrian's third visit to the city in 131–132 AD, except from the fact that all imperial benefactions to Greeks and foreigners alike were inscribed therein. It has been tentatively recognized in a large complex, excavated some 50 metres east of Hadrian's library and the Roman agora, but many doubts remain on both its identification and date. That Pausanias mentions the sanctuary when listing the works completed under the emperor in the area of the river Ilissos has, however, led other scholars to suggest a location of the sanctuary for 'all gods in common' in the vicinity of the Olympieion. In the same area, the pseudo-Aristotelian *De Mirabilibus Auscultationibus* reports the existence of a Pantheon, using such a name for the first and only time in ancient literature to indicate a sanctuary in Athens. This passage has been mostly ignored in the literature and is generally considered an unreliable source, but the most current hypothesis suggests that it is the result of a post-Hadrianic interpolation of the original Hellenistic text. Here, the original sentence mentioning an otherwise unknown Pantheon in Olympia triggers the later juxtaposition of an explanation concerning a much more famous contemporary Pantheon in Athens. It might therefore offer us an alternative definition for the hieron of 'all gods in common', coherent with contemporary developments in the western part of the Empire, as much as a precise hint for the location of the building in the Ilissos valley.

Pausanias' report may imply that the establishment in Athens of the sanctuary to 'all gods in common', possibly known also as 'Pantheon', triggered the development of a new cult in Greece, as had happened in the West. The writer uses, in fact, a special wording for defining the hieron founded by Hadrian: 'all gods in common' (θ ε ο ἰς πᾶσιν ἰε ρ ὄν κ ο ἰ ν ὄ ν), not just the widespread and well-known 'all gods' (θ ε ο ἰς πᾶσιν). Interestingly, this expression is never attested in any earlier literary or documentary sources and recurs only four times in the *Description of Greece*, suggesting that in the 2nd century AD it was endowed with a very specific meaning. In Olympia and Lykosoura, altars were dedicated to 'all gods in common'; at Orneai (near Argos), in the sanctuary of Artemis, and at Marios (Laconia) there were temples 'dedicated to all gods in common' or 'common to all gods'. In Olympia, in particular, Pausanias clearly distinguished the altar for 'all gods in common' from those 'to all gods' for ritual reasons that will be described below. The question of whether the cult of the Pantheon corresponds to that of 'all gods in common' is intriguing and cannot be easily answered, but the appearance of both in Greece seems to be contemporary. Should we decide to give credit to the testimony of the pseudo-Aristotle, the fact that the Athenian cult building reported by Pausanias as dedicated to 'all gods in common' was also known as 'Pantheon' will confirm the identification of the two cults.

The Ritual

The Epidaurian altars dedicated to the Pantheon bear symbols and numbers; they were therefore included in the inventory of

altars described at the beginning of this paper. This was clearly aimed at counting and classifying the altars in a later phase of the cult, at keeping a record of numbers and sequence of gods, at a time when this was likely to be forgotten, possibly at the beginning of the 4th century AD. The numbering must have followed a topographical sequence, since altars that were found next to one another, although dedicated to different deities, bore either the same numbers or numbers in close succession. It is therefore highly likely that the sequence of altars marked a route throughout the sanctuary, possibly following the performance of a precise ritual, where offerings were presented to the various deities in a fixed order. The inventory was clearly a way of preserving the memory of the original ritual. The sequence of the gods, as it is preserved, does not appear to me particularly telling: gods and goddess are mixed without an obvious order, although Asklepios, Apollo, and the healing family seem to occupy prime positions (in order of appearance and by number of altars). The altar to the Pantheon dedicated by Hierokles was No. 12 in the sequence, followed by that to Pasi kai Pasai at No. 13, while the altar dedicated by Daos was No. 87.

This situation has an unexpected comparison in Pausanias' description of the altars at Olympia, among which was one altar for 'all gods in common'. Besides the main altar of Zeus, as a matter of fact Pausanias lists around 70 altars, dedicated to the most disparate divinities, often coinciding with those of Epidaurus. He also specifies that 'his narrative will follow in dealing with them in the order in which the Eleans are used to sacrifice on the altars.' As a result, he offers us an extraordinary account of the ritual route that, from the Altis to the slopes of the hill of Chronos and out of the sanctuary, around the hippodrome and the gymnasium, marked the worship of a number of gods, heroes, and personifications. With respect to this description, it has been suggested that he availed himself of a catalogue or inventory of altars, possibly not dissimilar to the one that must have existed later on in Epidaurus. At the end of his description, Pausanias also specifies that the ceremony took place once a month, and that the religious officers called to perform the sacrifice on all the altars in one single day were a theokolos, the manteis, the spondophoroi, an exegetes, and a flutist (all independently attested in inscriptions of the imperial period from the sanctuary). We have, therefore, a precise account of a monthly ritual performed at the sanctuary of Olympia by the main cult officials that can help us to better understand the ritual practice at Epidaurus. Here, it similarly appears that libations and offerings were placed on all the altars in a topographical sequence during one single ceremony and that the main sacred officials were responsible for the performance of the ritual, since all the altars were dedicated by pyrophoroi and hierois. Maybe a similar situation can also be also hypothesized in Lykosoura, where the altar to 'all gods in common' was also part of a series, according to the description of Pausanias.

In his account of the altars at Olympia, Pausanias also highlights an important ritual detail concerning the altar of 'all gods in common'. He specifies that, while the Eleans 'burn on the altars incense with wheat that has been kneaded with honey, placing also on the altars twigs of olive, and using wine

for libation,' only to the Nymphs, the Mistresses, and 'all gods in common' do they not pour wine. These are specific libations, known in Greek religion as *Nephalia*, normally offered to chthonian gods, the dead, deities of the earth, special categories of divine beings, and rites of purification. It is unclear, in this context, why 'all gods in common' should be the recipients of such offerings, although what is indeed evident is that their altar, together with a few others, is clearly distinguished from the rest (including the one to 'all gods'— $\theta \epsilon \omega \nu \pi \acute{\alpha} \nu \tau \omega \nu$) and singled out by the performance of special rites.

A 'New' Cult?

It is undeniable that a modest, and possibly selective, diffusion of the cult of the Pantheon/Pantheon can be traced in both the east and west of the Empire, from the reign of Hadrian onwards, and in particular after the reconstruction of the Pantheon in Rome and the foundation of the cult place for 'all gods in common' in Athens. The insertion of the cult in the ritual workings of the Asklepieion at Epidaurus might have been directly connected to Hadrian, especially in consideration of his consistent interventions in the life of the sanctuary. After his visit to Epidaurus in 124 AD, the emperor seems to have enforced a new dating system and new regulations concerning both the annual rota of religious officials and the recurrence of the games. The fact that these changes started at the very time of Hadrian's visit and that the adjectives *soter* and *oikistes* were attached to his name in inscriptions in his honour suggest that a sort of refoundation of the Asklepieion took place during his reign. From the point of view of the cult, besides the dedications to the Pantheon discussed above, there are at least three other votive inscriptions conceptually related to the religious world of the Hadrianic period: two to Zeus Panhellenios and Zeus Olympios, respectively, and one to Antinous.

By the same token, the testimonies of a cult of 'all gods in common' in Orneai, Marios, Lykosoura, and Olympia might be connected to the same visit of the emperor to the Peloponnese in the autumn of 124 AD. After visiting Megara, and crossing the Isthmus to Epidaurus, the imperial party probably travelled from Troezen, along the opposite coast, to Argos. From Argos to the following stop at Mantinea, the road must have passed by Orneai, as is confirmed by Pausanias' description of the area: '[...] from the gate at the ridge of the city of Argos' to 'Lyrkea at about sixty stadia, and from Lyrkea to Orneai at the same distance.' The party would have then continued south, through Tegea, to Sparta, where the emperor arrived in January 125 AD and spent a considerable time. To trace the origins of the sanctuary of 'all gods in common' at Marios back to this period is still pure speculation. From Sparta onwards, Hadrian's route is not very clear, but he is generally believed to have visited Olympia, possibly passing by Megalopolis and Lykosoura.

A similar pattern of dissemination of the cult, strongly connected to Hadrian's personality and his travels, has also been suggested for the dedications from Spain. These should also be dated to the years following the emperor's trip there in 123 AD and might have been a direct consequence of his presence in the area.³⁶ Nevertheless, the evidence from Spain

appears to be more coherent and probably slightly earlier than that from Greece, with one fundamental difference: the idea of a direct and explicit association of the cult with the emperor. Indeed, all the Spanish dedications bear the epithet 'Augustus' and are offered in public civic spaces by officers of the imperial cult. This affords a precise connection with the way Hadrian crafted the religious concept of the pantheon and expressed it in architectural forms in Rome. The Roman Pantheon was at the same time a place of worship of all gods in the heavens and a place of cult of past emperors, where the living emperor sat alone among the immortals. The concept of the pantheon in Spain and Rome could not therefore be easily dissociated from that of the emperor's divinity.

This situation is very different from that attested in Greece. In the Asklepieion at Epidaurus, the altars dedicated to the Pantheon appear no different from those dedicated to the other gods, heroes, or group of divinities and are likely to have shared the same ritual. Similarly, in Pergamon, where one single altar to the Pantheon was found, this was one of many others for the most disparate divinities, dedicated in the Sanctuary of Demeter by cult officials. The same can be inferred from Pausanias' description of the altars to 'all gods in common' in Olympia and Lykosoura. In all these sanctuaries of different titular deities, the new cult of the Pantheon and 'all gods in common' was therefore fully adapted to the regular workings of religious life: the altars are inserted in a preexisting religious system and dedicated by religious officers of the local cult. The Epidaurian altar dedicated by Hierokles even bears the formula *kat'onar*, after a dream, implying that the new divine entity, the Pantheon, shared a form of oracular divination with Asklepios, the titular god of the sanctuary. Only the peculiar nature of the wineless offering attested in the sanctuary at Olympia might betray the foreign/external origin of the cult.

All in all, the cult of the Pantheon in the East seems never to have directly included the worship of the emperor as a god, and even though it was foreign it swiftly blended with pre-existing cults and rituals. The case of Pergamon, where Le Glay has attempted to reconstruct a cult of Hadrian as Zeus Pantheios on the strength of the dedication above, has to be discredited—mainly on the basis of the find-spot of the dedication, in the sanctuary of Demeter. Analogously, in Athens, instances of the divinization of the living emperor are lacking in connection with the building for 'all gods in common', although they appear much clearer elsewhere—for example in the proliferation of altars dedicated to Hadrian. It is possible that in the Greek world the traditional association of sanctuaries for all gods and the 12 gods with the cult of the ruler, known from the Hellenistic period onwards, had made an explicit reference to the emperor unnecessary. The night-time procession at Aigai, where the statues of the 12 gods were displayed together with a thirteenth image of King Philip of Macedon and the Dodekatheion at Delos, where images of the 12 gods and a colossal portrait statue of a Hellenistic ruler (maybe Antigonos Monophthalmos) were worshipped, would have represented well-known precedents. The only known example of a similar setting at the time of Hadrian is the altar for the Dodekatheion dedicated to the Emperor in the theatre

of Hierapolis of Frigia—should the recent identification be proved correct. Here the statue of Hadrian was displayed together with those of the Twelve Gods in a very traditional monumental setting, reminiscent of Hellenistic altars such as the Great Altar at Pergamon. Alternatively, it is also possible that the qualification of the Pantheon was purposefully left unclear in the East. If the Pantheon and ‘all the gods’ of the Greek cities were traditionally identifiable as the reflection of their history, politics, and territorial arrangement, and therefore contained all the deities that were precisely relevant for each community, the ‘new’ Pantheon of the 2nd century AD might have been much more flexible: it blurred the original individual meanings of the gods in assembly into a generality and abstraction; it could be ‘all things to all men’ at a time of rapid religious diversification. In view of this, it could be more easily adapted to different contexts and might have constituted a strong reminder of the figure—not necessarily the divinity—of the Emperor Hadrian, who was the first to fully develop the concept of a pantheon in both architecture and religion in the capital of the Empire. <>

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