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# Spotlight 058

## To Aspire Toward Meaningful Considerations/ Nach sinnvollen Überlegungen streben

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The Time Is Now: A Call to Uncommon Courage by Joan Chittister [Convergent Books, 9781984823410]

Rationalization in Religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam edited by Yohanan Friedmann and Christoph Markschies [De Gruyter, 9783110444506]

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## Editorial Appraisals:

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

The Plight of Potential: Embracing Solitude In Millennial Life And Modern Work by Emerson Csorba [Anthem 9781783086573]

Immersed in a hyperconnected world, millennials are pressured by a lingering feeling that no matter their achievements, they can always do more. Conventional wisdom suggests that millennials must create and maintain personal brands while striving to achieve their potential. But this mentality, while initially appealing for many, breeds anxiety and insecurity. In Millennials in the Modern Workforce: Embracing Solitude in a Hyperconnected Society, Emerson Csorba shows how millennials can live deeper and more enriching lives by reflecting on the self, placing value on solitude and resisting the feeling that they must constantly connect and share. Drawing on case studies of millennials from networks such as the Global Shapers Community, Csorba offers suggestions on how millennials can thrive in a world that favours immediacy and superficiality.

Millennials live in a world of opportunity, characterized by the constant pursuit of personal growth and a belief that to hit the pause button would be catastrophic to a career. Within this context, Csorba explores ideas such as the ruthlessness of comparison amongst millennials and outlines guidelines for overcoming these pressures. Advocating for a long view of work and life, Csorba builds on hundreds of interviews with millennials across the world as well as research at the University of Cambridge.

The themes that Csorba explores in Millennials in the Modern Workforce: Embracing Solitude in a Hyperconnected Society are not unique - they have existed for centuries, and do not pertain exclusively to millennials - but in a society that glamourizes the individual while paradoxically discouraging solitude and self-reflection, they are radical. Both practical and critical, this book is timely and refreshing for millennials looking to overcome the social pressures around them and advance their work and lives, while also cultivating the skills and qualities required to better know themselves in the process.

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Excerpt: What do we mean when we talk about our potential? Modern life involves a lot of thinking about this idea. There is a big focus on pursuing self-growth, on dreaming big and doing whatever we can to achieve the visions we've set for ourselves. We believe that people are unique and special in their talents and that we must celebrate this. What each person's potential is, exactly, might be unclear, and yet constant striving for self-

betterment consumes the thinking of those living in the modern era.

Modern life demands this kind of thinking, and we've come to take it for granted. Not surprisingly, few people question the notion of potential: who, after all, does not want to grow, or not take advantage of their gifts and talents? Who does not want to see themselves as being limitless in their capacity for achievement? And so an important part of life becomes a matter of consistently working to achieve our individual potentialities, though often with little reflection on what our respective journeys are really for.

In his book Missing Out: In Praise of the Unlived Life, the British psychoanalyst Adam Phillips writes, "The myth of our potential can make of our lives a perpetual falling-short, a continual and continuing loss 1...] though at its best it lures us into the future, but without letting us wonder why such lures are required.'" There is an allure to ow belief in potential, allowing individuals to live in what could be, rather than in what is. The person in pursuit of potential is in a constant state of self-discovery, and so can be excused for being restless, never really slowing down or making serious decisions as to what they want to do in life.

As Phillips suggests, it is possible—perhaps likely, even—that our wished-for lives, centered on this belief in potential, limit self-examination in important ways. To dedicate time and space for critical self-examination in the present is hard work. This involves the confrontation of self, which can be slow, frustrating and painful, but there is little need for this kind of inner dialogue when the modern world always points us toward the future. In modern life we tend to associate potential with variety: we unlock our potential by doing as many things as possible in the shortest amount of time. Through variety, it is possible to sample from our many imagined lives. This keeps doors open to interesting future opportunities in life and work.

For those currently coming of age—that is, the "millennial" generation—a myriad of factors encourage this emphasis on potential. These are worth a very brief overview. Sherry Turkle, who serves as the Abby Rockefeller Mauzé Professor of the Social Studies of Science and Technology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), offers insight into one of these pressures: that of networks. In her book Alone Together, Turkle writes that "the network is seductive [...] if we are always on, we may deny ourselves the rewards of solitude.'* Networks offer the promise of efficiency—providing individuals with opportunities to connect with large volumes of people in little time—though often these very technologies consume users.

Another factor is that of societal change. Narratives about perpetual change and uncertainty—specifically, of a "rapidly changing world"—abound, which heighten individual anxiety and contribute to considerable worry regarding how best to live in this kind of world. At the same time, perpetual change and uncertainty bring new opportunities, from which the most active and flexible individuals can supposedly benefit.

A third pressure relates to educational institutions, particularly universities. In universities, the word of the day is now "adaptability." Chief among universities' priorities is to ensure that students graduate with the ability to adapt themselves to a wide variety of work and life circumstances, which are considered unpredictable. On the surface, this might seem benign—why not help students develop the dispositions to transition easily from one type of work to another? This point seems obvious. So universities encourage the ability to sell and take action (rather than to inform oneself and ask questions) in order to help graduates transition seamlessly into whatever the world puts in their way.

This book is about millennials, work and solitude. It is about those currently coming of age, in the early stages of their careers and actively thinking about the kinds of lives that they want to lead. This book is in large part a critique of things that we take for granted in modern life and that I believe harm to in ways that we do not usually see. The idea that we are limitless beings, destined to fulfill our potential, is one of these. In particular, I argue that millennials suffer—though not necessarily because of their own wrongdoing—from an inability to think critically about what kinds of lives they really want to lead, as individuals.

I must be careful about what I mean by individuals. We live in a society that at first glance values individualism, but that upon further inspection seems to

frown upon people who actually take ownership in their own thinking. The individualism to which I refer is one where a person takes into consideration what others say and do, reflects and then makes sense of this in their own terms. This person is embedded in social structure and yet demonstrates autonomy in thinking and action within this structure—sometimes shaping the structure itself through this activity.

Despite the emphasis that we collectively place on ideas like potential (or perhaps because of such emphasis!), most of us glide from one activity to the next without much coherence or reflection. Generally, we seem lost in a world of possibilities, lacking the moral vocabulary required to think effectively about what it means to live a good life. Solitude plays a major role in the cultivation of the kind of inner life that I favor, but is difficult to practice in a world that is believed to move quickly, where those not working toward something measurable risk falling behind.

My sense, in observing friends and colleagues over past years, is that they are peripherally aware of the dangers in thinking about how they can always move forward, progress, advance, self-actualize or find their purpose (to name a few terms that we commonly hear), and yet aren't quite sure how to think independently about what kind of life is really worth leading for them.

My aim in this book is not to describe this generation, for this is ultimately a futile endeavor. A lot of writing has been published in newspapers and magazines about millennials, the majority of which is not very insightful. For almost three years, I led a company focused on intergenerational engagement and through this quickly came to realize that, despite the public interest in the topic, it is much better to speak about the conditions that shape the world in which millennials live than to make specific recommendations on how companies should treat members of this cohort in their workforces. This approach requires that we make some generalizations, which pertain mostly to the philosophical, economic and cultural contours that shape people's entry into adulthood.

I'm much more comfortable writing about broad conditions that I believe affect individual behavior in important ways than I am making any sweeping statements about a generational cohort. This approach, I think, implies that individuals will be affected by these conditions to varying degrees—some more, some less—and so provides necessary emphasis on individual freedom and autonomy. That said, I also do not want to shy away from making value judgments about modern life, for fear of offending individuals in our relativistic culture. My sense is that a great number of millennials feel lost precisely because they do not know how to make sense of the complicated world they inhabit. More importantly, there is considerable hesitance to engage critically and respectfully with each other about what living a good life entails.

My efforts in this book are directed not toward telling readers what they should know about this cohort per se, nor what solutions can best engage this generation. I attempt instead to outline some major challenges that many of us face as we think about what kinds of lives are worth leading, given the pressures that make life seem like an endless search—and thus bring confusion and stress—for this generation. When I use the word "millennials," I'm referring to individuals generally in their twenties and thirties who are thinking actively, and making decisions, about what kinds of lives they really want to have.

Put differently, we can look at my intention this war. the term millennial is useful as a construct that reflects social, cultural, and economic conditions that collectively shape how individuals currently in the early stages of adulthood might think and behave. Millennials inhabit a world that is unique in several important ways, specifically in terms of its uncertainty, evolving conceptions of work and hyperconnectedness (by this I mean a society in which being connected to devices is our default state; to spend time in person with others is to be "offline," temporarily disconnected from technology).

These conditions provide us with a framework from which it is possible to address the particular, that is, specific persons and situations. It is a deliberate choice on my part to focus on philosophical concepts in this book rather than to make extensive use of surveys, polls and other forms of empirical data. As such, going forward I will refrain to the greatest extent possible from referring to millennials, and instead focus on the conditions that can help us address particular circumstances.

To think in terms of data or evidence often comes at the expense of philosophical reflection, which I believe is badly needed on this general topic, and in society more broadly. Neglected in so much of the public conversation about the "future of work" is moral reflection, in which we consider what kinds of things we should value, how values should be prioritized, what kinds of lives are worth living and so forth.

It might surprise us that John Maynard Keynes viewed the study of economics as a means to living "wisely, agreeably, and well." Similarly, the economic historian R. H. Tawney considered economics to be a branch of ethics rather than the predominantly mathematical and robotic pursuit that it has since become. For many reasons society has become very hesitant to engage in the kind of moral discussion that Keynes and Tawney endorsed, opting instead for a relativism in which it is enough to respect individuals' preferences, tastes, wants and desires—whatever these might be. This book is certainly informed by social scientific study and personal observation; however, a lot of my thinking relies on the work of several prominent moral thinkers of the twentieth century. This sort of philosophical approach, as far as I know, has yet to be adopted in much writing about the "future of work."

The argument put forward in this book is that solitude is for the millennial generation an ignored though ultimately vital practice, conducive to leading rich and purposeful lives as individuals. Solitude has been forgotten in modern life. Our propensity for action squeezes time that we could otherwise dedicate to solitude. We pursue potential but without really thinking about what all the striving is actually for. This in turn wastes a lot of energy and minimizes the potential impact that many of us care so much about.

Solitude, I argue, is not just a matter of disconnecting, of seeking temporary relief from the time we spend online. It is a practice in which individuals can better formulate questions pertaining to their lives as well as listen carefully to their responses. Few of us realistically engage in this, even though it helps us answer the kinds of personal questions that fundamentally shape the lives that we lead. In other words, there is a certain sense of self that can be cultivated in solitude and that is difficult to grasp otherwise.

Fundamentally, solitude is a practice through which a person can better understand their identity, using as material what they hear and see in the hustle and bustle of modern life. From this place, a person can make sense of experience in their own terms. I highlight own terms for a reason: so much of the identity that I see among this generation is really a rapid but thoughtless piecing-together of views conducive to self-expression that conforms to whatever is socially accepted.

Despite the many resources for self-expression at our collective disposal (social media platforms, for instance), few of us express ourselves authentically, that is, in ways that reflect who we are and what we actually think. I find there is a false seriousness in this generation. Many appear to be "purposeful" on the surface, though I often doubt how serious these purposes really are when push comes to shove. I suggest that universities are particularly to blame in this problem—that their emphasis on producing adaptable and employable graduates has contributed to countless graduates entering the workforce with only a faint sense of what they believe and care about.

I come at this book from several perspectives. First, I am a member of this generation, and I have spent the last four years interviewing friends and colleagues in similar fife stages across their twenties and thirties. Through my previous company, I worked with clients across multiple industries primarily in Canada and the United Kingdom, and following my exit from the company collaborated with additional organizations in the United States and Israel. Over the course of this

work, it became apparent that something is severely lacking in the language used to talk about our life aspirations (and that is used, more generally, in much contemporary analysis about work and education). Specifically, terms such as "wans," "needs," and "desires" frame our discussions about living a good life. We place a lot of our trust in people's preferences—that ultimately, we must respect what our colleagues want and not ask too many questions (especially when it comes to what should be valued in life and how we should conduct ourselves).

Employers want to know how to satisfy millennials' wants, needs, desires and aspirations. Of particular importance to universities is ensuring that students graduate with "skills" that can help them achieve their aspirations. Nowhere in these conversations is much consideration given to commitments that transcend the individual. For the friends and colleagues whom I speak with, there is, not surprisingly, a tremendous anxiety to perform, to progress in life and to achieve notoriety. This urge to perform is the be-all and end-all for many, whether we acknowledge it or not.

In talking about this generation and its goals, the individual usually comes well before society. This is apparent in the ever-growing number of leadership networks offered to millennials. These networks are geared toward high-potential individuals, those who have achieved "success" in the early part of their lives and who seem destined for bright futures. I have been part of several of these groups, with these experiences coloring my later commentary in the book. Many of these networks focus on creating local "impact," but I have in my own experience in these networks come to see much of the impact-driven activity as a means for members to broadcast themselves as they wish to be seen. Put differently, much of the activity in these networks leans more toward promoting oneself than it does toward actually being of service to others in a tangible way.

I also approach my writing as a member of the academic community Past graduate work brings a philosophical lens to my commentary on this demographic, inspired by the likes of Charles Taylor, Robert Skidelsky, A. N. Whitehead, R. H. Tawny, Adam Phillips and others. A philosophical lens is, as I have previously stated, a missing thread in contemporary discourse about modern work.

I would be remiss not to consider a final perspective in the genesis of this book, which is that I, as a millennial, sometimes struggle with hyperconnection, a propensity to do at the expense of reflecting on what the doing is for. I find that individuals with strong views on a particular subject often tend to behave in their private lives in a manner contradictory to their stated beliefs. Often these contradictions go unnoticed, or simply unmentioned, by these enthusiastic advocates and authors, though in rare instances they are made explicit.

David Brooks for instance, in his book The Road to Character, acknowledges that as a pundit, much of his career has been in the limelight, in which fame is won at the expense of meaningful relationships. This seems to have inspired Brooks to write about the need to place relational values above individual fame and achievement in his writing. In this sense, my focus on solitude is partially a result of grappling with this practice in my private life. The tension has been the source of considerable reflection and conversation with peers over the past years.

Many of my colleagues—no matter where they are located—seem interested in solitude. Many even long for this in their lives. Yet most have a difficult time dedicating the sort of time and space needed for this practice, as it runs counter to what they feel will get them ahead in their careers. Solitude, however, is not antithetical to progress. Rather, it is a means trough which our progress can be more richly reflected on. The speed and immediacy in our hyperconnected world provide us with the ability to self-reflect quickly but only superficially, and because of this, we are likely to forget that the development of a rich vocabulary about the good life should, in fact, take time.

## Why Focus on Millennials?

I have already briefly addressed this question, but will now elaborate in more detail. The book focuses on this generation for several reasons. First, millennials are entering the workforce at a time in which significant technological change is occurring.

This is the first generation confronted with the challenge of navigating online and in-person identities just as they transition into the workforce and begin their careers. Online lives being a recent phenomenon, this transition is one of heightened awareness of performance and identity, particularly as it pertains to one's career. The creation of a "personal brand," for example, is facilitated through online life. Indeed, the lines between online and offline identity have blurred, such that there is considerable debate on what kinds of identities are most authentic.

A second point pertaining to technological change involves the nature of comparison among this cohort, which I believe is the source of considerable anxiety in our day and age. A variety of reports, for instance, suggest this is an especially lonely generation despite its supposed connectedness. Modern life allows for a lot of thinking as to what else we might be able to do in our lives. We glorify choice. We have greater access than ever to other people's stories. And we place a lot of value on how we express ourselves in the various dimensions of life. I would imagine that constant intercomparison impacts mental health, more adversely than positively. Comparison is, after all, a gateway to loneliness.

Third, there is much discussion among millennials about achieving things like purpose, meaning or impact in our work. Not surprisingly, there is an entire industry built on the facilitation of purpose, especially in major cities like London, New York and Los Angeles. These organizations are in some ways laudable in that they attempt to help people enrich their lives. But much of the thinking produced in these companies is pretty conventional, and we should hesitate when any consultant—no matter how qualified in positive psychology or a similar field—enthusiastically tells us how we, as individuals, can find meaning.

Fourth, it is important to note that the public discourse on millennials splits along two very different lines of thought. In the first case, one focused on affluence. In the second, one focused on precarious work and bleak futures. These narratives sometimes mix together. In this introduction, we have so far dealt primarily with the former (and this will be the case for most of the book). Much of the current writing in this area assumes that the population already meets a particular socioeconomic threshold conducive to its members being able to comfortably weigh options before making choices.

But we must consider this second narrative: that of a generation caught in a cycle of low-pay, unstable work, in which participation in particular rites of passage (such as marrying or buying a house) is delayed well beyond the times at which their parents engaged in these same activities. The Guardian is here notable for its reporting on this topic, highlighting for instance that "a combination of debt, joblessness, globalisation, demographics and rising house prices is depressing the incomes and prospects of millions of young people across the developed world, resulting in unprecedented inequality between generations:

I can think of several friends and colleagues who, despite graduating with advanced degrees from prestigious universities, only found suitable employment more than one year following their university graduation. These individuals worked hard to find jobs. If these sorts of individuals struggle to find work outside of, say, the retail industry, then there is reason for concern. A key challenge, then, in the conversation about millennials is in deciding which groups we are actually referring to. In this book, I focus mostly on individuals with the good fortune to have pursued postsecondary (i.e., university or college) studies. Readers should thus be aware of the limitations in my approach. However, these two

narratives do sometimes intermingle. Indeed, many holders of undergraduate degrees struggle to find stable employment even if their prospects are on the aggregate superior to those without comparable forms of education.

## The Structure

This book is divided into three parts: Part 1, entitled "Work and Careers"; Part II, "Hyperconnectedness and the Networked Life," and Part III, "Solitude, Aloneness and Loneliness." Each of these parts consists of three chapters. In Parts I and II the focus is on the conditions that individuals face as they come of age. Part III addresses the

topic of solitude based on the challenges outlined in the previous sections.

In Part I, I focus on the key problems that drive the compulsion to do more that is so characteristic of this generation. This begins with an account of the integral role that work plays in forming an identity in ow society Following this, I examine the relationship between skills and wisdom in modern work, the former being the concept that dominates how we now think about the aims of education. Finally, I focus on the rise of precarious work in society—not only materially but also psychologically—and then on the problems that this creates for many of us as we reflect on important questions related to who we are.

In Part II, I shed light on the topic of progression. In the first chapter, I outline research on hyperconnection in society, and on the consequences, both positive and negative, that this has on workers. In the second chapter, I examine several of the major networks to which millennials aspire to gain entry, namely, the Global Shapers Community, which is an initiative of the World Economic Forum. There is no shortage of networks for "young leaders," "changemakers," and "social entrepreneurs," and I believe that the proliferation of these labels and networks tells us something important about how we think about progression within modern careers. In the third chapter, I focus on the ways in which social comparison and success stories in media publications influence expectations as to the ways in which lives and careers will develop.

In Part III, the discussion turns to solitude, as one would expect given the book's title. The first chapter consists of an exploration of loneliness and aloneness, two concepts that should be examined prior to considering what solitude means. The second chapter focuses on solitude, outlining the qualities and feelings—such as patience, frustration and a sense of the private—that I believe are vital to it. In chapter three, I address several potential counterarguments to solitude, which fall under categories of access ("Who can spend time in solitude?"), community ("Does solitude weaken community?") and education ("Should we advocate for solitude at the same time as educational institutions demand that students compete with each other and for jobs?").

I should note once more that it is not my aim in this book to provide readers with solutions pertaining to millennials. I am not going to debunk anything or give pointers on how to optimize work productivity among young staff. Readers are really best to develop their own strategies here. My aim is rather to illustrate the conditions that I believe most shape work-lives for those coming of age, and which together serve as a basis upon which readers can arrive at their own condusions, specific to their own particular circumstances. I argue strongly in favor of solitude, which I believe can help restore integrity in our inner lives in a way that many of us are yearning for. If this book is successful, then it will help readers set aside time and space for solitude, and through this more dearly formulate and answer personal questions conducive to leading rich lives as individuals.

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The modern journey involves considerable exploration, but it is beset by anxiety—anxiety that one is not keeping pace, not doing or accomplishing enough, not living up to potential. In a world of affluence, individuals are constantly aware of the lives that they could lead, if only they wanted to. For all of the perceived benefits, a belief in limitless potential—the ability for individuals to change the world—produces frustration and disappointment. The more one does and accomplishes, the greater the imagined opportunities become. At the same time, the many pressures of modern life quiet the inner voice that asks, even if weakly, "How much is enough?"

What matters in modern life is that experiences are acquired and then articulated for public consumption. It is not enough that individuals participate in new activities, see new places or meet new people; these activities are to be curated and carefully presented to others. As Turtle notes, the performance of identity becomes identity itself. Specifically, these performances require that individuals be adaptable, for it is adaptability that provides a semblance of continuity in a world that is believed to be evolving more rapidly than ever, one in which demands for skills are shifting and

where the most enduring of traditions are contested. The point is not to settle, for this represents a slowing down, an admission that one cannot keep up with the demands of modern life—an abandonment of ambition.

When the world is replete with uncertainty, knowledge becomes fragile and relationships are less likely to endure. Adaptability is therefore believed to be critical: it is on the surface the most sensible guidance that universities can provide to students and the most reasonable of strategies for progression in the workforce. Given ow culture of performance, this facilitated in large part through our online lives, it is better to go with the flow than to stop and critically examine what performance really entails. To reflect in this way would be considered too serious. Modern commitments are, after all, light.

For individuals coming of age, what matters is that one discovers oneself, pushing through personal limits in the journey for meaning and the articulation of personal values. But the very hyperconnectedness, competitiveness and speed with which the search takes place draws individuals away from themselves. Performance informs identity, but it does not follow that identity is authentic. Cheap security, as Williams says, is more likely. The millennial journey is often replete with self-deception, uncertainty and a lingering sense that something important—but that is difficult to put a finger on—is lacking One knows that values and knowledge are important, but wonders why these things alone are not helpful in answering fundamental questions: in particular, who we are as reflective individuals embedded in social structures.

I argue in this book that for millennials, few activities are more important than solitude—but not for the reasons typically imagined. Differentiating solitude from aloneness and loneliness, I argue that solitude must take place in physical aloneness, but that it is more specifically a philosophical search in one's aloneness. It is a search and clarification of questions pertaining to one's life, accompanied by a patient and honest listening to the responses. I worry, as a practitioner, having worked with and observed millennials across multiple countries over the last years, about the language nowadays used to describe what kinds of lives are worth leading Wants. needs and desires prevail: in short, the individual comes prior to the social. This contributes to a millennial malaise (to borrow from the language of Charles Taylor).

I do not attempt to say in this book what millennials are, but rather to provide a particular interpretation of social, economic, cultural and educational conditions that I believe collectively shape how individuals, at a formative time in their lives, come to think and behave. My sense is that public discourse about what it means to live a good life is severely impoverished. Young people consume information, but without grounding in relation to wise persons and traditions that transcend the self, knowledge can only be tenuous.

I recognize that solitude is, in many people's eyes, antithetical to progress. To find time and space for oneself means that one is not active in a "doing" sense. Solitude is a search, and so it requires patience—particularly as one grows frustrated when expectations for fast answers in solitude are not met. I argue that solitude requires a sense of the private: the questions that one formulates and the responses that one receives in careful listening, are not to be shared, at least not in the short term.

Part of the beauty of solitude is that one can sit on things, making sense of them in one's own time. The practice of this kind of solitude is, as I see it, courageous when societal pressures encourage constant activity. Solitude requires that

individuals do not begin their searches with particular expectations or outcomes in mind, and yet the immateriality of the process produces in the long term the most enriching of outcomes.

If we believe in the individual, then there are particular kinds of questions that we must be able to answer for ourselves: "What do I think about this?"; "What matters to me?"; "What kind of person do i want to become?" To be an individual is to be able to answer—or at the very least, seriously and continuously consider—these questions in relation to challenges that we individually encounter. I've written this book in large part because, when looking at many of my peers and the modern world more generally, I fear

that individuals are pushed in the opposite direction. I too struggle with these questions and pressures.

Millennials, I think, are pushed to perform for others, but lose a sense of who they are, as individuals, in their constant striving to fulfill a nebulous sense of potential. This book serves as an attempt to articulate these and other challenges that a significant number of people nowadays face. More importantly, it hopefully encourages us to cultivate relationships with ourselves—aware of our limitations and strengths alike. The world is changing quickly and the problems that young people are set to inherit are formidable. But action is most powerful when informed through patience and honesty in critical self-examination. <>

Transzendenz und säkulare Welt: Lebensorientierung an letzter Gegenwart by Ingolf U. Dalferth [Mohr Siebeck, 9783161538360]

Ingolf U. Dalferth plädiert daf|r, dem gegenwärtigen Abgesang auf die Säkularisierung und der modischen Ausrufung einer neuen postsäkularen Religionsepoche aus theologischen Gr|nden kritisch gegen|ber zu stehen. Von Anfang an hat der christliche Glaube einen entscheidenden Beitrag zum Weltlichwerden der Welt und zur Kritik von Religion, Religionen und Religiosität geleistet. Christlichem Glauben geht es um die Orientierung an Gottes Gegenwart in allen Lebensvollz|gen, jenseits der gängigen religiösen Formen und oft in Abgrenzung gegen|ber ihnen. Die Orientierung an dieser letzten Gegenwart und damit an vorgängiger Transzendenz in der Immanenz einer säkularen Welt lässt die Alternative zwischen religiösem und nichtreligiösem Leben hinter sich. Der Autor untersucht die Grundunterscheidungen dieser christlichen Lebensorientierung.

Vorwort

Solange wir betonen müssen, in einem säkularen Zeitalter zu leben, tun wir es noch nicht. Auch im 21. Jahrhundert spielen Religionen eine bedeutende Rolle in unserer Welt, im privaten Leben vieler Menschen und in der Öffentlichkeit. Dass das nicht nur eine gute Sache ist, zeigt sich täglich. Religionen können das Beste in Menschen hervorrufen, aber sie können sie auch zum Schlimmsten verführen. Sie malen den Himmel vor Augen und können das Leben zur Hölle machen. Ihnen verdanken wir Einsichten in die Harmonie des Universums, die Macht der Liebe und die Möglichkeiten der Mitmenschlichkeit. Aber immer wieder verwüsten sie auch das Leben von Menschen durch die Zerstörung von Ordnung, die Verführung zum Hass, die Unterdrückung von Freiheit und die Rechtfertigung unfassbarer Unmenschlichkeit. Beides ist zu beachten, wenn es um Religion und Nichtreligion geht. Religiös zu leben ist nicht per se gut, und nicht religiös zu leben nicht per se übel. Im einen wie im anderen Fall kommt es darauf an, wie man ist, was man ist, und tut, was man tut. Man kann nichtreligiös leben und ein vorbildlicher Mensch sein, und man kann ein religiöses Leben zu führen meinen und sich als Bestie aufführen.

Christen tun daher gut daran, die säkulare Welt und Gesellschaft nicht nur negativ zu sehen, sondern sich um eine differenzierte Sicht und Haltung zu bemühen. In vieler Hinsicht ist es ein Gewinn, nicht mehr in einer religiös dominierten, sondern in einer säkularen Gesellschaft zu leben, in der Religionsfreiheit als Grundrecht gilt. Zweifellos ging in der westlichen Moderne vieles Vertraute verloren, was man beklagen mag. Aber es wurde auch vieles Gute gewonnen, von dem man nicht zu träumen wagte. Niemand, der das Glück hat, in einer freien Gesellschaft zu leben, die auf Recht und Gleichheit setzt, den Unterschied zwischen Staat und Religion achtet und das Grundrecht der Religionsfreiheit hochhält, kann ernsthaft darauf verzichten wollen. Noch nie konnten Menschen so frei ihre religiösen Überzeugungen leben wie in der säkularen Gesellschaft des Westens. Aber auch noch nie wurde unter Berufung auf religiöse Überzeugungen so erbittert gegen die Freiheitsprinzipien der Moderne gestritten, ohne die ein solches Leben nicht möglich wäre.

Christliche Theologie sollte dem gegenwärtigen Abgesang auf die Säkularisierung und der modischen Ausrufung einer neuen postsäkularen Religionsepoche kritisch gegenüber stehen. Von Anfang an hat der christliche Glaube einen entscheidenden Beitrag zum Weltlichwerden der Welt, zur Kritik von Religion, Religionen und Religiosität und zur Neugestaltung menschlichen

Lebens in der Gegenwart Gottes geleistet. Um dieses kritischen Glaubens willen wurden und werden Christen immer wieder verfolgt. Christlichem Glauben geht es um die Orientierung an Gottes Gegenwart in allen Lebensvollzügen, jenseits der gängigen religiösen Formen und oft in Abgrenzung gegenüber ihnen. Recht verstanden lässt die christliche Lebensorientierung' die Alternative zwischen religiösem und nichtreligiösem Leben hinter sich. Ihr Bezugspunkt ist die sich selbst vergegenwärtigende Gegenwart Gottes, keine Differenz zwischen Profanem und Heiligem in der Welt, und die durch diese Gottesgegenwart gesetzte Unterscheidung im Möglichkeitsraum der Welt zwischen einem Leben, das sich daran orientiert (Glaube), und einem Leben, das das nicht tut (Unglaube). Die philosophische Chiffre dieser Lebensorientierung ist die Unterscheidung von Transzendenz und Immanenz im Lebensvollzug. Beide bezeichnen keine unterschiedlichen Bereiche im Leben, sondern unterschiedliche Einstellungen zu allen Lebensbe¬reichen auf der Basis eines Ereignisses, das sich als Einbrechen der Transzendenz in die Immanenz chiffrieren lässt und zur Reorientierung des Lebens im Geöffnetwerden für Transzendenz führen kann. Dieser philosophischen Unterscheidung entsprechen im christlichen Leben und Denken Unterscheidungen zwischen Schöpfer und Schöpfung, Göttlichem und Weltlichem, der letzten Gegenwart Gottes, die unveränderlich und überall wirksam ist, und den wechselnden Gegenwarten, in denen wir auf Zeit leben, sei es im Glauben, in dem Menschen ihr Leben an letzter Gegenwart ausrichten, oder im Unglauben, in dem sie das nicht tun.

Um die Orientierung an dieser letzten Gegenwart und damit an vorgängiger Transzendenz in der Immanenz einer säkularen Welt geht es in diesem Buch. Diese Vorgängigkeit manifestiert sich im Leben anhand oft ganz gewöhnlicher Ereignisse, die den Unterschied zwischen Transzendenz und Immanenz bewusst werden lassen, indem sie zeigen, dass und wie Transzendenz sich von der Immanenz unterscheidet und sich so als Transzendenz selbst verdeutlicht und vergegenwärtigt. Und weil wir uns an dieser Leitunterscheidung nicht orientieren können, ohne weiter zu unterscheiden, geht es um die Unterscheidungen, durch die sich eine solche Lebensorientierung an letzter Gegenwart konkret vollzieht, bewusst im Glauben, faktisch im Unglauben.

Inhalt

Excerpt:

## Orientieren durch Unterscheiden. Christlicher Glaube und säkulare Welt

Wir leben in einem säkularen Zeitalter, in dem der Glaube an Gott, Götter oder Göttliches nicht mehr den Normalfall darstellt, sondern zu einer Option unter anderen geworden ist.' Das gilt trotz großer regionaler Unterschiede weltweit und obwohl Säkularisierungsprozesse in verschiedenen kulturellen Kontexten unterschiedlich verlaufen und keineswegs immer zur Auflösung oder zum Abbau religiöser Bindungen und Orientierungen führen.

## Säkularität, Religion und Spiritualität

Säkularität - das Weltlichwerden der Welt - kann viele Gestalten annehmen und nicht alle schließen aus, dass Menschen ein religiöses oder spirituelles Leben führen. Beides kann unterschieden werden, ist aber nicht scharf zu trennen. Zwar gibt es Religion nur in der Vielfalt der Religionen, aber religiös lebt nicht nur, wer an einer kollektiven Religionspraxis partizipiert, sondern auch, wer achtsam lebt, der Ordnung und Vielfalt des Lebens Ehrfurcht entgegenbringt und sorgsam Vorschriften befolgt, die dem Leben einen tieferen Sinn zu geben versprechen. Und auch Spiritualität besteht nicht nur in der Teilnahme an der konventionellen Frömmigkeitspraxis einer religiösen Tradition, sondern meint umfassender die Suche nach Sinn und ein Leben aus dem Erleben »der Verbundenheit mit dem Augenblick, dem Selbst, den anderen, der Natur, dem Bedeutungsvollen, dem Heiligen«. Doch nicht alle Religion, Religiosität oder Spiritualität ist Bewusstsein von Transzendenz, und nicht jedes Bewusstsein von Transzendenz ist religiös oder spirituell. Es gibt >Religionen< wie Shintō oder Konfuzianismus, die vorwiegend das Leben im Diesseits gestalten, und es gibt Transzendenzbewusstsein in einer Vielzahl kultureller Formationen, die keine Religion sind oder sein wollen.

Auch im Westen ist Entkirchlichung nicht notwendig Religionsverlust, sondern die Rückseite einer suchenden Zuwendung zu anderen Religionsformen und einer kreativen, selektiven und individualisierenden Aneignung fremder Spiritualitätstraditionen. Wer sucht, der findet vieles. Und wer das, was er sucht, in den überkommenen Formen seiner Religion und Kultur nicht (mehr) findet, sucht es anderswo. Was aber wird gesucht? Dass Religion etwas ist, mit dem man sich identifizieren kann, weil man sich dafür entscheiden muss. Religion wird bedeutungslos, wenn sie mich nicht vor existentielle Entscheidungen stellt, die mir eine neue Sicht auf mich, meine Welt, die anderen und Gott eröffnen. Sie ist dann nur noch eine überkommene gesellschaftliche Praxis, auf die man verzichten kann, weil sie einem nichts Entscheidendes abfordert oder erschließt. Man muss sie nicht einmal mehr bekämpfen oder kritisieren, um sich von ihr zu befreien, sondern lässt sie links liegen.

Christsein als doppelte und doppelseitige Entscheidung

Diese Verknüpfung von Religion, Entscheidung und Identität ist ein charakteristisches Phänomen der Neuzeit. Aber sie hat eine lange Vorgeschichte, die eng mit der Geschichte des Christentums verknüpft ist. Ursprünglich hatte das Christentum als eschatologische Entscheidungsreligion begonnen, und zwar in doppeltem Sinn: Gott hat sich nach

christlicher Überzeugung in Jesus Christus und durch seinen Geist als der erwiesen, der sich endgültig und unwiderruflich für die Menschen entschieden hat, obgleich diese als Sünder leben und ein Gott fernes und Gott ignorierendes Leben führen. Das ist der Kern der christlichen Botschaft von Gottes rettendem Kommen zur Erneuerung der Welt aus Liebe zu seinen Geschöpfen. Die Menschen wiederum können sich für oder gegen diese Entscheidung Gottes entscheiden, indem sie der christlichen Botschaft von Gottes Entscheidung für sie Glauben schenken oder nicht, sei es, weil sie diese Botschaft faktisch nicht kennen, sei es, weil sie diese ausdrücklich ablehnen oder zurückweisen. Glauben sie ihr, verstehen sie das nicht als ihre eigene Entscheidung, sondern als Wirken Gottes, der sich bedingungslos für die Menschen entschieden hat, wie an und durch Jesus Christus deutlich geworden ist, und der sie durch seinen Geist auch zur Entscheidung für diese Entscheidung instand setzt, wie sich am Wechsel vom Unglauben zu einem Leben im Glauben zeigt. Mit der Taufe bekennen sich Menschen zu dieser Entscheidung Gottes als unverdienter Gottesgabe, die sie aus den alten Bindungen und Orientierungen befreit und ihnen das Tor zu einer neuen Lebensform mit Gott und mit einander öffnet. Indem sie sich taufen lassen, entscheiden sie sich für ein Leben im Glauben und damit zugleich gegen ein Leben im Unglauben. Durch Gottes Entscheidung für die Menschen (Jesus Christus) und seine Selbstvermittlung dieser Entscheidung an die Menschen (Geist) ist das alte Leben in der Ferne und Abwendung von Gott vergangen (altes Sein) und das neue Leben in der von Gott durch Jesus Christus und den Geist eröffneten Gemeinschaft mit Gott nicht nur möglich, sondern wirklich geworden (neues Sein). Gott hat sich aus freien Stücken zum Nächsten der Menschen gemacht, so dass alle ihn als ihren guten Vater anrufen können und selbst als Kinder, Erben und Nächste Gottes zu verstehen und zu behandeln sind. In dieser neuen Gemeinschaft der Nächsten Gottes gibt es - mit Paulus gesprochen - keine Juden und Griechen, keine Knechte und Freien, keine Männer und Frauen mehr (Gal 3,28), weil all das für das neue Leben in Christus nicht ausschlaggebend ist.

Die neue Identität der Nächsten Gottes ist nicht selbstgewählt, sondern freie Gabe Gottes. Keiner kann sie sich selbst verschaffen, keiner hat ein Recht auf sie, und deshalb hat auch keiner ein größeres Recht auf sie als irgendein anderer. Wo sie ins Bewusstsein tritt, wird sie als Geschenk und Auftrag Gottes verstanden, die an keinerlei Vorbedingungen geknüpft sind. Man kann sie glaubend annehmen und für sich gelten lassen oder nichtglaubend ignorieren und ablehnen. Beides bestätigt, dass diese neue Identität eine Vorgabe ist, die nicht von der eigenen Annahme oder Ablehnung abhängt, sondern diesen vorausgeht und sie überhaupt erst möglich macht. Sie ist nicht das, was man immer schon gesucht hat, sondern das Widerfahrnis eines nicht zu erwartenden Neuen, der unwahrscheinlichen Möglichkeit, dass Gott zum Nächsten derer wird, die sich nicht um ihn kümmern. Man muss die Identität eines Nächsten Gottes auch nicht suchen, um sie zu finden. Sie kann sich gegen das eigene Wünschen und Wollen der Menschen zur Geltung bringen, wie die Wende des Paulus vom Verfolger der Christen zum Apostel des Christus beispielhaft belegt. Wo sie auf Resonanz stößt, führt sie am Ort des Menschen zu einer Spaltung der Identität in ein altes und neues Ich. Die existentielle Spannung zwischen ihnen lässt sich nicht nach einer der beiden Seiten hin auflösen, wie Paulus beschreibt (Röm 7), sondern nur im Rekurs auf Gott ertragen. Man ist nicht mehr Herr seiner selbst, sondern gehört als Gottes Nächster zum Machtbereich eines anderen, ob man das im Glauben begrüßt oder im Unglauben ausblendet oder bestreitet.

Zu dieser geschenkten neuen Identität kann man sich bekennen, indem man für Gottes Gabe dankt, sich taufen lässt und sich damit gegen ein Leben im Unglauben und für ein Leben im Glauben entscheidet und in der Christusgemeinschaft des neuen Seins lebt. Oder man kann Gottes Gabe zurückweisen, den Orientierungswechsel zu einem Leben im Glauben ablehnen und in der Adamsgemeinschaft seines alten Seins verharren. Jeder Mensch gehört zu dieser alten Menschheit (Adam), in der sich alles um die eigene Selbstbehauptung, Selbsterhaltung und Selbstdurchsetzung dreht, und deshalb gibt es ein Leben im Glauben immer nur in der Abwendung

von einem Leben im Unglauben. Aber jeder Mensch könnte auch zu der neuen Menschheit (Christus) gehören, die Gott den Menschen eröffnet, indem er sich so zu ihren Nächsten macht, dass die Liebe zu Gott und allen anderen als Gottes Nächsten ihr Leben bestimmen kann. So wenig aber die Entscheidung für Christus das neue Sein konstituiert, so wenig hebt die Nichtentscheidung dafür oder die Entscheidung dagegen dieses neue Sein auf. Gottes Gabe und damit Gottes Entscheidung für die Menschen geht allem Entscheiden der Menschen voraus (doppelte Entscheidung). Sie macht deren Entscheidung überhaupt erst möglich: Jetzt können sie in der Berufung auf Gottes Gabe ein Leben in der Orientierung an Gottes Liebe führen und sich gegen den Unglauben und für ein Leben im Glauben entscheiden (doppelseitige Entscheidung).3 Aber sie macht diese Entscheidung der Menschen auch unverzichtbar: Angesichts der Entscheidung Gottes ist auch keine ausdrückliche Entscheidung dafür oder dagegen eine Entscheidung - wobei offen bleiben kann, ob ein solches Nichtentscheiden immer eine Entscheidung dagegen sein muss oder das faktische Leben eines Menschen nicht auch das Gegenteil belegen kann.

Das sind die Grundzüge des neuen Seins in Christus, das Paulus skizzierte. Je mehr allerdings die bewusste Lebensorientierung von Menschen nach Maßgabe des neuen Seins in Christus zu einer Religionsform unter anderen und zur dominierenden Religion im Römischen Reich wurde, in die man hineingeboren wurde und kulturell und gesellschaftlich hineinwuchs, desto weniger prägte dieses doppelte Entscheidungsmoment das christliche Sein und Bewusstsein. Zwar wurde es kirchlich in der Taufpraxis in Erinnerung gehalten. Doch die Praxis der Säuglingstaufe betonte den Gabecharakter des Christusglaubens und Christseins und damit die Entscheidung Gottes für den Menschen, aber nicht in derselben Weise die menschliche Entscheidung für Gottes Entscheidung in der Verabschiedung des alten und der Zuwendung zum neuen Leben. Die kirchliche Einführung der Firmung bzw. Konfirmation reagiert auf diese Problematik. Der Streit um die Praxis der Säuglingstaufe und die Forderung nach Erwachsenentaufe sind exemplarisch für die dadurch aufgeworfenen Konflikte. Während die einen Gottes unbedingte Vorentscheidung für die Menschen betonen, bestehen die anderen auf der Verantwortlichkeit der Menschen in der eigenen Entscheidung für Gottes Entscheidung. Und ist für die einen die Zugehörigkeit zur Kirche der gesellschaftliche Normalfall, dem volkskirchlich Rechnung zu tragen ist, so ist für die anderen keine kirchliche Zugehörigkeit christlich legitim, die nicht auf eigener Entscheidung beruht. Wer sich nicht selbst dafür entscheidet, gehört auch nicht wirklich dazu. Und wer sich ausdrücklich dagegen entscheidet, hat wenigstens verstanden, dass es ohne eigene Entscheidung nicht geht.

## Religion in der Spätmoderne

Der Konflikt ist paradigmatisch für den Umgang mit Religion in der Moderne. Im Prozess der Neuzeit wird Religion zunehmend von einer gesellschaftlichen und kulturellen Selbstverständlichkeit, an der man ohne besondere Entscheidung teilhatte und auch bloß äußerlich teilhaben konnte, zu einem Merkmal der individuellen Identität, Unverwechselbarkeit, Authentizität, ja Sakralität einer Person. Wer religiös lebt, sollte es aus Überzeugung tun, und wer es nicht tut ebenfalls. Nur mitzumachen genügt nicht, aber es bloß nicht zu tun ebensowenig. Man muss sich ganz dazu bekennen oder ganz dagegen sein. Doch der Preis dieses Identifikationsdrucks ist hoch. Wenn es um Authentizität und die eigene Identität geht, wird selbst Beiläufiges zum Wesentlichen. Nichts kann zur Verhandlung gestellt, alles muss verteidigt werden: Bilder in der Kirche, Kreuze auf Bergspitzen oder in Gerichtssälen, Feiertage, kultische Gewänder, lateinische Messen, Beschneidungsrituale und Ganzkörperschleier. Immer geht es um alles und stets steht man selbst auf dem Spiel. Zwischen Sache und Person wird nicht mehr unterschieden, und zwischen Wichtigem und weniger Wichtigem auch nicht.

Vielen wird das zu anstrengend. Aber sie entziehen sich dem Identifikationsdruck nicht dadurch, dass sie die Verknüpfung von Religion und Identität in Frage stellen, sondern dass sie allem Religiösen gegenüber gleichgültig werden. Sie sind nicht für eine Religion und gegen andere, nicht einmal für oder gegen Religion überhaupt. Mit ihnen und ihrer Identität hat all das nichts mehr zu tun. Alles

Religiöse wird ihnen gleich uninteressant, und Authentizität und Identität suchen sie anderswo.

Andere halten daran fest, dass es bei Religion und Glaube um die eigene Identität geht, können diese aber nicht mehr im Rahmen überkommener Religionsformen erleben. Nicht Glaube und Religion, sondern ihre institutionalisierten Sozialgestalten und organisatorischen Zugehörigkeitsformen sind das, wovon sie sich abwenden. Sie suchen nach anderen spirituellen Lebensformen, und sie finden sie leicht auf dem globalen Markt der Religionen, wo Nachfrage und Angebot sich gegenseitig steigern. Wie Daniel Bell schon in den siebziger Jahren konstatiert hat: »Wo Religion versagt, kommen Kulte zum Vorschein.«

Vom Ende der Religion kann daher nicht die Rede sein. Nach wie vor ist Religion selbst im aufgeklärten Europa im privaten Leben und im öffentlichen Raum in vielfältiger Weise präsent.' Und manches spricht dafür, dass die Tendenzen zur Ausbildung fundamentalistischer Strömungen, die sich nicht nur im Islam, sondern auch im Christentum, Judentum, Hinduismus oder Buddhismus beobachten lassen,' eher durch die entwurzelnden Kräfte einer ökonomischen, technologischen, kulturellen und medialen Globalisierung bedingt sein dürften als durch die funktionale Ausdifferenzierung der Gesellschaft und eine sich politisch, rechtlich, moralisch und wissenschaftlich säkularisierende Moderne.' Man kann, aber muss nicht religiös sein, um in Politik und Recht, Moral und Wissenschaft gleichberechtigt mitwirken zu können und anerkannt zu werden. Jeder dieser Bereiche hat seine eigene Logik, seine eigenen Normen und Werte und seine eigenen Leitkriterien. Die religiöse Orientierung darf weder im Negativen noch im Positiven eine ausschlaggebende Rolle spielen, wenn das friedliche Zusammenleben von Menschen unterschiedlicher Überzeugungshaltungen und Lebenskonzepte in einer pluralen Gesellschaft möglich sein soll.

Das hat auch die überkommenen Religionen selbst verändert. Längst ist der Konflikt zwischen Religion und säkularer Welt zu einem Konflikt innerhalb der religiösen Traditionen selbst geworden. Und zwar nicht nur zwischen vormodernen und modernen Richtungen in den einzelnen Religionen, sondern mehr noch in Gestalt einer konfliktgeladenen Spaltung unter denen, die sich den gesellschaftlichen Modernisierungsprozessen gegenüber nicht traditionalistisch verschließen, sondern aktiv auf sie reagieren. So bemühen sich die einen, sich in ein positives Verhältnis zu diesen Prozessen zu setzen und ihre religiösen Traditionen unter den Bedingungen der Moderne neu zu aktualisieren, während die anderen sich den Herausforderungen der Moderne in fundamentalistischer Negation verweigern und diese nicht nur ignorieren, sondern aktiv bekämpfen. Nicht der Konflikt zwischen Traditionalisten und Modernisten ist die entscheidende Signatur der religiösen Situation der Gegenwart, sondern der zwischen Reformern, die versuchen, die Grundeinsichten ihrer Religion unter den dynamisch sich verändernden Bedingungen der Spätmoderne auf neue Weise zur Geltung zu bringen, und Fundamentalisten, die sich auf die Anfragen der Moderne nicht einlassen wollen, sondern diese im Namen ihrer Religion aktiv bekämpfen und sich dazu ihr eigenes Konstrukt ihrer religiösen Tradition zurechtlegen. Modernisierer sind sie beide, nur sehen die einen die Moderne als religiöse Herausforderung, auf die sie sich einlassen, während die anderen sie als Aufforderung zu einer religiösen Antimoderne wahrnehmen, die sie mit modernen Mitteln zur Geltung bringen.

Translated from German:

Transcendence and secular world: life Orientation at last present by Ingolf U. Dalferth [Mohr Siebeck, 9783161538360]

Ingolf U. Dalferth pleads to critically oppose the current swan song on secularization and the fashionable proclamation of a new post-secular era of religion for theological reasons. From the beginning, the Christian faith has made a decisive contribution to the worldliness of the world and to the critique of religion, religions and religiosity. Christian faith is about the orientation to God's presence in all life's statements, beyond the common religious forms and often in demarcation against them. The orientation towards this last present and thus to previous transcendence in the immanence of a secular world leaves the

alternative between religious and non-religious life behind. The author examines the basic distinctions of this Christian way of life.

Excerpt: As long as we need to emphasize living in a secular age, we are not doing it yet. Even in the 21st century, religions play an important role in our world, in the private lives of many people and in the public sphere. That is not only a good thing, shows up daily. Religions can bring out the best in people, but they can also seduce them to the worst. They paint the sky in front of their eyes and can make life a hell. We owe them to the harmony of the universe, to the power of love and to the possibilities of humanity. But again and again they also devastate the lives of people through the destruction of order, the seduction to hatred, the suppression of freedom and the justification of incredible inhumanity. Both must be taken into account when it comes to religion and not religion. To live religiously is not per se good, and not religious to live not per se evil. As in the other case, it depends on how you are, what you are, and what you do. One cannot live religiously and be an exemplary person, and one can think of a religious life and perform as a beast.

Christians therefore do well to see the secular world and society not only negatively, but to strive for a differentiated view and attitude. In many respects, it is a profit to live no longer in a religiously dominated, but in a secular society, in which freedom of religion is regarded as a fundamental right. Undoubtedly, in Western modernity, many familiar things were lost, which one might lament. But there was also a lot of good that was not dared to dream of. No one who is fortunate enough to live in a free society who On law and equality, respecting the difference between state and religion and holding up the fundamental right of religious freedom can seriously want to do without it. People have never been able to live their religious beliefs as freely as in the secular Society of the West. But it has never been so bitterly argued against the principles of freedom of the modern world, without which such a life would not have been possible.

Christian theology should be critical of the current chanting of secularization and the fashionable proclamation of a new post-secular religious period. From the beginning the Christian faith has made a decisive contribution to the secular will of the world, to the Critique of religion, religions and religiosity and to the reshaping of human life in the presence of God. For this critical faith, Christians have been and are being persecuted again and again. Christian faith is about orienting God's presence in all life-styles, beyond the usual religious forms, and often in delimitation to them. Rightly understood, the Christian life orientation leaves behind the alternative between religious and non-religious life. Their point of reference is the self-mindful presence of God, no difference between profane and holy in the world, and the distinction set by this presence of God in Space of opportunity in the world between a life oriented towards it (faith), and a life that does not (unbelief). The philosophical cipher of this life-orientation is the distinction between transcendence and immanence in the life-imprisonment. Both do not denote different areas in life, but different attitudes to all life enriched on the basis of an event that can be immanenceed as a break-in of transcendence into the reorientation of life in the open will can lead to transcendence. This philosophical distinction corresponds in Christian life and think distinctions between creator and creation, divine and secular, the last presence of God, which is immutable and effective everywhere, and the changing counter-waiting, in Which we live on time, whether in the faith in which people align their lives to the last present, or in disbelief, in which they do not.

This book is about the orientation of this last present and thus of the prevalent transcendence in the immanence of a secular world. This prevalentness manifests itself in life on the basis of often very ordinary events that make the difference between transcendence and immanence aware by showing that and how transcendence differs from the immanence and thus becomes a transcendence Self-evident and mindful. And because we cannot orient ourselves to this guiding distinction without further distinction, it is a question of the distinctions through which such a life orientation in the last present takes place, consciously in faith, in fact in disbelief.

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Excerpt:

## Orientation by difference: Christian faith and Secular world

We live in a secular age where the belief in God, gods or divine is no longer theormal case, but has become an opton among others. ' This is true despite major regional ifferences worldwide and although secularisation processes differ in different cultural contexts and do not always lead to the dissolution or degradation of religious ties and orientations.

## Secularity, religion and spirituality

Secularity-The Weltichwerden of the word -can take many forms and not all infer that people lead a religious or spiritual life. Both can be distinguished, but is not s (h)1 (a)-7.8 (r)11.8 (p)3.6 ( t)-4.7 (o)-3 ( s)0 attentively(e)-3, t (-8.2 (e)-3 ( o)-3 (r)11.8 (d)-7.8 (e)-3 (r)0.5 ( )11.6

cultural formations that are or do not want to be religion.

In the West too, de-churching is not necessarily a religious loss, but the back of a seeking affection for other forms of religion and a creative, selective and individualized appropriation of foreign spiritual traditions. He who seeks, finds many things. And he who does not find what he is looking for in the preformed forms of his religion and culture finds it elsewhere. But what is being searched for? That religion is something you can identify with, because you have to choose. Religion becomes meaningless if it does not make me face existential decisions that open up a new view of me, my world, the others and God. It is then only an general social practice, which one can dispense with, because it does not challenge or tap into anything decisive. You don't even have to fight or criticize them to get rid of them, but let them be left.

## Being a Christian as a double and double-sided decision

This combination of religion, decision and identity is a characteristic phenomenon of modern times. But it has a long history that is closely linked to the history of Christianity. Originally, Christianity had begun as a eschatological decision-making religion, in a twofold sense: God, after Christian conviction, has proven himself in Jesus Christ and by his spirit as the man who is definitively and irrevocably for the people have decided, although they live as sinners and lead a god-distant and God-ignoring-ends of life. This is the core of the Christian message of God's saving coming to the renewal of the world out of love for his creatures. People, in turn, can opt for or against God's decision by believing in the Christian message of God's decision for them or not, either because they do not know this message in fact, either because they explicitly Refuse or reject. Believe it, you do not understand this as your own decision, but as the work of God, who has unconditionally opted for the people, as has become evident in and through Jesus Christ, and who through his spirit also makes you decide for this Decision, as the shift from unbelief to a life in faith shows. With baptism, people confess to this decision of God as an undeserved gift of God, which liberates them from the old bonds and orientations and opens the door to a new way of life with God and with each other. By being baptized, they choose to live in faith, and at the same time to live in disbelief. By God's decision for the People (Jesus Christ) and his self-mediation of this decision to the people (spirit) is the old life in the distance and turning away from God (old being) and the new life in the of God through Jesus Christ and the Spirit Opened communion with God not only possible, but really become (new). God has made himself freely to the next of the people, so that all can call him as their good father and understand and treat themselves as children, heirs and next God. In this new fellowship of the next God there are-with Paul-no Jews and Greeks, no servants and freemen, no men and women anymore (gal 3.28), because all this is not decisive for the new life in Christ.

The new identity of the next God is not chosen, but free gift of God. No one can give them to themselves, no one has a right to them, and therefore no one has a greater right to them than any other. Where it enters into consciousness, it is understood as a gift and order from God, who are not bound by any preconditions. One can accept them believing and let them be considered for themselves or not believing and rejecting them. Both confirm that this new identity is a requirement that does not depend on its own acceptance or rejection, but which precedes it and makes it possible at all. It is not what one has always sought, but the chattel of an unanticipated new, the unlikely possibility that God will become the next of those who do not care for him. You don't have to look for the identity of a next God to find them. It can assert itself against the wishes and aspirations of the people, as exemplified by the turn of Paul from the persecutor of the Christians to the Apostle of Christ. Where it resonates, it leads at the place of man to a division of identity into an old and new I. The existential tension between them cannot be dissolved after one of the two sides, as Paul describes (Rom 7), but only in recourse to God. One is no longer the Lord of himself, but belongs as God's next to the sphere of power of another, whether one welcomes it in faith or hides or denies it in disbelief.

One can confess to this gifted new identity by thanking God's gift, being baptized and thus opting for a life in disbelief and for a life in faith and living in the Christ community of the new being. Or one can reject God's gift, refuse the change of orientation to a life in faith, and remain in the Adam-community of his old being. Every human being belongs to this ancient humanity (Adam), in which everything revolves around self-assertion, self-preservation and self-enforcement, and therefore there is a life in faith always only in the turn of a life in disbelief. But each person could also belong to the new Humanity (Christ), which God opens to man by making himself so his neighbour, that love for God and all others as God's neighbor can determine their lives. So little, however, the decision for Christ constitutes the new being, so little does the non-decision or decision against this new being arise. God's gift and thus God's decision for the people goes ahead of all decisions of the people (double decision). It makes its decision possible in the first place: Now you can lead a life in the direction of God's love in the vocation of God's gift and decide against the unbelief and for a life in faith (double-sided decision). 3 but she does this Decision of the people is also indispensable: Given the decision of God, there is no Explicit decision to do so or against a decision-whereby it can remain open whether such a decision must always be a choice against it or the factual life of a person cannot also prove the opposite.

These are the broad lines of the new being in Christ that Paul outlined. The more, however, the conscious life orientation of people in accordance with the new being in Christ became a form of religion among others and the dominant religion in the Roman Empire, into which one was born and grew culturally and socially, The less marked this double decision moment the Christian being and consciousness. The church was remembered in the baptismal practice. However, the practice of infant baptism emphasized the gift-character of Christ's faith and Christ and thus the decision of God for man, but not in the same way the human choice for God's decision in the passing of the old and the Dedication to the new life. The ecclesiastical introduction of confirmation or confirmation responds to this problem. The dispute over the practice of infant baptism and the demand for adult baptism are exemplary for the conflicts that arose. While the one God's unconditional predecision emphasizes for the people, the others insist on the responsibility of the people in their own decision for God's decision. and is for the one the affiliation to the Church of the normal social case, the people's Church is to be taken into account, so for the others no ecclesiastical affiliation is Christian legitimate, which is not based on own decision. Those who do not decide for themselves do not really belong to it either. And those who explicitly decide against it, have at least understood that it does not go without their own decision.

## Religion in the late modern age

The conflict is paradigmatic for dealing with religion in modern times. In the process of modern times, religion becomes increasingly of a social and cultural self-evidentness, in which one was able to participate without a special decision and could only be part of the outside, to a characteristic of individual identity, unmistakable, authenticity, yes sacredness of a person. Who lives religiously should do it out of conviction, and who does not do likewise. Only to participate is not enough, but it just does not do neither. You have to be totally committed to it or be totally against it. But the price of this identification pressure is high. When it comes to authenticity and one's own identity, even incidental becomes the essence. Nothing can be put to trial, everything must be defended: images in the church, crosses on mountain tops or in courtrooms, holidays, cult robes, Latin masses, circumcision rituals and whole-body veils. It is always about everything and you are always at stake. Between thing and person is no longer distinguished, and between important and less important either.

Many are too exhausting. But they do not evade the pressure of identification by questioning the link between religion and identity, but by becoming indifferent to all religious beliefs. They are not for a religion and against others, not even for or against religion at all. All of this has nothing to do with you and your identity. Everything religious will

be equally uninteresting to you, and authenticity and identity are looking for you elsewhere.

Others believe that religion and belief are about their own identities, but they can no longer be seen in the context of overcoming religious forms. Not faith and religion, but their institutionalized social design and organisational forms of belonging are what they Away. They are looking for other spiritual forms of life, and they find them easily in the global market of religions, where demand and supply are increasing each other. As Daniel Bell noted in the 1970s: "Where religion fails, cults come to light."

The end of religion cannot therefore be mentioned. Religion, even in enlightened Europe, is still present in many ways in private life and in the public sphere. ' And some argue that the tendencies towards the formation of fundamentalist currents, which can be observed not only in Islam but also in Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism or Buddhism, are ' more due to the uprooting forces of an economic, Technological, cultural and media globalization are likely to be due to the functional differentiation of society and a political, legal, moral and scientifically secularizing modernism. ' One can, but must not be religious, in order to be able to participate in politics and law, morality and science on an equal footing and to be acknowledged. Each of these areas has its own logic, its own norms and values and its own guiding criteria. The religious orientation must not play a decisive role in either the negative or the positive, if the peaceful coexistence of people of different persuasions and life concepts in a plural society is to be possible.

This has also changed the traditions of the religions themselves. The conflict between religion and the secular world has long been Become a conflict within the religious traditions themselves. Not only between pre-modern and modern directions in the individual religions, but even more in the form of a conflict-laden division among those who do not face the societal modernisation process as opposed to traditionalist But actively respond to them. Thus, the one endeavours to put themselves in a positive relationship with these processes and to reupdate their religious traditions under the conditions of modernity, while the others face the challenges of modernism in fundamentalist negation Not only ignore them, but actively combat them. Not the conflict between traditionalists and modernists is the decisive signature of the religious situation of the present, but of the intermediate reformers who try to make the basic understanding of their religion under the dynamically changing conditions of To bring out late Modernism in a new way, and fundamentalists who do not want to get involved in the demands of modernity, but who actively fight them in the name of their religion and put their own construct of their religious tradition into action. Modernizers are both of them, only the one sees the modernity as a religious challenge to which they enter, while the others perceive it as an invitation to a religious antimodernity, which they bring to bear with modern means. <>

## Essay: Fichte und Nishida: Das Absolute und das absolute Nichts von Hitoshi Minobe


### Abstract

This article compares the theory of knowledge of Fichte with that of the Japanese Philosopher Kitaro Nishida and brings out an essential correspondence between them. Both philosophers are not satisfied with the usual epistemology which is based on the contraposition of subject and object, and consider it necessary to go beyond the scheme of the contraposition because it covers the truth of knowledge. They both diagnose that the scheme of contraposition stems from the objectification by the I, and suggest that the objectifying I should be nullified. According to the view that the I can be nullified only by the I itself, they take the self-nullification of the I as their theme. They think that the I does not vanish by self-nullification, but rather touches its own life which by its nature cannot be objectified. The Absolute of Fichte as well as the absolute Nothing of Nishida are characterizable as an unobjectifiable life which can be reached only by the selfnullification of the I.



### Keywords

Nishida – Absolute – Selfnullification – objectification

## Zusammenfassung

Dieser Aufsatz vergleicht die Wissenslehre Fichtes mit der des japanischen Philosophen Kitaro Nishida und hebt eine wesentliche Gemeinsamkeit zwischen beiden hervor. Die beiden Philosophen sind mit gängiger Erkenntnistheorie, die auf der substantiellen Gegenüberstellung von Subjekt und Objekt gründet, nicht zufrieden und halten es für nötig, über dieses Schema der Gegenüberstellung hinauszugehen, weil es die Wahrheit des Wissens verhüllt. Sie stellen gemeinsam fest, dass das Schema aus der Objektivierung durch das Ich stammt, und denken, dass das objektivierende Ich vernichtet werden soll. Aufgrund der Ansicht, dass das Ich nur durch das Ich selbst vernichtet werden kann, machen sie die Selbstvernichtung des Ich zum Thema. Durch die Selbstvernichtung des Ich verschwindet das Ich nach ihnen jedoch nicht, sondern vielmehr berührt es dadurch sein eigenes Leben, das seiner Natur nach nicht objektiviert werden kann. Sowohl „das Absolute" bei Fichte als auch „das absolute Nichts" bei Nishida sind als ein unobjektivierbares, nur durch die Selbstvernichtung des Ich erreichbares Leben zu charakterisieren.

## Schlüsselbegriffe

Nishida – Absolutes – Selbstvernichtung – Objektivierung

Im Folgenden versuche ich, die Philosophie Fichtes mit der des japanischen Philosophen Kitaro Nishida (1870–1945) zu vergleichen. Nishida gilt als Urheber der sogenannten Kyoto-Schule und ist in Japan einer der bekanntesten japanischen Philosophen. Im Mittelpunkt seines Denkens steht der Begriff des „ absoluten Nichts". Das Nichts ist bekanntlich ein Zentralbegriff des Buddhismus. Aber Nishida verwendet diesen Begriff nicht im Rahmen der traditionellen buddhistischen Lehre, sondern vielmehr im Kontext der europäisch-nordamerikanischer Philosophie. Zwar hat er sich für den Buddhismus sehr interessiert und hat auch intensiv die Sitzmeditation praktiziert, so dass klar ist, dass der Begriff des absoluten Nichts unter dem Einfluss des Buddhismus entstanden ist. Aber er arbeitete nicht im Bereich der Buddhologie, sondern in dem der Philosophie, wie sich diese sich hauptsächlich in der europäisch-nordamerikanischen Welt entwickelt hat. Er hat sich dabei viel Mühe gegeben zu klären, was das Nichts in der Philosophie bedeuten kann, und hat im Zuge dieser Auseinandersetzung ein originelles Gedankengebäude errichtet. Ich zitiere eine Stelle, an der er die Absicht seiner Philosophie erwähnt:

> In der prächtigen Entwicklung der westlichen Kultur, die die Form für das Sein und die Gestaltung für gut hält, ist ohne Zweifel viel Beachtenswertes und Lernenswertes enthalten. Aber im Grunde der östlichen Kultur, die unsere Vorfahren seit einigen tausend Jahren aufgezogen hat, liegt etwas verborgen, das die Form des Formlosen sieht und die Stimme des Stimmlosen hört. So etwas sucht unser Herz unaufhörlich. Ich möchte solchem Bedürfnis einen philosophischen Grund geben. [Nishida Kitaro zenshu (Kitaro Nishidas sämtliche Werke), Iwanami Verlag, Tokio 1987-89 = NKZ, IV, 6. Vgl. Nishida, Kitaro: Logik des Ortes. Der Anfang der modernen Philosophie in Japan, übersetzt und herausgegeben von Rolf Elberfeld. Darmstadt 1999 = LO, 42.]

Das absolute Nichts ist nach Nishida etwas Lebendiges, das seinerseits gestaltlos bleibt und alle Gestalten in sich entstehen lässt. Dieses lebendige Nichts bei Nishida hat meines Erachtens eine wesentliche Verwandtschaft mit dem Absoluten bei Fichte, das auch als lebendig gekennzeichnet wird. [Zur Verwandtschaft zwischen Nishida und Fichte vgl. das Dokument des Symposiums über Fichte und Nishida am jährlichen Kongress der japanischen Fichte-Gesellschaft 2007. In: Fichte-Studien Bá 16 (2008), 37-105 (japanisch).]

Was nun die Wirkungsgeschichte betrifft, besteht zwischen den beiden Begriffen keine direkte Beziehung. Fichte kannte Nishida natürlich nicht. Nishida wiederum war zwar damals einer der besten Fichte-Kenner in Japan und von Fichte sehr stark beeinflusst, jedoch interessierte sich Nishida nur für die früheren Werke Fichtes. Der Begriff des schlechthin sich selbst setzenden Ich, zum Beispiel, hat eine große Bedeutung für die Entwicklung seines Ge¬dankens. Zugleich kritisiert er aber auch den Begriff des Ich bei Fichte: Fichte habe das Ich substantialisiert und nicht weiter gefragt, wie das Ich zustande kommt. Wenn das Ich sich selbst schlechthin setzen soll, müsse der

Entstehungshintergrund des Ich ein Nichts sein. Dieses Nichts hätte Fichte, so Nishida, weiter erforschen sollen. In Wirklichkeit hat Fichte das Nichts weiter erforscht. Besonders durch die Kritik von Jacobi, dass die Wissenschaftslehre ein Nihilismus sei, wurde er sozusagen dazu gezwungen. Und aus diesem Anlass hat er in seiner späteren Wissenschaftslehre eine neue Ansicht erreicht, die meiner Meinung nach auch Nishida teilen könnte. Es wäre also interessant gewesen, wenn sich Nishida mit der späteren Wissenschaftslehre auseinander gesetzt hätte. Nishida hat aber (leider) seine Aufmerksamkeit nicht auf die spätere Wissenschaftslehre gerichtet und gedacht, dass er Fichte schon hinter sich gelassen habe oder wenigstens dass er eine andere Richtung als Fichte eingeschlagen habe. Nishidas Begriff des absoluten Nichts ist also durch die späteren Wissenschaftslehre nicht direkt beeinflusst. Aber ich meine, dass das absolute Nichts bei Nishida und das Absolute in der späteren Wissenschaftslehre der Sache nach im tiefsten Punkt übereinstimmen.

Im Folgenden skizziere ich zuerst anhand der Schriften Nishidas aus der Zeit der Entstehung des Begriffs des „absoluten Nichts“ (1926–29), was er dar-unter versteht. Dann beschreibe ich anhand der Wissenschaftslehre von 1805, in der Fichte den Kern der in der Wissenschaftslehre von 1804 gewonnenen Einsicht ausführt, das Charakteristische des Absoluten beim späteren Fichte. Abschließend gehe ich kurz auf die Verwandtschaft beider Begriffe ein. [Zer Vortrag der Wissenschaftslehre –. Erlangen im Sommer 1805 (= WL-1805) in: GA II/9. Zu dieser Schrift ist ein hilfreicher Kommentar, von dem ich sehr viel gelernt habe: Janke, Wolfgang: Johann Gottlieb Fichtes ‚Wissenschaftslehre 1805‘. Methodisch-systematischer und philosophiegeschichtlicher Kommentar. Darmstadt 1999.]

## Nishida: Wissen als Spiegelung und der Ort desselben

Nishida geht davon aus, dass das Wissen kein Verhältnis zwischen zwei Dingen ist. Ding zu sein ist nach ihm eine Bestimmung des Wissens und daher ist es unmöglich, das Wissen aus dem Ding zu erklären. Das Wissen ist eine Sache des Bewusstseins im weitesten Sinne oder, mit Nishidas Wort, es ist eine Sache des „Erlebnisses“. Er schreibt: „Erkennen bedeutet nichts anderes, als dass das Erlebnis sich in sich selbst gestaltet.“

Unter dem Begriff „Erlebnis“ versteht Nishida ein unmittelbares Erlebnis, in dem das Objekt vom Subjekt noch nicht unterschieden ist. Erkennen oder Wissen bedeutet, dass das unmittelbare Erlebnis in sich Subjekt und Objekt gestaltet und dadurch die Deutlichkeit bekommt, die sowohl für das Sehen als auch für das Handeln erforderlich ist. Die Frage ist dabei, wie sich Subjekt und Objekt gestalten.

Nishida betont, dass diese Gestaltung im Erlebnis keine Wirkung, sondern eine Abbildung oder eine Spiegelung ist. Subjekt und Objekt des Wissens entstehen nach ihm dadurch, dass das Erlebnis sich selbst spiegelt und das Spiegelnde vom Gespiegelten unterscheidet. Subjekt ist dabei das Spiegelnde und Objekt das Gespiegelte. Was gespiegelt wird, ist der Erlebnisinhalt. Das Spiegelnde ist der „Ort“, in dem sich der Erlebnisinhalt befindet, wobei der Begriff des „Ortes“ einen der wichtigsten Termini Nishidas darstellt. Das Wissen ist also nach ihm nicht die Wirkung des Subjekts auf das Objekt oder umgekehrt, sondern das Verhältnis zwischen dem Erlebnisinhalt und dem Ort, worin jener gespiegelt wird. An mehreren Stellen zeigt er die Eigentümlichkeit der Spiegelung durch das Gleichnis des Spiegels. Zum Beispiel: „Spiegeln bedeutet, die Gestalt der Dinge, so wie sie ist, ohne jede Verzerrung entstehen zu lassen, d. h. sie so aufzunehmen, wie sie ist. Das Spiegelnde lässt in sich die Dinge entstehen. Es ist nicht das auf die Dinge Wirkende. Wenn wir sagen, dass der Spiegel Dinge spiegelt, denken wir eben an diesen Sachverhalt.“

## Ich als Ort des Nichts

Das Wissen besteht also darin, dass der Erlebnisinhalt im Ort gespiegelt wird. Dabei spielt der Ort für die Qualität des Wissens eine entscheidende Rolle. Denn es hängt vom Ort ab, wie der Erlebnisinhalt erkannt wird. Da der Ort nun, wie gesagt, nichts anderes als das, was man normalerweise Subjekt oder Ich nennt, ist, kann man sagen, dass die Qualität des Wissens davon abhängt, was für ein Ich man hat oder ist. In diesem

Zusammenhang fragt Nishida, was für ein Ich das wahre ist.

Zuerst stellt er fest, dass das Ich kein Ding ist. Für ein Ding ist das Ich vielmehr Nichts. Nichts bedeutet hier natürlich nicht die Abwesenheit eines Dinges. Das Ich ist der Ort, worin sich alle Dinge – sowohl anwesende als auch abwesende – befinden. Es ist der Ort, der selber Nichts ist und somit, wie ein klarer Spiegel, alles Sein in sich spiegeln kann. Einen solchen Ort nennt Nishida „Ort des Nichts". Das Ich muss also nach ihm ein Ort des Nichts sein, der die Dinge, so wie sie sind, ohne jede Verzerrung entstehen lässt.

Wenn man den Ort des Nichts den Dingen gegenüberstellt und z. B. als einen Geist substantialisiert, so ist er kein Ort des wahren Nichts mehr. Denn das Nichts, das in Relation zum Sein als ein Nichts bestimmt wird, ist „ein relatives Nichts" und damit kein wahres Nichts:

> Der gewöhnliche Standpunkt des Bewusstseins ist der Standpunkt des Nichts, das dem Sein gegenübersteht [...]. Das wahre Nichts ist aber nicht dieses gegensätzliche Nichts, sondern das, was Sein und Nichts in sich umfasst. Selbst das Nichts, das alles Sein negiert, ist noch eine Art Sein, insoweit es ein gegensätzliches Nichts ist. [...] Deshalb geschieht es auch, dass man das Nichts für ein potentielles Sein hält und darauf eine spiritualistische Metaphysik baut. Im wahren Bewusstsein muss aber auch das eben beschriebene Bewusstsein gespiegelt werden, welches ein bloß objektiviertes Bewusstsein ist.

Auf diese Weise kritisiert Nishida eine idealistische Denkweise, die er auch Fichte zuschreibt. Die idealistische Ansicht ist nach ihm insofern richtig, als sie einsieht, dass das Bewusstsein ein Nichts (oder eine freie Handlung aus Nichts) ist. Sie ist aber in dem Punkt unzureichend, dass sie das Nichts dem Sein der Dinge substantiell gegenüberstellt und die Realität der Dinge von jenem ableiten will. Die Dinge, die in einem ihnen gegenüberstehenden Bewusstsein vorkommen, nämlich die Dinge, die sich im Ort des relativen Nichts befinden, sind Nishida zufolge nicht so, wie sie in Wahrheit sind, sondern von dem vermeintlich für eine Substanz gehaltenen Bewusstsein verzerrt.

Um sowohl die Dinge als auch das Bewusstsein so, wie sie sind, zu sehen, muss das Ich der Ort des wahren Nichts sein, der selbst dem Sein nicht mehr gegenübersteht. Gibt es aber ein Nichts, das dem Sein nicht gegenübersteht? Insofern man das Nichts objektiviert, kann man kein anderes Nichts finden als das dem Sein gegenüberstehende. Es ist also nötig, dass man von der Objektivierung befreit wird. Nishida zufolge wird die Objektivierung nur dadurch, dass das Ich selber Nichts wird oder dass es „sich völlig entleert", beseitigt, womit das wahre Nichts, d. h. „das absolute Nichts", realisiert wird.

Was bedeutet aber, dass das Ich Nichts wird? Oben haben wir gesehen, dass das Ich bei Nishida das Spiegelnde im Erkennen ist. Dass das Ich Nichts wird, bedeutet also nicht, dass es objektiv verschwindet, sondern dass es im Akt des Spiegelns völlig aufgeht und keine Spuren des Aktes hinterlässt. So wird das absolute Nichts eben als das wahre Ich realisiert, das den Erlebnisinhalt „ohne das Spiegelnde spiegelt" oder „ohne das Sehende sieht".

Das absolute Nichts ist daher nicht stillstehend wie ein leerer Raum, sondern es ist als ein Ich lebendig. Nishida charakterisiert diesen Sachverhalt mit dem Begriff „Leben". Das absolute Nichts ist nämlich nach ihm „unser innerliches Leben". Es ist innerlich, weil es nicht objektiviert werden kann, und es ist unser Leben, weil es eben unser Vollzug des Spiegelns und des Erkennens ist. Unser Ich ist also erst dann ein wahres Ich, wenn es sich völlig entleert und mit dem innerlichen Leben unseres Erlebnisses vereinigt und auf eine solche Weise die Dinge im Erlebnis so sieht, wie sie sind.

## Fichte: Wissen als Existenz und das Licht

Die Frage, die Fichte in der Wissenschaftslehre von 1805 stellt, lautet wie üblich: Was ist das Wissen? Auf diese Frage antwortet er: „Das Wissen ist Existenz" (GA II/9, 185). Das Wissen ist nach Fichte keineswegs etwas, was erst aus Subjekt und Objekt entsteht, sondern die Existenz eines Gegenstandes ist die primäre Gestalt des Wissens. Die Spaltung von Subjekt und Objekt gehört zu dem, was von der Existenz abgeleitet werden soll. Was ist nun die Existenz?

Eine der Analyse des Begriffs der „Existenz" zeigt, dass die Existenz nicht das Sein selbst ist. Zunächst

besteht die Existenz in dieser negativen Bestimmung. Sie ist nicht das Sein selbst, sondern das Da-sein des Seins. Zum Beispiel bedeutet die Existenz der Wand nicht das Sein der Wand, sondern das Bewusstsein, d. h. das Dasein der Wand.8 Fichte schreibt in der dritten Stunde: „Die Existenz (erschöpfend) ist [...] Aeusseres Seyn (= Daseyn) des Seyns“ (GA II/9, 189). Beim Wissen kommt das Sein an sich nicht in die Existenz hinein. Das Sein bleibt vielmehr außen vor. Aber außerhalb bleibend ist es in der Existenz da, wie es an sich ist. Das ist der Grundcharakter des Wissens. Diesen Charakter bezeichnet Fichte mit dem Wort „als“: Das Sein ist in der Existenz da als das Sein. Er erklärt in der vierten Stunde: „Die Existenz ist notwendig die Existenz des Seyns als solchen“ (GA II/9, 194). Fichte zufolge besteht die Existenz oder das Wissen in der Form des Als.

Das Wissen ist also nur in der Als-Form möglich. Wie ist dann das Als möglich, bzw. worin besteht der Grund des Als? Es ist klar, dass der Grund des Als nicht in der Als-Form gefunden werden kann. Man kann aber auch nicht sagen, dass er etwas außerhalb der Als-Form ist. Denn wenn man sagt, dass er außerhalb der Als-Form sei, so ist er mit dieser Aussage schon eben als ein Grund außer der Als-Form in der Als-Form. Man kann ihn also weder in der Als-Form noch außer derselben finden. Fichte sagt, dass das Als nur „unmittelbar“ ohne weiteren Grund möglich ist als die Beziehung zwischen Sein und Dasein. Zwar fungiert das Als in diesem Sinne als ein Drittes, gleichzeitig sind Sein und Dasein jedoch im Als nicht getrennt, sondern unmittelbar eins. Die „beiden Glieder sind schlechthin unmittelbar in ihr [sc. in der Beziehung], keineswegs durch Vermittelung“ (GA II/9, 210). Das Sein bezieht sich gemäß dieses Als ohne Vermittelung auf das Dasein und umgekehrt. Das Als ist also nur dadurch möglich, dass es unmittelbar ohne weiteren Grund die Einheit von Sein und Dasein ist. So sehen wir, dass der Grund des Als paradoxerweise im Ohne-Grund-Sein oder in der Unmittelbarkeit besteht. Um diesen Sachverhalt auszudrücken, führt Fichte den Begriff des „Lichtes“ ein, indem er „die bis jetzt beschriebene Beziehung in ihrer unmittelbaren concreten, u. organischen Einheit“ (GA II/9, 210f.) als Licht bezeichnet: „das Licht bringt das als“ (GA II/9, 211). In der alltäglichen Erfahrung wissen wir, dass die optische Wahrnehmung eines Gegenstandes als solchen in der Finsternis unmöglich und nur im Licht möglich ist, d. h. dass das Sein des Gegenstandes erst im Licht vom Dasein (=Für-uns-Sein) desselben differenziert und zugleich damit identifiziert wird. Die Differenzierung und die Identifizierung sind dabei unzertrennlich und geschehen auf einen Schlag. Ebenso ist das Licht in der Wissenschaftslehre etwas, das auf einen Schlag unmittelbar die Zweiheit und Einheit von Sein und Dasein hervorbringt und somit das Als ermöglicht. Das Licht ist also der wahre Grund des Als, der jedoch kein Grund im gewöhnlichen Sinn ist.

Was ist aber eigentlich das Licht, das das Als unmittelbar ermöglicht? Jetzt gilt es, die Unmittelbarkeit des Lichtes näher zu betrachten, damit wir das Wesen des Lichtes richtig fassen können. Nach Obigem besteht die Unmittelbarkeit des Lichtes darin, dass dieses weder in der Als-Form noch außer derselben gefunden werden kann. Das Licht ist in der Als-Form überhaupt nicht fassbar. Diese Unmittelbarkeit ist der dafür entsprechende Ausdruck. Können wir aber etwas fassen, was mit der Als-Form nicht zu fassen ist? Wie gesehen ist das Wissen nur durch die Als-Form möglich. Alles, was wir fassen können, ist durch sie. Wir wissen also nur, dass wir das Licht nicht fassen können. Aber dieses Wissen ist von entscheidender Wichtigkeit. Denn es verhilft uns zu der Einsicht, dass das Licht etwas ist, das der Als-Form entgeht.

Wenn wir etwas mit der Als-Form sehen, sehen wir es notwendig als ein Objekt, da die Als-Form die Form der Objektivierung ist. Das Licht, das seinem Wesen nach mit der Als-Form nicht fassbar ist, ist also etwas, was wir nicht objektivieren können. Das Einzige wiederum, das wir nicht objektivieren können, aber darum nicht leugnen können, ist nach Fichte der „Akt“ oder das „Leben“ des Objektivierens selbst.9 „Innere Lebendigkeit u Akt“ (GA II/9, 218) sind das Wesentliche des Lichtes. Die Lebendigkeit oder der Akt des objektivierenden Lichtes bleibt gerade für dieses verborgen. Das Licht erzeugt das Wissen eines Objekts, indem es sich dem Bereich des Objekts entzieht.

## Hinausgehen aus dem Faktischen

Wir haben gesehen, dass das lebendige Licht, das nie im Wissen vorkommen kann, das Wissen ermöglicht. Hier entsteht aber die Frage nach der Realität des Begriffs der Lebendigkeit. Denn es ist bisher noch nicht klar, wie die Lebendigkeit, die nie im Wissen vorkommen kann, doch real ist und warum sie nicht vielmehr ein leerer Begriff ist. Gewiss ist, wie gesagt, dass sie im Wissen nicht vorkommen kann. Wenn wir das, was als ein Objekt im Wissen vorkommt, mit Fichte „Faktum“ nennen, ist sie kein Faktum. Um sie zu erreichen, müssen wir irgendwie aus dem Bereich des Faktums hinausgehen. Da wir aber wenigstens bis jetzt keinen anderen Bereich als den faktischen kennen, haben wir kein anderes Mittel hinauszugehen als die Leugnung der faktischen Realität. Um die Lebendigkeit des Lichtes zu realisieren, müssen wir also alles Faktum leugnen. Fichte fordert somit zuerst von uns den Entschluss, die Gültigkeit des Faktums völlig zu leugnen. Nach ihm sollen wir folgendes sagen können: „[I]ch soll es [sc. das Faktum] als wahr nicht gelten lassen: ich soll es, ohnerachtet es faktisch bleibt, u. nimmer weicht, und ich allerdings die Augen öfnen soll, um dies zu sehen, für bloßen Schein, u. Täuschung halten.“ (GA II/9, 232)

Dieser Entschluss ist keine Folge aus einem theoretisch-objektiven Wissen, weil er eben die Gültigkeit desselben leugnen will. Sondern er ist ein „rein praktisches, reelles Machen, u. anfangen aller Wahrheit durchaus per hiatum“, das Fichte „Glaube“ nennt (GA II/9, 233). So betont Fichte die Diskontinuität zwischen Faktum und Lebendigkeit. Das bedeutet aber nicht, dass wir durch den Sprung des Glaubens in einen Bereich kommen würden, in dem kein Faktum mehr existiert. Das Faktum verschwindet nie, insofern wir nicht „das Auge zuthun“ (GA II/9, 231). Wenn wir denken, dass es außer und neben dem Bereich des Faktums einen anderen nicht-faktischen Bereich geben würde, dann denken wir noch immer faktisch, und der Bereich, der angeblich nicht mehr faktisch ist, ist in Wirklichkeit noch innerhalb des faktischen Bereichs. Was durch den Entschluss des Glaubens geleugnet wird, ist nicht die Existenz, sondern die Gültigkeit des Faktums bzw. die faktische Ansicht, die nur das Faktum für real hält. Fichte ist der Meinung, dass wir nur durch die Leugnung der faktischen Ansicht aus dem faktischen Bereich wirklich hinausgehen und die oben genannte Lebendigkeit des Lichts erreichen können.

Insofern wir in der faktischen Ansicht bleiben, gibt es keinen Zugang zum Lebendigen, da wir alles mit der Als-Form sehen und so objektivieren. Mit anderen Worten: Wir sehen da nur die Objekte, die im Licht vorkommen, und nicht das lebendige Licht selbst, das die Objekte entstehen lässt. Wenn wir aber unseren Blick, von der faktischen Ansicht befreit, vom schon seienden Faktum auf seine Genesis wenden, lernen wir dadurch die Realität der Lebendigkeit des Lichtes kennen, das uns davon überzeugt, dass in Wahrheit nicht das Faktum, sondern die Lebendigkeit real ist.

Auch in der neuen Ansicht sehen wir zwar das Faktum. Aber wir sehen es jetzt nicht mehr auf dem Standpunkt des Faktums, sondern auf dem des Lebendigen. Wenn wir das Lebendige, das keineswegs in der Als-Form, aus der die Relation stammt, vorkommt und auf solche Weise dem Faktum in der Als-Form zugrunde liegt, mit Fichte „das Absolute“ nennen, können wir sagen: Wir sehen das Faktum und das Licht, in dem es existiert, nicht mehr faktisch, sondern vom lebendigen Absoluten her. So sehen wir ein, dass die Quelle des Lichtes das Absolute ist und dass das Existieren des Faktums im Licht nichts anderes als die Lebendigkeit des Absoluten ist. Wir gelangen dann zu der Einsicht, dass „das absolute, als absolutes in seinem unmittelbaren Existieren Erzeuger des Lichts“ und dass es „auch Erzeuger alles dessen, was in ihm vorkommt“ (GA II/9, 235), ist. Hier gibt es keinen Hiatus mehr zwischen dem Faktum und dem Absoluten. Denn wir wissen jetzt, dass das Faktum und das Absolute in der Lebendigkeit, die allein eigentlich real ist, eins sind.

## Ich als Form des Absoluten

Oben wurde ausgeführt, dass die Gültigkeit des Faktums geleugnet werden soll. Diese Aussage war zunächst richtig, weil wir auf dem Standpunkt des Faktums standen. Jetzt aber müssen wir, die wir den Standpunkt des Lebendigen kennen, genauer sagen, dass die Gültigkeit des Faktums insofern geleugnet werden soll, als man im Standpunkt des Faktums befangen ist und das Faktum als für sich

bestehend betrachtet. Denn wir wissen jetzt, dass das Faktum eigentlich vom Lebendigen untrennbar ist und somit dass seine Gültigkeit insofern anerkannt werden soll, als es mit dem Lebendigen eins ist. Es bleibt nur die Frage, auf welche Weise das Faktum und das Lebendige eins sind bzw. worin der Berührungspunkt beider besteht.

Fichtes Antwort auf diese Frage ist, dass das Ich der „unmittelbare Berührungspunkt" (GA II/9, 250) ist. Das Ich ist nämlich nach ihm der Übergangspunkt vom lebendigen Absoluten zum Faktum. Mit anderen Worten: Das Absolute erzeugt das Faktum, indem es Ich wird. Das Ich ist nicht etwas, was vom Absoluten unabhängig außer dem Absoluten existieren würde. Wenn man das Ich als etwas vom Absoluten Unabhängiges betrachtet, so wird das Absolute objektiviert und damit geht die Absolutheit des Absoluten verloren. Das Absolute kann nur dadurch absolut und lebendig sein, dass es Ich ist. Das Faktum kann auch nicht lebendig und real sein, ohne dass das Absolute Ich ist. Denn ohne Ich zu sein, wäre das Absolute nicht fähig, das Faktum zu erzeugen. Das ist der Grund von Fichtes Aussage, dass das Absolute Ich wird.

Das Ich kann dabei natürlich kein faktisches Ich sein. Um zu sagen, dass das Absolute Ich ist, muss man sich vom gewöhnlichen faktischen Verständnis des Ich befreit gründlich auf das Ich besinnen. Fichte ist der Meinung, dass das Ich eigentlich die Form ist, durch die sich das Absolute repräsentiert (vgl. GA II/9, 248ff.). Nach ihm sind sowohl das Absolute als auch das Faktum nur dann lebendig und real, wenn das Ich sich selbst vernichtet und reine Form der Repräsentation wird. Diese Form beschreibt Fichte als „die absolute SichProjektion des Wissens" (GA II/9, 245). Die SichProjektion des Wissens hier geschieht nicht dadurch, dass ein Wissen, das schon da ist, sich selbst projiziert. Denn das Wissen ist erst mit dem Ich möglich, das durch die absolute SichProjektion entsteht. Das Ich projiziert sich schlechthin, ohne vor der Projektion etwas zu sein. [Das ist eine der Grundeinsichten Fichtes. Er schreibt z. B. schon in der Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre von 1794/95 Folgendes: „Man hört wohl die Frage aufwerfen: was war ich wohl, ehe ich zum Selbstbewusstseyn kam? Die natürliche Antwort darauf ist: ich war gar nicht; denn ich war nicht Ich. Das Ich ist nur insofern, inwiefern es sich seiner bewusst ist" (GA I/2 262).] Es ist also auch nicht der Akt im gewöhnlichen Sinne, den wir im faktischen Bereich finden. So charakterisiert Fichte das Ich vielmehr als ein Sein. Das Ich ist nach ihm ursprünglich „absolute Inversion, Rükkehr; auch nicht als Akt, oder Veränderung von einem terminus a quo: Sondern seyn, nur in diesem Gekehrtseyn in sich selber, u. ausserdem gar nicht" (GA II/9, 245). In solcher reinen Rückkehr besteht das Ich als reine Form der Repräsentation.

Wenn man nun einsieht, dass das Ich reine Rückkehr ist, ist zugleich klar, dass es nicht für sich bestehen, sondern nur als die Rückkehr des Absoluten existieren kann. Es ist also eigentlich nicht das Ich, sondern das Absolute, das in sich selbst zurückkehrt. Fichte schreibt: „[N]icht, wie vorher, das Ich repräsentirt ihn [sc. Gott], sondern er selber repräsentirt sich im Ich. In Sum¬ma: Gott selber unmittelbar ist im Ich; u. er ist das Ich [...]." (GA II/9, 249f.)

Fichte zufolge kann man nur auf diese Weise das Absolute und das Ich und damit den Status des Faktums, d. h. das Wissen der Sache gemäß verstehen. Entscheidend ist dabei das Selbstverständnis des Ich. Wenn man denkt, dass das Ich faktisch irgendwo existieren würde, so objektiviert man alles aus die¬sem vermeintlich faktischen Ich. Wenn man wiederum das Ich für nichtig hält und denkt, dass das Absolute ohne Ich sein würde, so stellt dies auch eine Objektivierung dar, die die Sache verzerrt. Denn die Einstellung, dass das Ich ein Nichts sei, das dem Sein des Absoluten gegenübersteht, kann nur daraus folgen, dass man sowohl das Ich als auch das Absolute objektiviert. Man muss demgegenüber einsehen, dass das Ich weder faktisches Sein noch faktisches Nichts, sondern reine Form der Repräsentation des Absoluten ist und zugleich dass das Absolute auch weder faktisches Sein noch faktisches Nichts, sondern ein in sich geschlossenes Sein ist, das sich nur im Ich repräsentiert. Wir, die wir Ich sind, können ohne das Absolute nicht leben. Das Absolute kann auch ohne uns nicht leben: „Es lebt in uns" (GA II/9, 244). [Vgl. den Brief des Paulus an die Galater, ii, 20: „Ich lebe gar nicht mehr, sondern in mir lebt Jesus Christus". Dazu vgl. auch die 6. Vorlesung der AzsL.]

## Vergleich

Besonders den Status des Ich berücksichtigend, soll kurz auf auf die Verwandt¬schaft zwischen dem absoluten Nichts bei Nishida und dem Absoluten beim späteren Fichte eingegangen werden.

Sowohl Nishida als auch Fichte denken, dass das Wissen insofern nicht möglich ist, als das Ich ein faktisches Sein ist. Denn das faktische Ich sieht die Dinge nicht so, wie sie sind, sondern nur als Objekte, die ihm gegenüberstehen. Um das Wissen zu erreichen, muss das Ich also sich selbst vernichten. Durch die Selbstvernichtung wird das Ich ein Nichts. Das bedeutet aber nicht, dass es verschwinden würde. Es wird dadurch vielmehr lebendig, indem es vom fakti¬schen Sein befreit sein eigenes Leben berührt und ein lebendiges Nichts wird. Beide Philosophen kennen dieses lebendige Nichts. Es heißt bei Nishida der Ort des absoluten Nichts. Bei Fichte ist es die Form der Repräsentation des Absoluten. Es scheint zwar auf den ersten Blick, dass das absolute Nichts einen Gegensatz zum Absoluten bildet. Wenn man aber die Aufmerksamkeit darauf richtet, dass beide eben das sind, was sich im Ich, und zwar nur in dem Ich, das als lebendiges Nichts gekennzeichnet werden soll, zum Wissen bildet, so könnte man vielmehr sagen, dass sie eng verwandt sind.

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## Essay: [English translation] Fichte and Nishida: The absolute and the absolute nothingness by Hitoshi Minobe

In the following I try to compare the philosophy of Fichte with that of the Japanese philosopher Kitaro Nishida (1870-1945). Nishida is considered the author of the so-called Kyoto school and is one of Japan's most famous Japanese philosophers. At the center of his thinking is the concept of "absolute nothingness". Nothing is known to be a central concept of Buddhism. But Nishida does not use this term in the context of traditional Buddhist teachings, but rather in the context of European-North American philosophy. Although he was very interested in Buddhism and also intensively practiced sitting meditation, it is clear that the concept of absolute nothing originated under the influence of Buddhism. But he did not work in the field of Buddhology, but in philosophy, as it has developed mainly in the European-North American world. He has gone to great lengths to clarify what nothingness in philosophy can mean, and in the course of this altercation he has created an original building of ideas. I quote a passage in which he mentions the intention of his philosophy:

In the magnificent development of Western culture, which considers the form of being and design to be good, there is no doubt that much worth noting and worth learning are contained. But basically, the Eastern culture that has raised our ancestors for a few thousand years now hides something that sees the formless and hears the voice of the unvoiced. That's what our heart is constantly searching for. I would like to give such need a philosophical reason. [Nishida Kitaro zenshu (Kitaro Nishida's Complete Works), Ivanami Publishing, Tokyo 1987-89 = NKZ, IV, 6. See Nishida, Kitaro: Logic of the Place. The beginning of modern philosophy in Japan, translated and edited by Rolf Elberfeld. Darmstadt 1999 = LO, 42.]

Absolute Nothing is, according to Nishida, something living, which in turn remains shapeless and allows all shapes to develop. In my opinion, this living nothingness in Nishida has a substantial relationship to the Absolute in Fichte, which is also characterized as living. [For the relationship between Nishida and Fichte cf. the document of the

symposium on spruce and Nishida at the annual congress of the Japanese Spruce Society 2007. In: Spruce Studies Bá 16 (2008), 37-105 (Japanese).]

As far as the impact story is concerned, there is no direct relationship between the two terms. Of course, Fichte did not know Nishida. Nishida was then one of the best spruce connoisseurs in Japan and very much influenced by Fichte, but Nishida was only interested in Fichte's earlier works. For example, the concept of the ego that absolutely sets itself up has great significance for the development of its thought. At the same time, however, he also criticizes the concept of the ego in Fichte: Fichte had substantiated the ego and no longer asked how the ego came about. If the ego is to set itself upright, the origin of the ego must be nothingness. This nothing would have spruce, Nishida continue to explore. In fact, Fichte has further researched the Nothing. Especially through Jacobi's criticism that science is nihilism, he was forced to do so. And on this occasion, he has in his later science a new view reached, which I think could also share Nishida. So it would have been interesting if Nishida had dealt with the later science. Nishida, however, has (unfortunately) not focused his attention on the later science and thought that he has already left Fichte or at least that he has taken a different direction than spruce. Nishida's concept of absolute nothingness is therefore not directly influenced by later science. But I think that the absolute nothingness in Nishida and the Absolute in the later science of science are at bottom in the lowest point.

In the following, I first sketch what he understands from the writings of Nishida from the time of the emergence of the concept of "absolute nothingness" (1926-29). Then, on the basis of the theory of science of 1805, in which Spruce explains the essence of the insight gained in the theory of science of 1804, I describe the characteristic of the absolute in later spruce. Finally, I will briefly discuss the relationship between the two terms. [Zer lecture of the science of science -. Erlangen in summer 1805 (= WL-1805) in: GA II / 9. For this writing is a helpful comment from which I have learned a lot: Janke, Wolfgang: Johann Gottlieb Fichtes, Wissenschaftslehre 1805 '. Methodological-systematic and philosophical-historical commentary. Darmstadt 1999.]

## Nishida: Knowledge as a reflection and its place

Nishida assumes that knowledge is not a relationship between two things. According to him, being a thing is a destiny of knowledge and therefore it is impossible to explain the knowledge of the thing. Knowledge is a matter of consciousness in the broadest sense, or, with Nishida's word, it is a matter of "experience." He writes: "To know means nothing else than to make the experience itself."

By the term "experience" Nishida understands an immediate experience in which the object is not yet distinguished from the subject. Cognition or knowledge means that the immediate experience forms the subject and the object in itself, thereby acquiring the clarity required for both seeing and acting. The question is how the subject and the object shape themselves.

Nishida emphasizes that this design in the experience is not an effect, but an illustration or a reflection. According to him, the subject and object of knowledge emerge from the fact that the experience reflects itself and distinguishes the mirror from the mirrored. Subject is thereby the mirroring and object the mirrored. What is mirrored is the experience content. The mirroring is the "place" in which the experience content is located, whereby the term "place" is one of Nishida's most important terms. According to him, knowledge is not the effect of the subject on the object or vice versa, but the relation between the content of the experience and the place in which it is mirrored. In several places he shows the peculiarity of mirroring through the simile of the mirror. For example: "Mirroring means giving shape to things as they are, without any distortion, d. H. to accept her as she is. The mirror makes things happen. It is not the things that work on things. When we say that the mirror reflects things, we think of that fact. "

## I as a place of nothing

The knowledge is thus that the experience content is mirrored in place. The place plays a crucial role in the quality of knowledge. Because it depends on

the location as the experience content is detected. Now, as the place is, as I said, nothing other than what is normally called the subject or the ego, one can say that the quality of knowledge depends on what kind of self one has or is. In this context, Nishida asks what kind of self is true.

First, he realizes that the ego is not a thing. For a thing, the ego is nothing. Of course, nothing here does not mean the absence of a thing. The ego is the place in which all things - both present and absent - are. It is the place that is itself nothing and thus, like a clear mirror, can reflect all being in itself. Nishida calls such a place "place of nothingness". So the ego must be after him a place of nothing that lets things arise as they are without any distortion.

If one places the place of nothing against the things and z. For example, as a spirit substantialized, it is no longer a place of true nothingness. For the Nothing, which is determined in relation to being as nothing, is "a relative nothingness" and therefore not a true nothingness:

The ordinary point of view of consciousness is the viewpoint of nothing facing being [...]. The true nothing, however, is not this opposing nothing, but that which embraces being and nothing. Even the nothing that negates all being is still a kind of being insofar as it is an opposing nothingness. [...] That's why it happens that one considers nothingness to be a potential being and builds a spiritualistic metaphysics on it. In true consciousness, however, the just described consciousness must also be mirrored, which is a merely objectified consciousness.

In this way Nishida criticizes an idealistic way of thinking, which he ascribes to Fichte. According to him, the idealistic view is correct insofar as it realizes that the consciousness is a nothing (or a free action out of nothing). But it is inadequate in the sense that it essentially confronts nothingness with the being of things, and wants to deduce the reality of things from that. According to Nishida, the things that occur in a consciousness that is in their opposition, namely, the things that are in the place of relative nothing, are not what they really are, but distorted by the supposedly substance-held consciousness.

To see both things and consciousness as they are, the ego must be the place of true nothing that no longer faces being. But is there a nothing that does not face being? In so far as one objectifies the nothing, one can find no other nothing than the one opposed to being. So it is necessary to get rid of the objectification. According to Nishida, the objectification is removed only by the ego becoming nothing or "emptying itself out completely," thus rendering the true nothingness, that is, meaninglessness. H. "The absolute nothing", is realized.

But what does it mean that the ego becomes nothing? Above, we have seen that in Nishida the ego is the mirroring in knowing. The fact that the ego becomes nothing does not mean that it disappears objectively, but that it completely dissolves in the act of mirroring and leaves no traces of the act. Thus the absolute nothing is realized just as the true ego, which mirrors the content of the experience "without the mirroring" or "without seeing".

The absolute nothing is therefore not stationary as an empty space, but it is alive as an ego. Nishida characterizes this fact with the term "life". The absolute nothing is after him "our inner life". It is inwardly because it cannot be objectified, and it is our life because it is our very act of mirroring and knowing. Our ego is then a true self only when it is completely emptied and united with the inner life of our experience, and in such a way sees things in the experience as they are.

## Fichte: knowledge as existence and the light

The question that Fichte poses in the science of 1805 is as usual: what is the knowledge? To this question he answers: "Knowledge is existence" (GA II / 9, 185). According to Fichte, knowledge is by no means something which arises first from subject and object, but the existence of an object is the primary form of knowledge. The division of subject and object belongs to that which is to be derived from existence. What is the existence?

An analysis of the concept of "existence" shows that existence is not being itself. First, existence exists in this negative determination. It is not the being itself,

but the existence of being. For example, the existence of the wall does not mean the being of the wall, but the consciousness, d. H. The existence of the wall. In the third hour, Fichte writes: "Existence (exhausting) is [...] outward being (= Dasein) of Being" (GA II / 9, 189). In knowledge, being in itself does not come into existence. Being is rather left out. But remaining outside, it exists in existence as it is in itself. That is the basic character of knowledge. Fichte refers to this character with the word "as": Being is there in existence as being. He explains in the fourth hour: "Existence is necessary for the existence of Being as such" (GA II / 9, 194). According to Fichte, existence or knowledge exists in the form of Als.

The knowledge is only possible in the as-form. How then is the as possible, or what is the reason of the as? It is clear that the reason of the Being can not be found in the as-form. But you can not say that he is something outside of the as-form. For if one says that he is outside of the "as-form," he is already with this statement as a cause, except the "as-form" in the as-form. One can therefore find it neither in the as-form nor outside of it. Fichte says that Being is possible only as "immediate" for no other reason than the relationship between being and being. To be sure, the Als acts as a third in this sense; at the same time, being and existence are in the not separated, but immediately one. The "two limbs are absolutely directly in her [sc. in the relationship], by no means through mediation "(GA II / 9, 210). Being, according to this Being, relates without reference to existence and vice versa. The al is possible only because it is the unity of being and existence immediately without any further reason. Thus, we see that the cause of Being is, paradoxically, in no-ground-being or in immediacy. In order to express this state of affairs, Fichte introduces the concept of "light," by "concretizing" the relationship described so far in its immediate, u. organic unit "(GA II / 9, 210f.) called light:" the light brings that as "(GA II / 9, 211). In everyday experience, we know that the optical perception of an object as such is impossible in the darkness and only possible in the light, that is, in the darkness. H. that the being of the object is only differentiated and at the same time identified with it in the light of being (= being-for-us). Differentiation and identification are inseparable and occur in one fell swoop. Likewise, light in the science of science is something that at one stroke directly brings forth the duality and unity of being and existence, thus enabling the Being. So the light is the true ground of the al, which, however, is no reason in the ordinary sense.

But what is actually the light that makes Das possible directly? Now it is time to take a closer look at the immediacy of light so that we can grasp the essence of light correctly. From the above, the immediacy of light is that it can not be found either in the as-form or beyond. The light is not tangible in the as-form. This immediacy is the appropriate expression. But can we grasp something that can not be grasped with the as-form? As seen, knowledge is only possible through the as-form. Everything we can grasp is through them. So we only know that we can not grasp the light. But this knowledge is crucial. For it helps us to realize that the light is something that escapes the as-form.

When we see something with the as-form, we necessarily see it as an object, since the as-form is the form of objectification. The light, which by its nature is incomprehensible with the as-form, is thus something that we can not objectify. The only thing that we cannot objectify, but can not deny, is, according to Fichte, the "act" or the "life" of objectifying itself. "Inner liveliness and act" (GA II / 9, 218) are the essentials of the light. The liveliness or the act of objectifying light just remains hidden for this. The light creates the knowledge of an object by eluding the area of the object.

## Going out of the fact

We have seen that the living light, which can never occur in knowledge, enables knowledge. But here arises the question of the reality of the concept of liveliness. For it is not yet clear how the liveliness, which can never occur in knowledge, is real and why it is not rather an empty concept. Certainly, as I said, it can not occur in knowledge. If we call what is an object in knowledge Fichte a "fact," it is not a fact. To reach them, we must somehow go beyond the realm of fact. But since we know at least until now no area other than the factual, we have no other means to go beyond the denial of factual reality. To realize the liveliness of light, we must

deny all fact. Thus, Fichte first demands from us the decision to completely deny the validity of the fact. According to him, we should be able to say the following: "[I] ch it shall [sc. the fact] can not be accepted as true: I should, without it remains factual u. never give way, and I should, however, open my eyes to see this, for mere appearance, and so on. Deception. "(GA II / 9, 232)

This decision is not a consequence of a theoretical-objective knowledge because it just wants to deny its validity. But he is a "purely practical, real making, u. to begin all truth by hiatum ", which Fichte calls" faith "(GA II / 9, 233). Thus Fichte emphasizes the discontinuity between fact and liveliness. But that does not mean that through the leap of faith we would come into an area where no fact exists anymore. The fact never disappears insofar as we do not "do the eye" (GA II / 9, 231). If we think that there is another non-factual realm besides and beyond the realm of fact, then we are still thinking in fact, and the realm that is supposedly no longer factual is really still within the factual realm. What is denied by the decision of faith is not the existence, but the validity of the fact or the factual view, which considers only the fact to be real. Fichte believes that only by denying the de facto view of the factual realm can we really go beyond reaching the above-mentioned liveliness of light.

Insofar as we remain in the factual view, there is no access to the living because we see and objectify everything with the as-form. In other words, we only see the objects that appear in the light, not the living light itself, which creates the objects. But if we turn our gaze, freed from the factual view, from the already existing fact, to its genesis, we thereby become acquainted with the reality of the liveliness of light, which convinces us that in reality not the fact, but the liveliness is real.

Even in the new view we see the fact. But we no longer see it in the point of view of the fact, but on that of the living. If we call the living, which by no means resides in the as-form from which the relation originates, and thus underlie the fact in the as-form, with Fichte we call "the absolute", we can say: we see the fact and the light in which it exists, no longer factually, but from the living Absolute.

Thus we realize that the source of light is the Absolute, and that the existence of the fact in light is nothing other than the liveliness of the Absolute. We then arrive at the insight that "the absolute, as the absolute, in his immediate existence, is the generator of light," and that "he is also the generator of all that is in him" (GA II / 9, 235). Here there is no hiatus between the fact and the absolute. For we now know that the fact and the absolute in the liveliness, which alone is actually real, are one.

## I as a form of the absolute

Above it was stated that the validity of the fact should be denied. This statement was correct at first, because we were on the standpoint of the fact. But now we, who know the standpoint of the living, must say more precisely that the validity of the fact is to be denied insofar as one is caught up in the standpoint of the fact and considers the fact as consisting for itself. For we now know that the fact is in fact inseparable from the living and thus that its validity should be recognized insofar as it is one with the living. There remains only the question of how the fact and the living are one, or in which the point of contact of both exists.

Fichte's answer to this question is that the ego is the "immediate point of contact" (GA II / 9, 250). For the ego is after him the point of transition from the living absolute to the fact. In other words, the Absolute creates fact by becoming I. The ego is not something that exists apart from the absolute, except the absolute. If one regards the ego as something independent of the absolute, then the absolute is objectified, and with it the absoluteness of the absolute is lost. The Absolute can only be absolute and alive by being I. The fact can not be alive and real without the Absolute I being. For without being I, the Absolute would not be able to produce the fact. That is the reason of Fichte's statement that the Absolute I becomes.

Of course, the ego can not be a factual ego. In order to say that the Absolute is I, one has to be thoroughly mindful of the ordinary factual understanding of the ego. Fichte is of the opinion that the ego is actually the form through which the Absolute is represented (see GA II / 9, 248ff.). According to him, both the absolute and the fact

are only alive and real if the ego destroys itself and becomes a pure form of representation. Fichte describes this form as "the absolute self-projection of knowledge" (GA II / 9, 245). The self-projection of knowledge here does not happen because a knowledge that is already there projects itself. For knowledge is possible only with the ego that arises through absolute self-projection. The ego projected itself without being anything before the projection. [This is one of the basic insights of Fichte. He writes z. For example, in the very basis of the entire theory of science of 1794-95, the following is said: "One can well raise the question: what was I, before I came to self-consciousness? The natural answer is: I was not at all; because I was not me. The ego is only in so far as it is aware of it "(GA I / 2 262).] So it is not the act in the usual sense, which we find in the realm of fact. Thus Fichte characterizes the ego as a being. The ego is after him originally "absolute inversion, return; also not as an act, or change from a terminus a quo: but be, only in this being of being in itself, u. not at all "(GA II / 9, 245). In such pure return, the ego exists as a pure form of representation.

At the same time, when one realizes that the ego is pure return, it is clear that it can not exist by itself, but can exist only as the return of the absolute. So it is not really the ego, but the absolute that returns to itself. Fichte writes: "[N] not, as before, the I represents him [sc. God], but he himself represents himself in the Ego. In Summa: God Himself is immediate in the Ego; u. he is the I [...]. "(GA II / 9, 240f.)

According to Fichte, only in this way can the Absolute and the ego, and thus the status of the fact, d. H. to understand the knowledge of the matter. Decisive is the self-understanding of the ego. If one thinks that the ego actually exists somewhere, then one objectifies everything from that supposedly factual ego. In turn, if one negates the ego and thinks that the absolute would be without the ego, then this also constitutes an objectification that distorts the thing. For the attitude that the ego is a nothing that faces the being of the absolute can only follow from objectifying both the ego and the absolute. On the other hand, one has to realize that the ego is neither factual being nor factual nothingness, but pure form of the representation of the Absolute, and at the same time that the Absolute is neither factual being nor factual nothingness, but a self-contained being that only represents itself in the ego , We who are I cannot live without the Absolute. The Absolute cannot live without us: "It lives in us" (GA II / 9, 244). [See. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, ii, 20: "I no longer live, but Jesus Christ lives in me". For this cf. also the 6th lecture of the AzsL.]

## Comparison

Especially considering the status of the ego, the relationship between the absolute nothingness in Nishida and the absolute in the later spruce should be briefly mentioned.

Both Nishida and Fichte think that knowing is not possible insofar as the ego is a factual being. For the factual ego does not see things as they are, but only as objects that face it. In order to reach the knowledge, the ego must destroy itself. Self-destruction makes the ego a nothing. That does not mean that it would disappear. On the contrary, it becomes alive by being freed from factual being, touching on its own life and becoming a living nothingness. Both philosophers know this living nothingness. Nishida is the place of absolute nothingness. For Fichte, it is the form of the representation of the Absolute. It seems at first glance that absolute nothing forms a contrast to the absolute. But if one directs attention to the fact that both are precisely what is constituted in the ego, and indeed only in the ego which is to be characterized as living nothingness, then one could say that they are closely related.

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The Thousand and One Nights and Twentieth-Century Fiction: Intertextual Readings by Richard van Leeuwen [Handbook of Oriental Studies: Section 1; The Near and Middle East, Brill 9789004362536]

It is gradually being acknowledged that the Arabic story-collection Thousand and One Nights has had a major influence on European and world literature. This study analyses the influence of Thousand and One Nights, as an intertextual model, on 20th-century prose from all over the world. Works of approximately forty authors are examined: those who were crucial to the development of the main currents in 20th-century fiction, such as modernism, magical realism and post-modernism. The book contains six thematic sections divided into chapters discussing two or three authors/works, each from a narratological perspective and supplemented by references to the cultural and literary context. It is shown how Thousand and One Nights became deeply rooted in modern world literature especially in phases of renewal and experiment.

Excerpt: In one of his essays on the Thousand and one nights the Argentine author Jorge Luis Borges remarked that not long after Boileau proclaimed, at the end of the seventeenth century, the laws which should govern European literature, his codex was turned upside-down by the intrusion of an exotic literary work: the tales of Shahrazad. With his observation, Borges presumably had two intentions: He wanted to indicate that the carefully conceived system of generic conventions based on classical examples and codified by Boileau was destroyed by something that transcended and disrupted generic prescriptions: an act of pure, imaginative narration. The appearance of the Thousand and one nights marked the end of a literary era and the beginning of another, characterized by new spaces for experiments and exploration. In addition, Borges's remark should be seen as a statement about his own art and his efforts to use Shahrazad as a source of inspiration for his exploration of the boundaries of modernist literature.

With this remark, Borges identifies the first European translation of the Thousand and one nights, published by Antoine Galland in 1704–17, as a watershed in European literature, and even in world literature. Its appearance coincided with developments in literature and history which determined the nature of European modernity and its relations with the parts of the world in which it was becoming increasingly involved. In the eighteenth century, the interest in eastern

civilizations was at its height; intellectuals and literati fervently experimented with literary forms, new genres, and concepts of literature to accommodate new perceptions of the world. In spite of Boileau's prescriptions, the field of literature was still fluid and had not crystallized into clear generic demarcations, thus, the reception of the Thousand and one nights in western literatures is closely linked to literary history itself, as the work became part of the various experimental trends that henceforth defined the literary landscape. It gradually penetrated into the capillary veins of "modern" literature. By the end of the nineteenth century the Thousand and one nights, as a literary and cultural phenomenon, had become deeply rooted in the western imagination, but it was also vibrantly alive in non-western cultures, in new guises and forms, often conveyed through European literary influence.

In this study, my aim is to show that in the twentieth century, the triumphal procession of Shahrazad has not subsided; on the contrary, it has received a new impetus from contemporary literary trends and newly emerging media. Although several good studies of the influence of the Thousand and one nights on European literature, especially its influence in the eighteenth century, have appeared, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have hardly been touched upon. It is only in recent years that the importance of the Nights as an intertextual source of modern literature has begun to be acknowledged. The first to draw attention to the significance of the Thousand and one nights in modern English literature was Peter Caracciolo, who edited a collection of essays revealing the traces of the Nights in the work of authors such as Coleridge, Collins, Thackeray, Gaskell, Conrad, Wells, and Joyce. Another landmark was Dominique Jullien's book on the sources of Proust's À la recherché du temps perdu, the Thousand and one nights and Saint-Simon's Mémoires, followed more recently by a study of the Nights in French modernism. Other studies are more fragmented and incidental, but they show that there is an increasing recognition of the continuing importance of the Nights as a source of literary inspiration.

These efforts contribute to our insights about the Thousand and one nights as a structural phenomenon not only in literature, but in many segments of world culture; this appears in a multitude of ways. Still, the available information remains fragmented and focused on single authors, specific media, and specific interpretations; we lack a more extensive survey to reveal a more systematic pattern. For instance, some specialists in the work of specific authors have studied traces of the Nights in an individual novel; others have focused on cinema or translations; still others have used the perspective of orientalism to see how references to the Nights reveal attitudes toward the oriental Other. All these partial inquiries are of course valuable in themselves, but they tend to present the influence of Shahrazad as incidents rather than as a systematic process in which the Nights has been incorporated into a textual and visual aesthetics. In particular, the Saidian concept of orientalism highlights ideological aspects of the reception of the Nights, at the expense of other aspects, such as textual and literary mechanisms. Attention has focused on forms of "othering" rather than on the procedures of transmission, adaptation, and incorporation of narrative material and narrative techniques.

Of course, the phenomenon of the Thousand and one nights has become so omnipresent and recognizable in global culture that it is not possible to present an all-encompassing overview of its significance. In the present study, we present an analysis of the influence of the Thousand and one nights on prose literature in the twentieth century, as an intertextual reference for a number of authors who together have shaped the landscape of literature on a worldwide scale. We will see that these traces of Shahrazad are by no means incidental or merely an expression of exoticism, but that they were, rather, structurally incorporated into the reservoir of literary models, strategies, and concepts, especially as a source of inspiration for literary experiment and innovation. For many important authors, the Thousand and one nights is not a mere literary curiosity, but a work of huge narrative potential and force, one that reveals quintessential characteristics of storytelling, narratives, and texts. For some, Shahrazad embodies their alter ego, representing what for them is the essential nature of writing.

Before expounding on the procedures we have followed in this book, we first briefly outline the textual history of the Thousand and one nights and its gradual incorporation into world literature from the beginning of the eighteenth century onwards. Of course, this field is in itself quite broad, but we limit our survey here to what is essential for a good understanding of what follows.

## The Thousand and One Nights

The textual history of the Thousand and one nights still contains some unsolved mysteries. Scholars agree that the first versions of the collection were probably modeled on Sanskrit examples based on the same concept of a frame story containing a number of embedded tales. Presumably, the material was transmitted through a Persian collection called Hazar afsane, which was probably translated into Arabic in Baghdad in the ninth century. From then on, we find references to a work called the Thousand nights or the Thousand and one nights in Arabic sources; these probably referred to a work that was originally Arabic but molded on Indian and Persian examples. These references are too scarce and too brief to give a clear picture of the nature and contents of the work. The earliest substantial manuscript that we have probably dates to the first half of the fifteenth century. This manuscript, which contains only 282 nights, was used by Antoine Galland for the first European translation, which appeared between 1704 and 1717.

We know little about the circulation of the Thousand and one nights in Arabic literary circles. Some later manuscripts and an Ottoman translation of the work dating from 1636–37 indicate that the work was in circulation at that point, and some stories probably were transmitted in oral storytelling circuits. Whatever the case may have been, toward the end of the eighteenth century the Arabic tradition of the Nights was revitalized by a number of manuscripts produced in Egypt especially; these contain the core part of the Galland manuscript, supplemented with material from various sources until the number of nights reached one thousand and one. The supplemental stories clearly show traces of Persian, even Indian, origin, and late reworkings of older material reveal that in Ottoman times narrative material migrated over large geographical/literary realms. Apparently, the Ottoman Empire provided the framework for a renewed interest in these kinds of narrative texts and the Thousand and one nights became a rather diverse repository of narrative material. In 1835, these manuscripts were used for the first printed edition of the Thousand and one nights in Egypt; it was edited by Shaykh al-Sharqawi, and became known as the so-called Bulaq edition. This version became the starting point for what may be called the 'modern' Arabic tradition of the Nights.

The renewed popularity of the Thousand and one nights in the Arab-Ottoman world coincided with an increasing interest in the work in Europe during the eighteenth century. The French translation by Antoine Galland, who had spent some time collecting manuscripts in Istanbul, was based on the aforementioned text from the fifteenth century, and was supplemented with similar material from other sources. For instance, he added the cycle of 'Sindbad of the sea' from a separate manuscript preserved in the Royal Library in Paris, and incorporated some stories which he heard from Hanna Diyab, a Syrian priest introduced to him by a friend. These stories, which included 'Ali Baba and the forty thieves' and 'Aladdin and the wonderful lamp,' became known as the 'orphan stories,' because there was no extant version of them in the Thousand and one nights; they nevertheless became the most well-known and popular stories in Europe. Thus, Galland's Mille et une nuits is a rather diverse collection of material from different sources. Still, it became tremendously popular in France and was soon translated into English, German, and Dutch. It became the – rather shaky – foundation of what may be called the European tradition of the Nights, a tradition that continues until the present day.

The interest raised by Galland's translation stimulated scholars to look for more manuscripts and to use these for new translations. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a series of translations appeared which became the backbone of the European tradition of the Thousand and one nights and which fostered its incorporation into world literature. Interestingly, the most important of

these translations reflect cultural trends in Europe and the attitudes toward the Orient of their times. Galland's translation appeared in a period of great intellectual fervor that marked the beginnings of the European Enlightenment. The translation is correct and fairly precise, but it was stylized and bowdlerized to suit the taste of the audience, as was common practice at the time. It is philologically ambivalent, as we have seen, but it is lively and aims to give a truthful and positive representation of oriental society. The interest it engendered led to German translations by Joseph von Hammer Purgstall (1804–06) and Maximilian Habicht (1825), who also published an Arabic edition based on manuscripts he collected in European libraries (1825–43). A third German translation, based upon allegedly 'authentic' manuscripts, was published by Gustav Weil in 1838–41.

In England, the first significant translation (1838–40) was made by the ethnographer Edward Lane. Lane resided in Egypt for several years, during which he gathered material for his impressive book, Manners and customs of the modern Egyptians (1836), and in the meantime, he translated the Egyptian manuscript version of the Nights as it had been compiled at the end of the eighteenth century. His anthropological interest inspired him to add a huge apparatus of explicatory footnotes that contain all kinds of information about the cultural, social, and religious background of the work, partly based on information provided by a local shaykh. Apart from this anthropological touch, the translation is known for its archaic, almost biblical, idiom, and its prudery: several passages and even complete stories were left out because they were deemed too obscene or too bizarre, or because they would give "an erroneous idea of the manners of the behaviour of Cairene ladies." It thus exemplifies the conventionalism and priggishness of the Victorian period.

Lane's work was succeeded by the translation by John Payne (1882–84), which went almost unnoticed, because it was soon superseded by the animated version of the polyglot, explorer, ethnographer, diplomat, and enfant terrible, Richard Burton (1885–88). Burton criticized his predecessors because he considered their translations too reserved to do justice to the temperament of the Arabs. His own translation is characterized by its exuberant, sometimes pompous language, full of archaic and invented expressions. Burton justified his eccentric style by saying that it represented the speech of the Arabs, if English had been their native language. Therefore, he claimed, his version gave a more truthful picture of the Arabs' culture, society, and mentality. Apart from this, as a connoisseur of the sexual habits of indigenous peoples, he emphasized the erotic passages of the work, adding ample information in footnotes. His aim was not only to explain the true sexual 'temperament' of the Arabs, but, more likely, to scandalize his Victorian readership. His version thus shows the other side of Victorian morality; it was prohibited by censors several times. Burton's translation was based on the Egyptian edition, but he added the 'orphan tales' and material from other – both printed and manuscript – sources.

The first translation in the twentieth century was the French version published by J. C. Mardrus in 1899–1904. This text was a reworking of earlier translations supplemented by tales from other, non-Arabic sources and was consciously eroticized and exoticized to accommodate modern orientalist trends. Although fiercely criticized by scholars, who considered the text a free adaptation rather than a translation, it was acclaimed by literati and engendered a vibrant wave of orientalism in literature, art, design, and fashion. Another translation that appeared somewhat later was the German version of Enno Littmann (1921–28), who used the Egyptian edition. This work can be considered the first 'modern' translation in the sense that it conformed to modern philological standards; it is precise and avoids mystifications, additions or censorship (except for some erotic verses translated into Latin).

These translations, from that of Galland to Littmann, laid the foundation for the European tradition of the Thousand and one nights, as it steadily expanded and permeated European culture. They were the main channels for the incorporation of the Nights into European and world literature, since they were re-translated into many European and non-European languages, and were continuously reprinted and re-translated during the twentieth

century. Apart from these re-translations, and a plethora of anthologies taken from them, original translations from Arabic versions have appeared throughout the twentieth century until the present day, into Spanish, Italian, Russian, Japanese, Chinese, Danish, Norwegian, Dutch, Hungarian, Croatian, and many other languages. The fame of the Thousand and one nights was spread, too, by media other than translations, such as children's books, pop-up books, magic lantern shows, movies, theater, advertisements, design, comic books, television series, etc., culminating in the great Disney production of Aladdin in 1992. All these manifestations of Shahrazad's tales have contributed to their iconic status in global culture.

In contrast to this jubilant reception in Europe and elsewhere, the Thousand and one nights was evaluated in the Arab world more ambivalently, especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Although it was acclaimed by some as a work of genius from the indigenous Arabic tradition, others thought it was not up to the standards of the Arabic literary and cultural heritage. They relegated the Nights deprecatingly to the category of 'popular literature,' to distinguish it from the stylistically more sophisticated corpus of adab literature. Moreover, some considered it too frivolous and scandalous to be considered representative of the Islamic cultural heritage, and interpreted the western interest in the work as a sign of patronizing, colonialist, and orientalist condescension toward Arabic culture. On several occasions, efforts were made to prohibit the publication and distribution of the work on religious grounds, and many censored editions appeared in Arab bookshops. These restrictions were contested by secular intellectuals who considered the Thousand and one nights an indigenous example of a literary text that fostered the freedom of expression and imagination in Arab societies. The Thousand and one nights thus remained a controversial work, both in the Arab world and in the context of cultural exchange between Arab and western cultural domains.

## Incorporation into World Literature

Clearly, the translations of the Thousand and one nights have been of vital importance for their literary impact outside the Arabic literary realm; this is evident from the fact that authors and readers did not refer to the original work, which they could not read, but rather to its hybrid and adapted versions in other languages. This implies that the ways in which the Nights was cultivated in Europe sometimes seemed far removed from the significance of the original versions. The translators encouraged this by consciously emphasizing certain aspects of the work or taking liberties to adapt it according to their wishes. Galland, by adding tales, of course introduced the germ of mystification and manipulation into the Thousand and one nights tradition. Perhaps paradoxically, this tradition became imbued with the terminology of authenticity: translators were anxious to advocate their version as the most truthful, complete, and authentic, while stressing that it was a faithful representation of Arab society and mentality. These truth claims, combined with characteristic interventions by the translators, enhanced the public's fascination with the Nights.

The enormous popularity of the Thousand and one nights in the eighteenth century was caused in part by its unbridled exoticism. From the seventeenth century onwards, European interest in the Orient increased rapidly as a result of growing economic, diplomatic, and cultural interactions. Traders, travelers, diplomats, and scholars together shaped networks between East and West in which the Ottoman Empire, Istanbul, and the Arab Levant, were important links. Gradually, knowledge about oriental societies, religions, and cultures trickled into Europe and the evaluation of this new information became a central interest of Enlightenment scholars. The confrontation with the religious Other necessitated a complete revision of the world, which had hitherto been centered around Europe and Christianity. The common perceptions of the Orient, based on Catholic polemical discourses that dated back to the Middle Ages, were now accommodated to support broader visions of world history, the relations between cultures, and the place of religion in the history of civilizations.

Galland's Mille et une nuits came at a point when this cultural movement was gathering momentum. The work was seen as an authentic testimony of life, customs, and culture in the Orient, not mediated by a western traveler, but gleaned from a real

oriental source. It triggered fantasies about the Orient as a world of magic, fate, and fancy, but it also allowed a unique insight into an exotic society that relativized European self-images. Moreover, it was a work that somehow escaped the narrow discourse of religious polemics, thereby opening the space for a new look at the oriental Other. This space was used, especially, to investigate philosophical, political, and religious ideas outside the paradigms of Christian doctrines, within the 'neutral' environment of a non-Christian society, which in turn afforded a critical look at European society and culture from outside itself. In this sense, the Orient supplemented antiquity as a source of foreign moral and civilizational models.

Although the exotic element in the Thousand and one nights was important for its reception, it was not the only and perhaps not even the most important factor in the appreciation of the work in Europe. Whereas orientalism alone could pass as a temporary trend or a transient vogue, the work struck roots in European culture mainly for its literary value. As noted, in the eighteenth century European literatures were still in a formative stage. Authors were experimenting with form and genre, attempting to shed the obsolete categories of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, and looking for concepts more adequate for the 'enlightened' spirit of the times. In this atmosphere of intellectual ferment and experimentalism, the sudden appearance of the Thousand and one nights, seemingly from nowhere had an enormous impact. It added a new element that brought fresh inspiration, relativizing the significance of ancient culture as the repository of literary and moral types.

The Thousand and one nights can be seen as an alien element that suddenly intruded into a literary landscape which had exhausted its resources and was fervently searching for new forms and concepts. The Thousand and one nights provided these, not only through its strangeness and exoticism, but also, and perhaps even more, through its peculiar nature as a literary work. First, the concept and form of the work were new: the technique of the frame story was not unknown, but here it was implemented in an especially intriguing way, as Shahrazad's sequence of storytelling was designed to avert her almost certain death. Second, the frame contained a seemingly endless and strangely diverse chain of tales, drawing attention to the act of 'fabulation,' the essentially boundless dynamics of narration and fantasy. Third, the work proposed new configurations of the real and the imaginary, the natural and the supernatural, incorporated into a fictional form.

These three characteristics were not only fascinating in themselves, they also contributed to what may be called its 'generic instability,' a fundamental diffuseness that prevented it from being easily placed within existing literary categories. It defied literary conventions and genres and for this reason had to be defined in order to be incorporated into the literary field. Conversely, traditional literary conventions had to be revised to include this strange trespasser, thereby a process of redrawing the generic relationships in the literary field was engendered. Through its form and inherent dynamism and instability, the Nights stimulated literary experiments; it was disassembled, re-assembled, supplemented, reshaped, parodied, and emulated according to the author's fancy. But it was not only emulated and internalized, it also stimulated debates about the nature of fictional literature and its relationship to reality. At a time when religious conceptions of the supernatural were losing authority, new forms of imagining the supernatural were able to replace them in literary fiction. An undercurrent of 'fantastic' literature emerged in Europe and became, over time, a structural phenomenon.

The potential for literary experiments provided by the Thousand and one nights was immediately and eagerly exploited by authors in France and England, especially. Imitations of the Mille et une nuits appeared, such as Mille et un jours by Pétis de la Croix (1710–12), a collection of Turkish tales modeled after Galland's translation; Nouveaux contes orientaux by Comte de Caylus (1743), also translated from Turkish; and Suite des Mille et une nuits by Jacques Cazotte (1788), translated from an Arabic manuscript compiled in Paris. Pseudo-translations were published by Abbé de Bignon (Abdalla ïïls d'Hanif, 1712) and Gueullette (various works), while prominent authors and thinkers such as

Montesquieu, Diderot, Voltaire, Johnson, and Wieland, produced oriental tales with a moral, philosophical or satirical purport. Gothic and other fantastic tales inspired by the Nights were written by Walpole, Cazotte, and Beckford. All these authors set out new directions in European literature, drawing inspiration from the Thousand and one nights and explicitly or implicitly referring to it.

In the nineteenth century, this deep fascination with the Thousand and one nights continued and even expanded in the works of such prominent authors as Goethe, Hoffmann, Scott, Dickens, Balzac, Melville, Poe, Gauthier, and many more. Here again, exoticism was important, especially for romantic authors, but narrative elements, such as plot, embedded stories, the linking of narration and death, the relationship between reality and the imagination, remained essential as features that attracted European authors. During the course of the nineteenth century, the narrative techniques that make the Thousand and nights so intriguing were rapidly adopted by European authors, and were used as tools to complete the incorporation of the exotic intruder into the European literary field.

Rather than characterizing the European reception of the Thousand and one nights as a form of orientalism and as part of the western colonial discourse, we prefer to present it as a phase in the gradual incorporation of the work into world literature. The European translations allowed the Nights to escape the confines of Arabic literature and spread around the world to inspire authors and artists of all cultures. This expansion certainly has an element of exoticism and orientalism in it, but to reduce the interest in the Nights to these ideological discourses does not do justice to its intrinsic value as a narrative and literary text. It is, above all, the vitality of the work as a narrative concept that contains 'secret' mechanisms of storytelling which made it such a rich source of inspiration for narrative strategies, experiments, and literary ingenuity. This potential was inherent in the Arabic original, possibly based on Asian sources, but was released in a unique way through its hybridization, which was a fruitful effect of the processes of transmission and translation. To see this process as part of the colonial ideology of orientalism, and thus as manipulation, or appropriation, or a side-effect of cultural hegemony, is to deny not only the mechanisms of textual transmission and cultural exchange, but also the force of the work itself, as a literary text. The European tradition of the Thousand and one nights was not a marginal manifestation of exoticism, but an example of the influence of Arabic literature on European literature, of the influence of Arabic aesthetics on European art.

## This Study

After this brief overview of the phases and mechanisms of the incorporation of the Thousand and one nights into world literature, we now turn to explicate the aims, organization, and limitations of the present study. First, it is helpful to explain what it is not: the following chapters do not offer a comprehensive or exhaustive inventory of twentieth-century literary works that are in some way or another influenced by the Thousand and one nights. The references to the Thousand and one nights in twentieth-century literature are so numerous that a full survey would require a work of encyclopaedic scope. Although this study is certainly ambitious, its scope is still limited. As we see, these limitations are not only relevant for the amount of material studied for this research, but also for the methods applied and the organization of the book. For some readers, the limitations may be reason enough to reject a project such as this as too ambitious to be meaningful. However, we argue that an attempt to obtain a fuller picture of the intertextual influence of the Nights in twentieth-century literature is not only desirable but even necessary as a starting point for further research.

The main caveats of the book can be summarized as follows:

- It is of course impossible for one researcher to master all the languages involved in this kind of project. The present author's abilities are limited to reading works in English, French, German, and Arabic, and articles and secondary sources in these languages and in Spanish, Italian, Danish, and Dutch. This means that the analysis of works written in other languages was based on translations, and

that untranslated works remained inaccessible. This may have resulted in omissions and a western-centered perspective, and, although translators in general should be complimented on their dedication, skill, and effort, we cannot exclude the possibility that their work contains errors, misinterpretations or inadequate solutions to translation problems. This means that the analyses in our study will not be based on detailed evidence from language or style, or on evidence that can only be found in the original version; and we may even adopt mistakes made by the translator. Quotations in the text from German and Arabic are my translations (when English translations were not available).

- It is not immediately evident how terms such as 'influence' or 'intertextuality' should be defined or how their effects can be determined in literary works. As the survey above has made clear, the Thousand and one nights was omnipresent in western culture at least from the second half of the eighteenth century and authors may have had stories from the Nights in mind while writing without explicitly referring to them. To go even further, critics and scholars may detect intertextual parallels in literary works that the author himself was not even aware of. In the research for this study it was not always easy to distinguish between authors inside or outside the scope of the Nights. As a rule, we only selected authors who explicitly refer to the Thousand and one nights either in their work or in interviews, essays, etc. An exception is Margaret Atwood, who makes no reference to the Nights (except perhaps a mention in Alias Grace), but whose novel The blind assassin clearly follows its narrative procedure. Conversely, Juan Carlos Onetti's A brief life was not included although Mario Vargas Llosa saw it as an example of the technique of the frame story derived from the Thousand and one nights. Surely, some of the choices made in this book will be contested.
- Apart from these considerations, in some cases readers may ask whether a single reference to the Thousand and one nights is sufficient proof of an intertextual relationship. An author may mention Shahrazad, for example, with the intention of evoking an association, without wanting to suggest that the whole text is permeated with the figure of Shahrazad or intertextually related to the Thousand and one nights. So although the extent of intertextual influence is always a matter of debate, an explicit link between two works allows the critic to examine whether a structural relationship can be determined. Still, the boundaries are vague; are there sufficient grounds to include Toni Morrison's Beloved, with only one reference to the Nights, and exclude Mikhail Bulgakov's The master and Margarita, with its mention of Harun al-Rashid? Clearly, there should be secondary arguments involved, for instance the relationship between a specific novel and a cluster of novels influenced by the Nights.
- After weighing and applying these criteria, a rather large group of authors and works remains. Of course, not all of these works are equally interesting. Although some authors represent an interesting cultural trend or phenomenon, their work may not be sufficiently interesting in the literary sense. Since this study focuses on influence from a narratological perspective, that is, based on a literary analysis of the work rather than on contextual indicators, we have only selected texts that were interesting as works of literature. This does not mean that contextual aspects are deemed unimportant or are systematically neglected; in cases when they help to situate or explain a work and thereby better understand an author, we engage with references to contextual and historical embedding. An example is the cluster of German authors discussed in chapter 5. In general, the literary significance of a work or an author is what is decisive, and, as we see, most authors discussed belong to the

category of major contributors who have shaped the literary landscape of the twentieth century. The demarcation is rather strict: only two of the novels analyzed were published after 2000: Khoury's Yalo and Auster's Oracle night.

- Although these criteria have limited the group to some extent, it is still large and diverse. This has some important implications, especially with regard to the methodological approach and the organization of the book. First, the book is not a 'literary history' tracing a progressive chronological trajectory of influences of the Thousand and one nights; it is a discussion of specific authors and works, either limited to narratological analysis, or related to their cultural-historical context. Because the material is so varied, no single overall method has been applied; approaches are different for different authors, according to their peculiarities, in order to find the most fruitful perspective. Discussions may be more or less elaborate according to the relevance and general importance of the work. Since the influences of the Nights are so varied, no effort is made to shape them into a single pattern. The result is a rather mosaic-like overview of different kinds of intertextual relationships.
- Because of the multifarious nature of the material and the potential overlaps, the analysis is not ordered chronologically or according to linguistic or cultural domains, but rather divided into six main themes. The authors/ works have been grouped according to the aspect of the work that reveals their link with the Thousand and one nights. Of course, the theme that we have chosen may not be the only parallel with the Nights, but it may be the most instructive one, or it may add to our view of the thematic connections between the Nights and twentieth-century literature. In this way, it is possible to avoid overlap and to present a broad overview of the different types of intertextual influence. The themes are, briefly: enclosures and journeys; the manipulation of time; metafictionality and textuality; history; orientalism and identifications; aftermaths and politics. As noted, in several cases more than one theme may be relevant; it is, for instance, difficult to separate spatial structures from temporal structures, and historical concerns are often connected to politics. We have attempted to organize the analyses in such a way that the different types of influence are presented gradually to reveal the complexity of the intertextual relationships. Within the chapters/sections a chronological order is adopted, starting with modernist authors and concluding with postmodernists. In general, in each section we relate two or three authors to each other, to show sometimes unexpected similarities. In some sections, specific countries or cultural domains are combined (Argentina, Germany), and sometimes a single literary trend is discussed (magical realism, OULIPO), but only if there is sufficient thematic coherence. In other instances, combinations are primarily thematic. This rather associative organization will probably remind some readers of the Thousand and nights itself, an association which is not wholly unjustified.
- Most authors discussed in this book are major figures who have shaped the literary landscape of the twentieth century. This implies that their work has been studied in a vast array of books and articles. Most of them have been 'adopted' by excellent specialists who have spent their lives scrutinizing their work and discussing it with other specialists. It is of course impossible within the scope of this book to do justice to the depth of this scholarly effort. It was our aim to collect sufficient material for the purpose of our research, to analyze the intertextual influence of the Thousand and one nights, without pretending to gain expert knowledge of all the authors involved. In some cases, conclusions may add new insights to the work at hand, while in others it may only add an element to existing views. In any case, we hope that specialists

in the various fields will see this book as an incentive to discussion and further research.

- Although this book is meant for readers of a variety of backgrounds, it assumes the presence of a minimum knowledge of the contents of the Thousand and one nights, and the frame story; that is, King Shahriyar, after being deceived by his spouse, establishes a system of marrying a virgin every night and having her executed in the morning, until Shahrazad begins telling Shahriyar stories which are interrupted each morning. She thus succeeds in postponing and eventually preventing her death. Most people know the stories of 'Aladdin,' 'Sindbad,' and 'Ali Baba,' but they may not be aware that the collection contains a wide variety of stories, ranging from animal fables and short edifying tales to long romances of love and chivalry, tales of magic and strange journeys, etc. For more information about the Nights the most convenient reference is Marzolph and van Leeuwen's The Arabian nights encyclopedia, which contains abstracts of the stories and entries about the textual history of the work, reception, translation, approaches, etc., with an extensive bibliography.
- Taking these limitations into account, in this book we aim to present a starting point for a re-assessment of the significance of the Thousand and one nights in twentieth-century prose literature and for new approaches to its intertextual effects. We attempt this not by presenting a mere inventory, nor by discerning a pattern of orientalism, but through an analysis of specific texts and an examination of intertextuality, primarily at the level of narrative concepts and techniques. After all, as noted, over the course of time the influence of the Nights was not limited to exoticism, but rather penetrated the level of narrative strategies and procedures. We hope that this study will lead to a more general acknowledgment of the significance of the Nights in the shaping of prose fiction in what, in the twentieth century, came to be called world literature.

## PART 1: Enclosures, Journeys, and Texts

In the novels discussed in this part, examples from the Thousand and one nights are used to explore the interactions between enclosures and open spaces and the crossing of boundaries of various kinds. These interactions are usually set in motion as a result of some anomalous situation or an enforced imbalance in the spatiotemporal structure, through some event, an experience, or from the hero's adolescence and resulting desires. In the six novels discussed, enclosures are used to exclude the forces of time and create a kind of protected sphere, but this enclosure always has a complex relationship with what it intends to shut out: the world outside, which is subject to the forces of time. The anomaly of the enclosure is in all cases countered by forms of a 'journey,' the hero enters the world outside his realm and subjects himself to the hegemony of time and, thereby, to fate. Boundaries must be crossed, time must take its regular course, the secrets hidden in the enclosure are, in the end, revealed; the hero must be initiated into life and reach some form of maturity.

In all the cases analyzed above, texts play a crucial role. In von Hofmannsthal's stories, letters serve as the cause or medium of the transformation that reflects the tension between enclosure and movement; in Les faux-monnayeurs, letters induce the heroes to leave their enclosure, and their subsequent fate is governed by various kinds of texts, which reflect the 'labyrinth' of their adolescent experience; in the novels by Salih and al-Faqih the closed room harbors the secret desires of the hero, which are evoked by forms of narration and letters, the discovery and opening of which are instrumental. In the Thousand and one nights, the equilibrium between time and space is usually restored in the end. These (post)modern novels show how authors explore the subjectivity of the spatial experience and its connection with literature, and reveal that the consciousness of instability and lack of coherence of the spatial experience, which arose in modernism and was intensified in post-modernism, are not neutralized; rather they are emphasized. The pregnant use of

destabilized spatial settings in the Thousand and one nights, in combination with the textual intricacy of the work, provides ample models for the literary processing of this consciousness.

## PART 2: Capturing the Volatility of Time

In this part, we have explored some examples of the treatment of time in modernist and postmodernist fiction, by making use of the two main conceptualizations of time in the Thousand and one nights, the notion of deferral, taken mainly from the frame story of the Nights, and the subjectivity of the experience of time, as part of a psychological or emotional state. Both forms derive from the effort to counter a disequilibrium in the harmony between space and time, to cause a rupture or a state of liminality, and are essentially attempts to manipulate the effects of the passage of time within a diegetic reality. Sometimes a phase of stagnation is created to remedy some harmful mental state (love or desire), or to recover or reconstruct memories, or to avoid catastrophe or death. In other cases, stagnation must be broken by restoring the regular, or an adapted, passage of time, reconnecting past and present. In all cases, the aim is to find a new spatiotemporal equilibrium.

In Proust's À la recherche du temps perdu, the narrator attempts to recuperate time which was 'lost' through a traumatic experience, by resorting to narration and the reconstruction of memory. He creates a liminal situation in which time is temporarily halted and which allows his authorship to mature. In Tanpınar's novels, the disequilibrium between time and place is caused by war and forced modernization; these events result in a disruption of the harmony between various levels of temporal experience. During a brief intermezzo, in which the effects of disharmonious time seem to recede, love seems to provide the hope of a bright future, in which time can resume its regular course. In the novels by Nabokov and Atwood, the narrators try to reconstruct their past by recounting their memories, with the aim of addressing the traumatic experience of death and guilt. As in the case of al-Tayyib Salih's protagonist, discussed in the previous part, this is attempted through narration, which ultimately, in Shahrazad's manner, seems to survive death. In the novels by Tanpınar, Carter, Strauss, and Murakami, the personal experience of time is affected by some historical/ social event or anomaly, which resulted in a disruption of the course of time. The protagonist must undergo some kind of transformative experience, as symbolized by the stagnation of time, to restore the temporal structure.

As in many of the stories in the Thousand and one nights, these forms of manipulating time are part of a radical subjectivity, in which the experiences of the hero are governed by an uncontrollable desire that distorts his relationship with the elements structuring his experience and imbues his environment with a distorted sense of time. This distorted sense of time is reflected in the 'landscape' through which he roams, in which the boundaries between reality and imagination become blurred. In all of these cases, narration brings solace, or at least provides a strategy to come to terms with the situation. Time and narration thus become part of what may be called the 'management of desire' and the transformation of desire into a more or less stable condition.

## PART 3: The Textual Universe

In this chapter, we have discussed authors who profited from the space opened by James Joyce's path-breaking novels Ulysses and Finnegans wake. Although the impact of Joyce's work has not yet petered out and perhaps has not been fully understood as yet, it is clear that he posited the possibility of a literature radically reduced to its textual essence. The direction he pointed to was perhaps most uncompromisingly explored by Samuel Beckett, in his plays and novels. Here, the text is completely amalgamated with the 'persons' who utter it, and who die when their voices are silenced. There is nothing outside the text. It is, as Ihab Hassan suggests, a "literature of silence," which is, perhaps unconsciously, akin to Shahrazad's scheme to narrate in order to survive.

It is remarkable that this vision of a textual universe appears to appeal, especially, to writers who have experienced some form of cultural displacement or fragmentation. This is most aptly illustrated by the Argentine authors discussed in this part, who each, in different but related ways, constructed worlds made completely of text. In their novels and stories,

texts are the hegemonic reality, the milieu in which man lives, the substance of his natural habitat. The textual world has its own laws, to which man is subjected and which represent a layer of perpetuity and continuity that supports mankind's frailty and impermanence.

A similar vision is developed by Calvino and Perec, who confront us with the textual essence of our existence in an even more radical way. They present man as navigating through a cosmos of stories that proliferate at will and impose their formal constraints. Man is addicted to these stories, as a necessary condition to survive, like the availability of oxygen and water. Man cannot control this cosmos, but can only hope to be able to intervene in the continuous flows of stories, to tap their resources, influence their course, and regulate the admission to their succor. In order to survive, man must find a means to gain access to the vital force of stories.

Calvino's work suggests the connection between stories, as a vital force, and the body: if stories are vital for life, storytelling/reading becomes a physical act, with an impact on physical health, eroticism, and physical well-being. Khatibi and Goytisolo further develop this association; they use cultural hybridity to construct their own particular textual universes, which are indispensable for their physical survival. It is this association which links the authors in this chapter to Shahrazad, who puts her own body in jeopardy and constructs a textual universe to save it.

## PART 4: Narrating History

The Thousand and one nights offers an interesting set of themes and motifs related to history, in part derived from its treatment of the phenomenon of time and in part a result of its specific methods of storytelling. In the novels discussed in this chapter we see how the idea of the textual nature of narration can be linked to visions of history as essentially forms of narration. The narrative nature of history implies its basic fragmentation and its incorporation into clusters of individual, subjective accounts, which are the components of a broader, collective, rendition of historical events. The narrative nature of historical transmission reveals the gap between 'memory' and 'history' and the mechanisms that shape them and their interaction. This is most beautifully shown in Faulkner's Absalom, Absalom!, which heralds a new, modern perception of history as a corpus of knowledge about our past, one that is inextricably related to the effects of this knowledge on personal destinies and lives.

As we have seen in previous chapters, the essentially narrative character of the experience of time allows the writer/narrator to mold the temporal regime in his story as he likes. In the Thousand and one nights, this manipulation is shown in strategies of deferral, but also in enchantments, and the interaction between stagnancy and movement, as in the adventure trope mentioned in part 1. In the novels by Márquez and Rushdie, history is represented as a phenomenon that can be 'enchanted' – confiscated by unfathomable powers that 'create' history by imposing a dictatorial interpretation of events, both in the past and in the present, and thus prepare the way for a preconceived future. It is narrative, in its subjective, imaginative form that attempts to break this monopoly on history, and return it to the level of individual experience, where real history is generated.

In all these cases, the struggle between history and memory, between real events and their historical representation, between opposing versions, is caused by traumatic experiences, especially at the level of communities, nations, or societies. Communities are defined by the collective memories of past events, which somehow must be transformed into history. Only when the narratives of history are internalized can a trajectory toward the future be found. The traumas of the past must be encapsulated in words; historical aberrations have to be neutralized by narratives which give meaning to events that tend to reduce man to his most deplorable state of being, subject to relentless, irrational violence, to victimhood, to mere 'material' bodies. Grossman and Khoury show how narration is essentially a physical act which is related to the survival of the body. It can, at least, attempt to counter the forces that reduce human beings to anonymous bodies, and perhaps recover their individuality, and reincorporate them in protective discursive systems. This, of course, is

ultimately the stratagem Shahrazad uses to save her life.

## PART 5: Identifications, Impersonations, Doubles: The Discontents of (Post-)Modernity

In the first chapters, we looked at the influences of the Thousand and one nights on narrative strategies, concepts of narrative and textuality, and the manipulation of spatiotemporal structures in the texts. Although these issues are also relevant in this chapter, here we focused more on the element of representation and the uses of exoticism. We discussed a number of modernist and postmodernist authors who use exoticism as a means of identification, especially the imagining of a Self as an Other, or the conditions of the Self as represented in oriental images, and as a means of distancing oneself, to emphasize the differences between a familiar Self and an exotic Other. These identifications concern iconic figures of the Thousand and one nights, particularly those that contain specific, essentialized properties, which lend themselves to identification because they are narrative elements rather than realistic characters, or because they are themselves part of a 'twin' of some kind or another.

The function of these identifications and embodiments is, as Edward Said suggests, the formation of a self-image through the use of counter-images of the Other. However, the effect is always to bring to the fore an essential split in all self-images; the 'foreign' elements in everyone's psyche; the Other within the Self; and the 'schizophrenia' inherent in all cultural encounters.

These identifications inevitably lead to an awareness of hybridity, to the opening of a cultural space that breaks the homogeneity of familiar cultural space and thus criticizes monolithic cultural and political discourses. In particular, this can be seen in the work of Jünger, Krúdy, Sebbar, and Laredj, who problematize certain self-images constructed in their societies. The insertion of an oriental Other delimits an arena for negotiation and renewed cultural dynamics. For Sebbar, Pamuk, and Krúdy this negotiation is even more poignant, since they consider the 'Orient' as a crucial part of their cultural identity.

It is evident why the Thousand and one nights has inspired so many authors to embark on these kinds of experiments. It is not only that the figures of Shahrazad's stories struck roots so deeply in European society that they acquired iconic status, as the example of Aladdin shows; it is also because the hybridity and the literary tropes these figures represent can be related to the act of narration. They are both 'narrated' figures and 'narrating' figures, and as such they represent the essence of storytelling. What is more, they are storytellers who, through their story, break free of the confinement of narrow self-representations and realize the dream of becoming someone else.

## PART 6: Aftermaths: The Delusions of Politics

The main theme that connects the works discussed in this part is the urgency of a political and cultural critique which has pervaded Arabic literature throughout the twentieth century. This critique reflects the difficulty of reconciling an age-old heritage with the often-contradictory exigencies of modernity, which is dominated by the all-encompassing worldview of western nations. The complexities of colonial rule, new national power structures, and the influences of 'modern' practices, ideas, and possibilities have resulted in ruptures and reconfigurations meant to build societies in harmony with the emerging challenges of state formation, regional tensions, and the globalization of culture. In the context of all these elements, it is not surprising that authors often sought the role of independent intellectuals to criticize abuses of power, and call for the end of repression and respect for human values and human rights.

The Thousand and one nights is often seen as a work that promotes the goal of emancipation from repressive authoritarian rule through writing, literature, and artistic imagination. After all, Shahrazad is the prototypical storyteller who, through her imagination and ingenuity, frees herself from Shahriyar's vicious scheme, and restores political stability by 'educating' the king. What is more, Shahrazad is a figure from the Arabic tradition, one that seemingly defies social conventions and authoritarian relationships. She exemplifies the way in which the literary

imagination can overcome repressive systems and bring about a return to a society that respects human values. The contradictions involved in this process are shown in the works of Tawfiq al-Hakim, Taha Husayn, and Najib Mahfuz, where the world of Shahrazad is re-invoked allegorically. Remarkably, all three authors revert to rather philosophical perspectives which, in the end, converge with elements of Sufism and inner repentance.

The critique of al-Rahib and Boudjedra is much more direct and political. These two authors indict the regimes that emerged in most Arab countries in the 1960s and 1970s for their deceit, repression, and corruption. In their works, the Thousand and one nights is a symbol of this deceit, of the state of political isolation, amnesia, exile from history, and lack of commitment. The Nights symbolizes the political conditions of modernity, which are negotiations between repressive regimes and the people, and establishes a link between a past that has become both a burden and source of authenticity, and a promising future; this gives authenticity not only to Arab societies, but also to the rhetoric of human rights and respect for individual life. Needless to say, the figure of Shahrazad, as a redeemer of mankind, will continue to be relevant for Arab authors. <>

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Theology and Society in the Second and Third Centuries of the Hijra: A History of Religious Thought in Early Islam: The Unification of Islamic Thought and the Flowering of Theology Volume 3
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Notes and textual discussions are not included in ths excerpt;

## Excerpt: The Argument over the Quran

As we have seen the miḥna awakened theology even in circles close to the ashāb al-hadīth; it was hoped that Mu`tazilites and Jahmites could be beaten at their own game. It is not surprising that this led above all to developing alternatives to the khalq al-Qur'ān; sometimes, indeed, one has the impression that these 'orthodox' mutakallimūn had no interest in anything else. This is probably due to the selective attention of our sources. In the case of one thinker of this time, whom Ibn al-Nadīm counted among the Nābita, we can still observe how he fitted his theory on the subject into a wider frame: Ibn Kullāb. His draft system exerted a great influence on Ash`arī, and was consequently relevant for generations to come. Baghdādī recorded his opinions in Usūl al-dīn; Ibn Furāk even wrote a book on his theory and compared it with Ash`arī's.

Of course Ash`arī himself discusses him separately in his Maqālāt, but he introduces his summary with the remark that Ibn Kullāb's followers overall agreed with the opinions of the ahl al-sunna to whom he felt he belonged himself. The Mu`tazilites, too, regarded the Kullābiyya as their opponents for a long time, not – or not clearly – distinguishing between them and the school of 'Ibn Abī Bishr'. It is possible that this spotlight left other persons, who made similar at-tempts but did not find their way into the Ash`ariyya, being overshadowed. We will certainly have to discuss other theologians besides him.

## Ibn Kullāb

Abū Muhammad `Abdallāh b. Muhammad (?) b. Sa`īd Ibn Kullāb al-Qattān al-Tamīmī, d. 241/855, had trained in Basra like Najjār, and was probably born there. The Mu`tazilites reported that their Basran fellow believer `Abbād b. Sulaymān, but also colleagues from Baghdad such as Abū Sālih, a pupil of Bishr b. al-Mu`tamir's, and Abū Mujālid debated with him and, of course, refuted him every time. It is all the more surprising, then, that not a single Mu`tazilite refutation addresses him. We know nothing at all about his life, either. Bāqillānī claims that Ibn Kullāb never visited Ma 'mūn's court because he believed the caliph to be a grave sinner, but he only says this because in his eyes this attitude was fundamentally wrong. Baghdādī, on the other hand, tells us that Ibn Kullāb defeated the Mu`tazila in Ma 'mūn's majlis. Living in Basra he would not have found it easy in any case to get close to the caliph; furthermore, his activities probably took place during al-Mu`tasim's caliphate, during which Jāhiz reported the emergence of the Nābita.s He emphasised in this context that the 'young shoots' had learnt a number of things from books by Mu`tazilites, and from debating with them. Among the circles around Ibn Hanbal this would not have won him any friends, but as long as Ibn Kullāb lived in Basra he was probably reasonably safe from them even after the mihna. If, however, he did meet Ibn Mujālid, who died at the end of the sixties, he would have had to be in Baghdad at the time. All of this is entirely uncertain. The lack of reliable witnesses increases our suspicion that Ibn Kullāb became famous only posthumously; in retrospect, as it were.

Ibn Kullāb may have been part of Najjār's tradition. He used the concept of kasb and denied that the capacity to act could precede the action; we find a K. khalq al-af`āl among his writings. In order to evade the accusation of believing actions to be predetermined (taklīf mā lā yutāq) he used the category of thought badal like Najjār; however, the latter divided the capacity to act one is granted at the moment of action into tawfīq and khidhlān from the outset. Ibn Kullāb, on the other hand, adhered to the more Mu`tazilite position of not doing so and consequently found it easier to say that the capacity to act that led to a particular action might in theory have been used to perform a different action. This side of his ideas would be barely noted later; Ash`arī saw his attitude simply as that of the ahl al-sunna wal-hadīth. The reason why people accepted these ideas from him without commentary, while in the case of Najjār or Burghūth they would be discussed at great length was that he diverged from them quite significantly in another issue, namely the khalq al-Qur'ān. However, this is not part of the chapter on khalq al-afʿāl but is part of the doctrine of the attributes, at least in the eyes of Ash`arī and all those who agreed with him. In the eyes of the Mu`tazilites, on the other hand, Ibn Kullāb and his theory of human action disappeared among the multitude of mujbira; consequently they only paid attention to him in the matter of the question of divine speech.

The relation between divine speech and the Quran was one point which Ibn Kullāb had defined differently. He believed divine speech to be eternal, the word of creation, the fiat, being part of it; and something by means of which things are created, cannot itself be created. Thus his starting point was precisely where Abū l-Hudhayl had had to search for a solution: he simply turned the latter's premises on their head. He consequently saw himself compelled to find a new definition for the Quran, as even zealots such as Ibn Hanbal would have been reluctant to simply call the Quran eternal at that time. This would have been even

more difficult in Basra, where the Mu`tazila was evolving the distinction between hikāya and mahkī, reproduction and reproduced content before Ibn Kullāb's very eyes. His understanding of the issue was similar: divine speech is the content of what we hear as revelation on earth. It cannot reach our ears directly, precisely because it is eternal; it is not composed of sounds or letters at all. The phonetic form accessible to us is only its expression (`ibāra); this was the term Ibn Kullāb used instead of hikāya. Its expressions can vary; the word of God may equally be revealed in Arabic or in Hebrew. After all, the Quran and the Torah have the same content; it was merely the circumstances of the revelation that differed. What we hear is recitation (qirā'a), which is created. That which is recited (maqrū`), on the other hand, is the content; it is uncreated. Ibn Kullāb appears to have avoided the word qur'ān in this context as it would have rendered his distinction less clear. As a consequence he was able to evade the question of whether the Quran itself is created or uncreated. He demonstrated how one could uphold the position of the ashāb al-hadīth during the mihna without finding oneself in trouble with the authorities.

There are a few details that allow us to discover how well this fitted into the questions arising in the mihna. The evidence of the fiat, kun, was employed by Shāfi`ī's pupil Yūsuf b. Yahyā al-Buwaytī, who died in prison during Wāthiq's caliphate. The distinction between qirā'a and maqrū' was a Mu`tazilite one, but Ibn Kullāb put his own stamp on it by regarding maqrū', divine speech, not as generated within time but as eternal. He used a similar approach in the case of a Quranic passage that had played a part in Ibn Hanbal's trial: sura 21:2 or 26:5, which speaks of a 'new (newly generated) admonition that comes to them from their Lord' (mā ya 'tīhim min dhikrin min rabbihim muhdathin). This passage was so valuable to Mu`tazilites and Jahmites because it is the

only instance of the word mufzdath in the Quran. They interpreted it in accordance with their terminology as 'having come into existence within time'; and dhikr, the 'remembrance, reminder, admonition' to them was simply the Quranic revelation. Ibn Kullāb once again took half a step towards them: the 'reminder' came into existence within time, but its content is eternal.

For all its neat suitability for political purposes, when it came to theology the theory was not free from problems. We should like to know how Ibn Kullāb imagined the relation between the Quran and the Torah. The sources tell us nothing, and he probably had only a vague idea of the Old Testament in any case. We have slightly more information on another problem, as he had had to admit an exception: Moses had not heard a form of expression of divine speech but had been addressed directly. This was made clear in sura 28:30, the Quranic account of the events by the burning bush, and its exegesis in sura 4:164; Moses presumably bore the sobriquet kalīm Allāh even at that time. However, as this direct address could be only eternal, one had to wonder how he could have understood it as it would not have been made up of sounds. Ibn Kullāb probably assumed a miracle: the direct transfer of information into the prophet's mind. a Mere mortals, on the other hand, understand the contents of a text by hearing its expression; he interpreted a passage in the Quran which presumes that one hears God's speech (the 'word of God') as an abridged description of the event. Of course this meant that he rendered the argument of possible allies such as Ibn Hanbal useless; he was focussed more on Mu`tazilite opponents. Even Ash`arī keeps his distance from him in this matter.

A last problem, that he had probably not yet noticed, was linked to linguistic analysis. Ibn Kullāb tried to apply his views on divine speech to human speech as well. It was not clear whether he actually meant that it, too, did not consist of sounds but was in fact the pure, imagined content; it seems that Abū l-`Abbās al-Qalānisī was the first to try and tidy up the confusion towards the end of the century. Human speech certainly is merely a not specifically formed speech act (qawl). Its syntactic appearance is added subsequently; of itself it is neither imperative, optative nor question etc., and not even a simple statement. After all an order, a request etc. always have a referent; pure speech, however, does not require this. This was clearly

devised in accordance with the example of divine speech; God is speaking before the beginning of time, before the recipients of his speech even exists. Using a distinction we learnt from `Abbād b. Sulaymān, we can say that he has been speaking for all eternity, but not addressing (someone) (mukallim) for all eternity. He cannot be made dependent on a referent, a 'cause' (`illa). Of course at this point one might ask to what extent speech was still speech in this context. It seems as though Ibn Kullāb did not yet distinguish between grammatical and logical categories; he regarded both as secondarily differentiating phenomena.

These unanswered questions in particular show how interested Ibn Kullāb was in placing his theory within a greater framework, all the more so in the case of the doctrine of the attributes; he wrote a K. al-sifāt. This expansion was of course prescribed in principle by his theological environment; he showed originality only in the style of his approach. Once again he seems to have been influenced most by Abū l-Hudhayl's model. Like him he inferred the 'properties' from the 'nouns', i.e. he derived the respective nouns from the participles and adjectives mentioned in the Quran: if God is speaking, he possesses speech; if he is knowing, he possesses knowledge, etc. And like Abū l-Hudhayl he did not yet distinguish between attributes of essence and attributes of act, but he approached the issue from the other end, as it were. Abū l-Hudhayl understood 'God possesses knowledge' to mean that 'there is an act of knowledge with God, and it is identical with him'. Ibn Kullāb, on the other hand, did not presume these central attributes at all but focussed on divine speech: if it has been with God for all eternity, God's knowledge cannot simply be an act of knowledge reported by the revelation, but must be the eternal perfection of the divine being, a 'factor' within God subsisting within his essence (dhāt). In this form it cannot be completely identical with God: it is neither like him nor different from him. This was the formula Abū l-Hudhayl had applied to the relation between the attributes; Ibn Kullāb admitted its validity in this context, but also transferred it onto the relation between the attributes and the divine being.

In the eyes of the Mu`tazilites, Ibn Kullāb's doctrine of the attributes was a sin against the profession of God's oneness. They compared assuming eternal entities inherent in God to the Christian doctrine of the trinity, and it suited them just fine that divine speech – which, after all, was Ibn Kullāb's main focus of interest – seemed to recall the logos. In his debate `Abbād b. Sulaymān was said to have pointed out this very point; similar also Abū Mujālid. Finally people went as far as claiming that in the Greek quarter on the western bank in Baghdad Ibn Kullāb visited a church to listen to a certain Pethion's catechesis. The latter boasted that he would have converted the Muslims to Christianity if only Ibn Kullāb had lived a little longer. This was only true insofar as the formula of the contemporaneous identity and non-identity was based on Christian conjectures concerning the trinity. The frame story, on the other hand, was probably nonsense not least for chronological reasons. Perhaps the Mu`tazilites hoped to deflect attention away from the fact that Abū l-Hudhayl had already used the same formula.

Ibn Kullāb was prepared for polemic. He took great care not to say that the attributes existed independently besides God, and also avoided saying that they were eternal. One cannot, in fact, call them eternal, as eternity itself is an attribute and one cannot nest attributes within one another. This was a principle hardly anyone would have denied; usually it was said of accidents, and – in the case of earthly bodies at least – Ibn Kullāb considered properties and accidents to be identical. It is thus not the attributes that are eternal, but God is eternal 'with them' or 'in relation to them' (bihā). The easiest way of expressing the relation was, of course, using the verb: lam yazal.

For exegetic as well as factual reasons, the theory did not quite add up at this point, either. Some points led to scholarly dissension. No agreement could be reached, for instance, on whether 'neither identical nor not identical' referred to the essential level or the utterance level. There were also arguments on the presumed limit to inferring attributes from the names, as there were names

that described the divine essence so uniquely or uncharacteristically that the attributes derived from them could not possibly be 'neither identical nor not identical'. Among these were 'being' or 'something'; God is not being thanks to a separate essence, and while he is 'something with regard to his attributes', he is not something because of a particular, independent 'factor'. He is thus a being – and in fact 'something' means just that – but has no being, and is certainly not being as essence. Conversely, only he is eternal, and consequently one might ask whether he was eternal thanks to a (specific) eternity. Ibn Kullāb appears to have thought so, while not all his pupils agreed with him. The case of divinity was similar, but circumstances differed with regard to 'essence' (dhāt) and 'self': these were in fact neither names nor qualities. One might, however, say that God has an essence or a self, but he does not, of course, possess his dhāt li-dhātihī.

As always, the so-called sifāt khabariyya or sam`iyya, which can be understood only through the revelation and which the Mu`tazilites believed required a reinterpretation in order to become accessible to rational understanding, were a crux. These are the face, the hands, the eyes of God. Ibn Kullāb accepted them because they were mentioned in scripture, but he did not go beyond the Quran.

He did not speak of God's foot: the hadith mentioning this did not provide enough authority for him. He probably did not waste any consideration on the question of whether God had one eye or two eyes, either. The singular and the dual form are found together in doxographical accounts; what mattered was the Quranic instances – not as an anthropomorphism, but as a property that is, once again, 'neither identical nor not identical' with God.

One of our source texts also mentions the gaze (basar) of God among the attributes in the revelation. This is surprising as basar already occurs earlier in the same account, as sifa of the 'name' basīr; in that context we translated it as seeing (i.e. vision). The explanation for this discrepancy is that 'gaze' was interpreted as anthropomorphic; people such as Bishr b. al-Marīsī had attempted to reinterpret it. Ibn Kullāb did not do this, but extended its reference: God sees everything, i.e. his gaze, like his essence, relates to everything that exists. Conversely, everything that subsists of itself is visible. Consequently God is visible; this was Ibn Kullāb's explanation of the ruʾya bil-absār. He averted the Mu`tazilites' objection that according to sura 6:103 looks (absār) do not reach God; 'reach' (adraka) must be understood as a technical term meaning 'perceive'. It is impossible to perceive God, but he can be seen.

The dogma of the ruʾya bil-absār forced Ibn Kullāb to accord the sense of vision a greater range than the other senses. The latter are limited to their individual sectors, while the former comprises everything that exists – including God (Text 28). It is thus possible to see God, but not to smell or taste etc. him, and consequently not to perceive him grosso modo. When it came to the sense of hearing, things became difficult, as the events by the burning bush had to be taken into account, and By rejecting the khalq al-Qur'ān and affirming the visio beatifica Ibn Kullāb had defended the Nābita's two main bastions. One issue remained, which the ratio-nalists were only too happy to exaggerate: God's sitting on the throne. Some of Ibn Kullāb's followers believed the istiwā' to be an attribute of essence itself; he was known to have defended it against the Jahmites. The latter, we recall, believed that God was everywhere and nowhere, 'neither within the world nor beyond it', as Ibn Kullāb put it. He saw this as equal to the admission that God is not there at all, as existence cannot be without spatial dimensions.

God is indeed everywhere, but only in that he rules all things; in his essence, as a 'person', however, he is on high, above the things and on his throne. This is what we learn from Quran and hadith, but it is also an axiom of natural theology, for even the heathen imagine God in heaven and raise their hands up towards it in prayer.

Considering this argument, which survives in close context with the original, we are surprised to find that Ibn Kullāb did not want to tie God to a specific

place. This was because in his eyes the sitting on the throne could not be transient; rather, it had been inherent in God since the very beginning. In the very beginning, however, there was no place, and there was no time, and just as God remains outside of time so he remains beyond space. This led Abū Ishāq al-Isfarā'inī to claim that Ibn Kullāb saw in God's 'eternity' – as opposed to his merely being – the additional element of meaning confirming that God was not in a specific place. Within eternity place and time are equally unlimited. In Ibn Kullāb's view, 'place' was apparently not the same as 'space'.

All the other theological issues are neglected by tradition. Atomism does not seem to have interested Ibn Kullāb,80 and he hardly intervened in the argument over the definition of faith that gripped Najjār and the Basran Murji'ites so firmly. While he, too, kept actions separate from the concept of faith, he merely said that faith consisted in the profession (iqrār) of it, which had to be based in knowledge and inner agreement.81 It was apparently more important to him to emphasise that the act of faith was created, as he was a predestinarian; he believed that God would also accompany and delight in those who revealed themselves to be believers at the end of their lives only. A human's actions are collected until death, at which point they are evaluated in accordance with his last action, the 'end' (`aqība), presumably the confession he makes on his deathbed. The doxographers named this idea muwāfāt; as the last action could also be imagined to be the human's free decision, the concept is also found in the works of Mu`tazilites such as Ibn Kullāb's contemporary Hishām al-Fuwatī. However, Ibn Kullāb left no doubt concerning the framework in which he placed it. Not only faith is created by God, but unbelief as well, and not actions only are created, but in fact everything that comes to pass, including the mutawallidāt. Consequently God even creates what is evil, only one must not say so in so many words,s and even less must one approve of unbelief just because it was created by God.

These were rules of language usage of a kind that the Mu`tazilites, too, employed on occasion. In fact, there is one remark in Ibn Taymiyya that suggests that Ibn Kullāb did not ultimately rule out human free decision (ikhtiyār) in individual cases. While God guides human fortunes, individual actions are transient events (hawādith) and consequently accidents that cannot subsist in his eternal will. The 'choice' remaining to humans may presumably be regarded as identical with his kasb, the 'acquisition', the performance of an action. The human acts as a person, with his entire body, not with one body part only, or with one atom that guides his actions like a 'soul'. Consequently he also sins as a whole, because, we should add, he is responsible only as a whole.

## Muḥāsibī

Ibn Kullāb is regarded as Shāfi`ī's follower. However, he is not documented as a jurist, not even in the context of methodological matters. On the other hand it is noticeable that theologians with an interest in his teachings were also listed among Shāfi`ī's Iraqi followers. One of them was his contemporary

## Abū `Abdallāh al-Hārith b. Asad al-`Anazī al-Muhāsibī,

a man of Arab origins who died 243/857. He was indeed well versed in the usūl al-fiqh. He would be cited even later in matters of methodology. He believed that once a consensus had been reached one should not go back beyond it; even the sahāba's ikhtilāf had only historical significance in such cases. He accepted hadiths as the basis of juristic decisions even when they were transmitted by one chain of transmitters only, as long as the chain consisted of competent and honourable persons. In both these ideas he is close to Shāfi`ī, but he probably ultimately drew on Basran tradition, as he was born in Basra, just like Ibn Kullāb. A considerable portion of the hadiths and akhbār he adduced in great numbers also came from Basra; he did not mind that some of them originated with Qadarites.

Shāfi`ī and the innovative view he imported from Egypt were probably mainly the catalyst under whose influence those tendencies that diverged from the Hanafite majority joined together to form

a whole. This is a most complex process. Shāfi`ī had not arrived in Baghdad as a glorious hero; at first people had regarded him as rather exotic. The fact that he wrote his Risāla for a rich pearl merchant and by no means at the request of the authorities also shows that he lacked public importance, and may have needed money. His ideas first caught on in Egypt. Abū `Abd al-Rahmān al-Shāfi`ī, at first his most important follower in Iraq, joined the Mu`tazila without second thoughts, or saw no reason why he should have left it. Others, however, made use of the legal 'heresy' to take a stand against the predominant opinion. It is possible that in this sense Ibn Kullāb was indeed a Shāfi`ite, even without displaying any originality on the field of jurisprudence himself.

Dhahabī tells us that Ibn Kullāb introduced Muhāsibī to kalām. This is in accordance with the view of history that assumes that there was a Kullābiyya, but it may not quite reflect the facts. As we have seen, Ash`arī's Maqālāt illuminate Ibn Kullāb thoroughly, while Hārith al-Muhāsibī appears only once, and then as the former's follower, but the divergence in the context of which he appears is quite significant. Furthermore we are much better informed concerning the alleged pupil than about the teacher: one brief text is extant of which the latter is the author, or which may reflect his original closely, while a number of Muhāsibī's works survive. They are not, however, in the majority concerned with theological issues; if they were, they would probably have had as little chance of survival as Ibn Kullāb's. 'Abū `Abdallāh', as he introduces himself in his books, was a different type. While Ash`arī calls him simply Hārith, and Hanbalite circles mock him as 'Hārith the short' (Hārith al-Qasīr), posterity thinks of him under his sobriquet al-Muhāsibī because of his preaching mufzāsabat al-nafs, examining oneself, a kind of anticipation of the reckoning in the otherworld (hisāb) in which each action will be tested as to its intention, and judged accordingly.

This is the expression of a jurist's thinking who has turned inwards in his attempts to master the world; later, Muhāsibī would be included in the beginnings of Baghdad 'mysticism'. Hints of this are found with Shāfi`ī, too; some of his extant dicta – rarely taken into account so far – are expressions of inward-looking piety. However, Muhāsibī is once again connected with the Basran environment. Local ascetic tradition impressed him; he was influenced above all by Hasan al-Basrī. His understanding of Hasan differed from the Qadarites' or the Mu`tazila's; in his eyes, Hasan was the discoverer of introspection. Nobody had engaged in psychology with such flair before Muhāsibī. The distinction between a`māl al-jawārih and a`māl al-qulūb which he found in Abū l-Hudhayl's theories implied to him that the latter, the 'actions of the heart', took precedence; they were what determined each individual's salvation. They were the intentional underlying structure that determined the value of external actions. Not even Satan can see into them; in his innermost heart, the human is alone with God. Consequently his gravest sins are sins of the mind: eye-service, pride, envy. They come to be because the human is so preoccupied with the 'world' and other humans as to forget God. However, it would be too simple to, as the ascetics of `Abbādān did, to retire from the world; humans as social beings have a destiny willed by God. One has to overcome these sins by constantly observing and educating oneself.

Thus Muhāsibī continued to preach zuhd, but his renouncing of the world was an inward process. He considered demonising gainful employment (tahrīm al-makāsib) to be weakness, and rejected Shaqīq al-Balkhī's views. Owning property is not in itself evil; it all depends on one's attitude to it. Consequently poverty cannot be viewed objectively: someone will feel poor because he is unable to master his greed for possessions. Clearly Muhāsibī had nothing in common with the sūfiyyat al-Mu`tazila. He never dressed himself in woollen clothing; external appearances to him were above all a temptation to indulge in pride and hypocrisy. Instead of settling in `Abbādān he seems to have moved to Baghdad early on; he owned a beautiful house and had a family there. He wrote about the love of God; but the mysticism he professed in this way remained bourgeois. It seems that this

moderate worldliness in particular explains his success, albeit not exclusively: his writing style was vivid, extraordinarily clear, and his language rich in images. He was a born educator, but was also gifted with the long view necessary to avoid becoming entangled in minor issues. Like the qussās of earlier times he spoke of eschatology; a theologoumenon that had almost been forgotten in the meantime in the trend to rationalism. To him it was part of the muhāsaba; envisioning the last judgment became a kind of intellectual call to repentance. His works spread as far as Spain and were particularly popular in Shādhilite circles. Pilgrims went to visit his grave; it has been documented in Baghdad since the sixth/twelfth century, but is not, in fact, authentic.

Originally Muhāsibī's grave had been accorded everything but veneration. His funeral cortege was said to have consisted of four people only. `Abbādī even said in his Tabaqāt that Muhāsibī died in Basra. In his later years he suffered under Ibn Hanbal's hostility; after the end of the mihna, he was regarded as a collaborator like Ibn Kullāb. However, while Ibn Kullāb was never mentioned in Hanbalite texts, they had set their sights on Muhāsibī – probably because he lived in Baghdad and was better known there. Ibn Hanbal was said to have attacked him as a 'Jahmite' not only because of theological heresies but also because of his therapeutic approach focussed on the soul; it, too, was considered bid`a. In fact it was probably mainly seen as competition; like Ibn Hanbal, Muhāsibī appealed to the common people. He was not a mere intellectual, but a pious man as well. Once Ibn Hanbal had given free rein to his anger, he focussed on this aspect, too: 'Do not be deceived by his bowed head! He is a bad man. Only those who have tried him, know him. Do not speak to him, and do not ever show him reverence! (What would the outcome be) if we attended everyone's lectures just because he transmits hadiths from the prophet and is an innovator at the same time? No, no show of reverence, and no favours shall be accorded to him!' Sometimes there were attempts at discrediting him directly by spreading rumours: on the occasion of a wedding Muhāsibī was said to have watched the women from above through a railing, and his head got stuck between the rods. When challenged he replied that he had only wanted to imagine the houris in paradise.

Some voices claimed that Muhāsibī 'converted away from' theology under the pressure of this opposition; he was said to have retired to Kufa and taught hadith there. It is easy to imagine that he had to 'go underground' in Baghdad; after all, Mutawakkil had issued an edict in 238/852, namely five years before Muhāsibī's death, forbidding kalām. Ibn Taymiyya presents events as though Muhāsibī had dissociated himself from Ibn Kullāb's theory of the attributes when Ibn Hanbal severed his ties with him. We might indeed consider that Muhāsibī reached a turning-point; one or even two autobiographical texts are extant in which he describes how he found the right way. Abdallah Laroui tried to assign him a key role: more than anyone else, he says, Muhāsibī realised that rational theology had failed as the instrument of interpreting human existence.

This, however, is highly speculative. There is nothing to indicate in the texts cited that Muhāsibī did indeed take his leave of kalām of all things; we do not know if they describe actual events at all. Ibn Taymiyya omits the 'conversion' elsewhere. It does not really make sense, after all, to date all of Muhāsibī's 'mystical' texts to the last years of his life after the 'conversion' – in that case nothing much would be left for the earlier years. It seems that his approach to the doctrine of the attributes had always differed from Ibn Kullāb's; he believed that the sifāt, while different among themselves, were not distinct from God. Consequently he disagreed with the 'neither identical nor not identical' embraced by Ibn Kullāb and moved closer to Abū l-Hudhayl, as it were. The dissension appears to have been fought out using arguments based on linguistic theory in a way not entirely comprehensible to us. Ibn Kullāb regarded the name and that which it denoted as 'neither identical nor not identical', in Muhāsibī's view and based on his position in general, however, they were identical. Ibn Kullāb derived ism 'name' (but also 'noun') from wasama, as something with which one 'marks' a thing and that is attached to the thing

from outside; Muhāsibī rejected this etymology as for him useless and explained ism as being based on the root s-m-w 'to be high'. We are unable to see how this would have helped him. In any case he had thus adopted the opinion of the Basran school of grammarians, while Ibn Kullāb adhered to the position that was – or would be later – linked to Kufa.

It is particularly interesting that this divergence corresponds to one in the doctrine of the Quran. Muhāsibī did not approve of Ibn Kullāb's distinction between divine speech and its 'form of expression'; God's speech, although it is identical with God from the very beginning, consists of letters and sounds. This appears more 'fundamentalist' than Ibn Kullāb's model; Ibn Hanbal, too, believed that in the Quran recitation one heard God himself speak. Ibn Taymiyya suggested that we might be looking at a later opinion of Muhāsibī's here, one that he evolved under the influence of Ibn Hanbal's criticism. However, Muhāsibī was a mystic as well, and it was a matter of course to him that we hear God's word 'as if we heard him speak it himself'. Furthermore, in the same breath Ash`arī attributed to him the theory that all those passages in the Quran which speak of humans and their actions, are created; Ibn Hanbal would most certainly not have agreed with that.

It is true that this tradition is not easy to allocate, as Muhāsibī's own words make clear that when it came to God's knowledge and God's will, of which these Quranic passages speak as well, he was firmly in the camp of Ibn Kullāb – and also Najjār: God has for all eternity willed everything of which he knows that it will be. The will does not change when the moment arrives in which that which is willed, comes to pass. Even though God says in the Quran: 'When we desire to destroy a city ...' (sura 17:16), it would be wrong to conclude that this act of will came into existence at some point. What it means is that 'when the time has come at which we have (for all eternity) desired for it to be destroyed ...'. Similarly assertions such as 'God will see your actions' (9:94) or 'We (God) listen (to everything)' (sura 26:15) must not be understood to mean that God gains new insights. He knows everything that will come to pass, and everything that will not come to pass, but not in such a way that he knows it as not-being before it exists, and then as being once it enters into existence.

The book which contains these deliberations, Muhāsibī's K. fahm al-Qur'ān, was written before 230/845, i.e. during the mihna. At the same time it is the text that tells us the most about his theology. He polemicises like Ibn Kullāb – and with closely related arguments – against the Jahmite idea of the omnipresence of God, for what is within things is also like the things; God, on the other hand, is of his essence 'on high' and 'above' humans. He also defends against the Mu`tazilites the idea that God will forgive the grave sinners among the Muslims – maybe all of them, and certainly some of them. He himself says so in sura 20:82 regarding penitent sinners; as for obdurate ones, we can only hope. This hope, just like the fear of punishment, only has meaning if the matter has not yet been decided – and then there is always the prophet's intercession. These articles of faith are based on the Quran; Muhāsibī is not engaging in kalām here.

His intention of employing a predominantly exegetic approach becomes clear with the title of the book, but he did have a specific reason as well. The Mu`tazilites and Jahmites had proved the createdness of the Quran, i.e. its temporality, with the argument that there had been shifts during the historical sequence of revelation: in the process of abrogation. As we have seen this was an argument that had been submitted in the discussion against Ibn Hanbal; Jāhiz, too, had adopted it. Muhāsibī went into it in some detail, and was carried away by the refutation to such an extent that he presented the naskh theory in all its details and with all available Quranic instances.ss At no point before him do we find such a detailed analysis, not even in Shāfi`ī's works. This was apparently the issue because of which he wrote the book. The structure he used corresponds to some degree to that which we find in later centuries, e.g. in Suyūtī's works, although it is more detailed and diverges as to the terminology. This is apparently very original, and has consequently had some influence on posterity. We are mainly concerned with his fundamental argument here. Only a commandment,

he says, is abolished by the abrogation, but not the text itself, which remains divine speech even afterwards. One rule is replaced by another (tabdīl); but God does not change his mind because of it. 'He has willed both from the very first, and when he replaces one with another, this is not because he changes his mind, or by means of the abrogation of a commandment (amr), but because he replaces one commanded thing with another'.

In the last sentence he distinguishes between amr and ma'mūr bihī, understanding amr as transitive, God's commanding or ordering that is part of his speech and can consequently not be abolished. It shows us that he did not embrace Ibn Kullāb's distinction between kalām Allāh on the one hand, and amr, nahy etc. as merely an expression on the other. Even in those days, long before the end of the mihna, God's speech consisted of 'sounds and letters' in his view. This provides the final refutation of Ibn Taymiyya's theory of his 'conversion.

Despite being focussed on the Quran Muhāsibī still accorded reason a central role. In the eyes of posterity he was the first to provide a precise definition of `aql. This is surprising, considering how much the Mu`tazila relied on reason. It is true that Abū l-Huhayl preceded him in attempting a definition of its essence, but there is no title such as Muhāsibī's K. mā'iyyat al-`aql among the lists of titles composed by Mu`tazilite theologians. To the Mu`tazilites rationality was self-evident; Muhāsibī, who focussed much more on the Quran, had to defend himself. The fact that some passages of the Quran do not have one single clear interpretation did not lead him to infer, like the Mu`tazilites, that one should reflect on them all the more thoroughly. Like Ibn Kullāb, Muhāsibī regarded them as God's secrets; and although the search for knowledge was named in a hadith as a commandment (farīda) for every Muslim, in the case of all unclear issues he believed this to be binding only ad hoc, not in general. As for humans' fundamental capacity of intellectually mastering the world, however, he took a decisive step, probably based on precisely the apology: reason is a primal talent (gharīza) of humans that cannot be derived further. It is thus not a corollary of the spirit (rūh), as Nazzām would have said, and it is not a 'sensing' (hiss), either, which would place it on the same level as sensual perception, as Abū l-Hudhayl had believed. It must not be regarded as mere functioning, as those who understood `aql as an infinitive did; rather, all understanding (ma`rifa) flows from it. It is the expression of human nature; thanks to it, humans are ranked between angels and animals.

The term gharīza as such was not original at all. We see it everywhere since the praises of reason had first been sung: in the works of `Abd al-Hamīd b. Yahyā, Ibn al-Muqaffa`, Maysara b. `Abdrabbih, Jāhiz, in the Arabic translation of Themistius' paraphrase on Aristotle's De anima; it was attributed even to Ibn Hanbal. This shows why Muhāsibī's definition could be accepted by everyone; it spread beyond ideological boundaries. With his beliefs he was part of the Basran ascetic tradition, rather than Mu`tazilite; we have already pointed out the K. al-`aql by Dāwūd al-Muhabbar. From Ash`arī onwards 'orthodox' circles, too, felt committed to rational theology, and Muhāsibī's definition was just right; people quoted it without even consulting his works. It had the advantage of allowing worldly common sense as well as divinely-inspired knowledge; Muhāsibī called the former fahm 'experience', and the latter basīra 'insight' or `aql `an Allāh 'understanding through God'. In order to understand the Quran properly, one needs reason, and even mysticism becomes rational in this way. The Mu`tazilites never accepted this widening of scope; the contrasting concept came from an entirely different side. It was probably not much later that Kindī wrote the Risāla fī mā'iyyat al-`aql that shared the title with Muhāsibī's work. In it Kindī introduced Aristotelian ideas into Islam.

Thus while Muhāsibī engaged in theology, he did not get drawn into the intellectual game, least of all into disputations. That would have been contrary to his principles. One has to look after oneself first of all; the danger is not primarily heresy, but rather one's own self, the animal soul (nafs) which, if one allowed it to join the dialectical sparring, would affirm only itself when triumphing over an opponent. Later it would be thought that Muhāsibī

believed speculative understanding of the divine essence to be downright impossible. This is probably true to the extent that he believed revealed 'knowledge' to be essential for it. Ultimately, however, the difference to the Mu`tazila is not as great as one might have thought. The K. al-`azama, in which he presents not only a brief summary of the proof of the existence of God e contingentia mundi but also an in-depth refutation of dualism based on the cosmological argument, might have been written by a Mu`tazilite. The book is not particularly original; the idea that the order of the world could only be explained as the work of one single creator had already been formulated by Nazzām and quickly became popular. The Zaydite al-Qāsim b. Ibrāhīm, who died only three years after Muhāsibī, tried to refute the trinity in the same way.

## Karābīsī and the Problem of the lafẓ al-Qurʾān

The third theologian we must discuss here appears to have been the one closest to Shāfi`ī. Consequently he was best known as a jurist:

## Abū `Alī Husayn b. `Alī b. Yazīd al-Karābīsī al-Muhallabī,

a client of the Muhallabids who died in 245/859 or 248/862. He was one of the main witnesses for Shāfi`ī's biography in Iraq. Much of what he reported of him he had heard from the great man himself, but it seems that he also contributed to the legends that would grow around him. Like most of the Iraqi contemporaries he had originally grown up in the Hanafite intellectual tradition; but after he met Shāfi`ī, he had come to the true understanding of the usūl. Everything he had believed previously now seemed bid`a to him – at least this is what the Shāfi`ites reported, among whom he was consequently quite popular. In the furū` he also went his own way; Qaffāl al-Shāshī noted a number of his theories in Hilyat al-úlamā' fī ma`rifat madhāhib al-fuqahā'. All the same, he does not seem to have had a career in public service; he never became qādī. In fact this path had probably been closed to him since he had dissociated himself from the Hanafites. Furthermore he was a Khārijite, or at least associated with Khārijite circles; consequently it would be hard to believe that he, as is sometimes claimed, wrote fatwās on behalf of the government – especially as the source in question dates this to the time before he had met Shāfi`ī, i.e. half a century before his death. Due to his connection with the Muhallabids he may well have been moderately biased in favour of the Khārijites. It could be imagined that this was precisely the reason why he turned towards Shāfi`ī's doctrine that was not yet allied to the state; Ibn al-Dā`ī remarks that all the Shāfi`ites from Basra, Oman, Mirbāt (on the south Arabian coast between Oman and Hadramawt) and Isfarāyīn were Khārijites.

Even so, Karābīsī wrote about the correct way of administering the office of judge; the book was extensive and Ibn Hajar had access to a copy. One wonders what compelled Karābīsī to write it. Was he a member of a private 'administration of the law' in a Khārijite community? Considering our knowledge of the Ibādites this might have been possible even in Baghdaá Or maybe he was – after the mihna? – part of the class of the údūl; this would explain why he also made a name for himself on the field of law of testimony and diplomatics (shurūt). He was considered to be a prolific author. None of the early sources tell us explicitly what his civilian profession was. It is tempting to infer from his nisba that he was a merchant of white cotton fabrics (karābīs), but all this tells us is probably his school affiliation: he had studied kalām under Walīd b. Abān al-Karābīsī in Wāsit.

From Walīd b. Abān he had learnt to mistrust the khalq al-Qur'ān. Yazīd b. Hārūn, from whom he heard hadith in the same city, presumably emphasised this even more strongly. It was probably Walīd b. Abān, too, who convinced him that `Alī should be counted among the four 'righteous' caliphs. Being a Khārijite, however, moderate, he would have had to make some concessions. Consequently he did admit that `Alī was right in his disagreements with Talha and Zubayr as well as with Mu`āwiya, but only because

like his teacher he regarded these events as applying the principle of kullu mujtahid musīb. `Alī's opponents were right, too; and when it came to Nahrawān he preferred to remain silent. The Shī`ites realised which way the wind blew. Ibn al-Dā`ī noted that Karābīsī accused `Alī of having delivered incorrect judgments. In addition he believed to be able to read in the Quran that Hasan and Husayn could not have the legal status of descendants of the prophet, as 'Muhammad is not the father of any one of your men, but the Messenger of God, and the Seal of the Prophets' (sura 33:40). He allowed a hadith by Abū Hurayra according to which `Alī had asked for the hand of the daughter of Abū Jahl, the prophet's sworn enemy during the prophet's lifetime, and Muhammad publicly declared that his daughter Fātima (to whom `Alī was already married) would never share the same house as the intended second wife. All this was probably included in his K. al-imāma of which Ibn al-Nadīm, himself a Shī`ite, said that Karābīsī had been most harsh on `Alī in it. Mufīd wrote a refutation of it much later. He also argued with a follower of Karābīsī's over whether the ahl al-bayt in sura 33:33 were indeed `Alī's family, or only the prophet's wives.

He was well versed in the doctrines of the early Khārijites; some of this material appears to have been included in a K. al-maqālāt he composed. He also had substantial knowledge of hadith. Like Ibn Hanbal he had sufficient insight to be able to write about 'defects' (`ilal) in the transmission, and about jarh wal-ta`dīl. Scientific isnād criticism was in its very beginnings at the time; according to Hājjī Khalīfa, Karābīsī's K. al-mudallisīn was the first book of its kind. However, his implacable criticism lost him some support. People in Ibn Hanbal's circle were horrified that he did not leave even respected men such as A`mash (who had been a Shī`ite!) and Sulaymān al-Taymī unscathed. The Mu`tazilites rejoiced; Ka`bī drew on Karābīsī's K. al-mudallisīn extensively when composing his – equally critical K. qabūl al-akhbār. This is where we sense the resentment between the two groups for the first time, but the stumbling block was elsewhere. Ibn Hanbal could not have had a fundamental objection against hadith criticism. What he did take amiss was that Karābīsī had abandoned the prophet's traditions and turned towards 'those books'. This was apparently a reference to kalām, for while Karābīsī

rejected the khalq al-Qur'ān, he believed the recitation of the holy text to be created. This corresponded to Ibn Kullāb's distinction between qirā'a and kalām Allāh; it was furthermore a logical consequence of the belief in the khalq al-afʿāl. In order to put this relation into relief more clearly Karābīsī used not only the word qirā'a but also lafz or nutq; the act of pronunciation has nothing in common with the text which is speech. This more specific definition was helpful indeed, but it was a terminological innovation. Even the Mu`tazilites became involved: Iskāfī, who had debated with him, rejected this usage. Ibn Hanbal anathematised him; the Lafziyya, as he and his followers were called, were put on the same level as the Jahmiyya. This meant that someone who believes the pronouncing of the Quran to be created is only a step away from declaring the Quran itself to be created. Karābīsī thought this rather a broad inference; but from that time on the climate on both sides had been poisoned.

He found numerous followers in Mosul; after all, there was large Ibādite community there. Dhahabī claimed that he first made his theory public in 234/849, but this is probably based on the incorrect interpretation of a source, and the date is too late. After all, Karābīsī was not the only theologian to think along these lines at the time. In Damascus it was the traditionist Hishām b. `Ammār al-Sulamī, Friday preacher in the Umayyad Mosque, who supported the same theory; he died in 245/859, i.e. possibly in the same year as Karābīsī. It also spread in Nisibis. In Tarsus a certain Ahmad Sharrāk publicised it; he was an ascetic and a nephew on the mother's side of the Kufan `Abdak whose rejection of any kind of gainful employment had found favour with the Sufis. His having originally been a member of Ibn Hanbal's circle proved something of an embarrassment; when people in Tarsus began to

agitate against him for that reason, he went to `Abbādān. It is not necessary to infer from this infor-mation that Karābīsī's influence spread like wildfire. The 'Lafziyya' existed only from an Iraqi – or possibly Baghdad only – perspective as yet. People beyond Ibn Hanbal's circle were probably not yet able to imagine an explicit position against the khalq al-Qur'ān that was not 'Lafzite'. Even Ash`arī describes Ibn Hanbal's position in his Maqālāt – i.e. the position of those who based their extremism on him – as that of 'certain ahl al-hadīth'. Karābīsī's approach, on the other hand, followed only Shāfi`ī, at least according to Dāwūd al-Isfahānī's Kāfī.

## The Reaction of the Hanbalites and the aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth

The situation changed when Ibn Hanbal became a legend and his followers gained influence far beyond Baghdad. Some of them went so far as to claim in their turn that reciting the Quran was uncreated. They pointed out that according to the Lafziyya's ideas even Gabriel's uttering the Quran must be regarded as created; this appeared to affect the process of revelation itself. Ibn Hanbal does not seem to have gone as far as this; he would have responded to one innovation with another, and even in the case of the Quran he, as we have seen, was reluctant to speak of non-createdness. Certainly the moderate minds within his school did not tire of emphasising that he had forbidden only to comment on the subject in general. Muhāsibī probably thought the same when in his Ri`āya he counted the qā'ilūn bil-lafz together with other sectarians among the arrogant intellectuals who believe that 'none besides them on earth was led along the right road'. While this might have been an exhortation to reticence and humility, the aggression was already inevitable. Abū Hātim al-Rāzī (d. 277, 890) recommended ignoring Karābīsī's books and avoiding his pupils; Lālakā'ī, who reported this, included a number of scholarly authorities who considered the lafz theory to be 'unbelief'. The traditionist Muhammad b. Sālih al-Anmātī (d. 271/884–5) was accused of 'championing the teachings (madhhab) of Husayn al-Karābīsī in an exaggerated fashion'. Dārimī already thought at the time that Karābīsī 'fell' just as quickly as he had grown famous. However, it was only a generation later that Abū Bakr b. Abī Dāwūd (d. 316/928), son of the well-known author of the Sunan, accused Tabarī of embracing the lafz heresy; he justified himself in an `aqīda in which he referred to Ibn Hanbal's original position. Ash`arī took good care not to use the term; like Tabarī, he supported the old-fashioned reticence in the ashāb al-hadīth's profession of faith he included in his Maqālāt.

Just how deep the dissension was among the ashāb al-hadīth in this matter became clear when the Hanbalites tried to have their views accepted in Iran as well. Abū Bakr b. Abī Dāwūd came from there, but he had moved to Baghdad. The first one to struggle with the new rigorist trend was Bukhārī (d. 256/870). He had studied under Karābīsī, after all, but in addition the priorities would have been entirely different in a Hanafite environment like Bukhara. In the so-called Fiqh akbar II, presumably composed during this time, the belief in the createdness of the lafz was declared to be obligatory. This was a great admission indeed for a Hanafite author who upheld the tradition of the khalq al-Qur'ān. Bukhārī himself was no Hanafite, but he could be certain that scholars in Marv thought just like him. Only the common people saw things differently. He discusses the subject in his K. khalq al-afʿāl, but never mentions Karābīsī, and does not leave any doubt, either, that he had no connection with the Jahmiyya. He does, however, attack opponents who believe the articulation to be uncreated, and while he usually limits himself to listing one tradition after another, he employs argumentation here: 'Articulation is distinct from that which you articulate. You may articulate God (talaffazta billāh), but God is not your articulation. Similarly, when you say 'God' you articulate a property of God, but when you say 'God', it is not the property itself. Rather you are describing the owner of the property; you are the person describing, while God is the one described by his own speech ...'.. He did not publicise the term lafz; in fact, he discussed the problem using the old pair of opposites qur'ān (= kalām Allāh) and qirā'a. The

recitation (qirā'a) is created; it is an action the human merely performs, 'acquires'. While God has a part in it, this does not mean that we hear God himself speaking. Only Moses had that experience. Bukhārī thinks according to structures he might have adopted from Najjār. This might explain the title of his book, Khalq al-afʿāl, as well, as there is not much about the theory of human action in it.

There may have been a specific reason behind his taking sides so openly. Some years before his death he had travelled to central Iran, visiting Nishapur and Rayy in 250/864. His fame preceded him. He was received with great honours in Nishapur, but due to information received from Baghdad the pointed question of an audience member during a lecture led to outrage: Bukhārī stressed that all human actions are created, including the recitation. Envy may have played a part, too, as the man who initiated the resistance and who spoiled Bukhārī's sojourn in the city was a colleague: Muhammad b. Yahyā al-Dhuhlī (d. Rabīʿ I 258/late 871–early 872), a well-known local traditionist who was a particular expert in Zuhrī's hadith. He was not, however, able to incite all scholars. Muslim returned all the notes he had from Dhuhlī in outrage, and Muslim's younger friend Ahmad b. Salama al-Bazzāz (d. Jumādā II 286/June– July 899) did not attend his lectures any more. Another theologian in the city was al-Husayn b. al-Fadl al-Bajalī, a pupil of Ibn Kullāb's, who would have agreed with Dhuhlī's Hanbalite intransigence even less than Bukhārī. Still, in the end Ahmad b. Salama was the only one who accompanied Bukhārī outside the city gates;26 maybe the radicals in Nishapur were experts in intimidation, too. Dhuhlī also ensured that the story became known elsewhere. When Bukhārī arrived in Rayy, Abū Zur`a and Abū Hātim al-Rāzī sat at his feet, but when they received a letter from Dhuhlī, they stopped transmitting Bukhārī's hadith.28 Dhuhlī was said to have persecuted him all the way to Bukhara, but Bukhārī's quarrel with the governor there (who was, in fact, a Dhuhlī as well) appears to have had rather more complex causes.

Soon afterwards Ibn Qutayba (d. 276/889) would express his opinion no less clearly. He even named Ibn Hanbal; he considered the latter's demand to leave the subject untouched ridiculous. The question can be decided; all that is needed is clarity of thought. The solution he suggested was similar to Bukhārī's, although his approach was more philological. He saw the starting point of the confusion in a lexicographical remark by Abū `Ubayd (d. 224/838) who had treated qirā'a and qur'ān as synonyms in that they were both infinitives of qara'a. Ibn Hanbal's followers may have relied on this, but it is true only in grammar, and not in theology. Qirā'a is ambiguous and may refer to the (created) act of reciting as well as the (uncreated) Quran. Ibn Qutayba collected these deliberations in a text that shows in its very title that this is its concern: K. al-ikhtilāf fī l-lafz. However, like Bukhārī he first completed a refutation of the Jahmiyya; presumably this had to be done if one did not wish to expose oneself to suspicion.

We do not know if Ibn Qutayba wrote this treatise while he was qādī in Dīnawar. What is certain is that the Hanbalites never really gained a foothold in Iran, and in eastern Iran least of all. It is easy to imagine that a Hanafite like Pazdawī lacked understanding of the non-createdness of the lafz. The same is true of Makhūl al-Nasafī; in his eyes the articulation of the Quran was most certainly due to the human. And Ghazzālī, who was a Shāfi`ite, also rejected the doctrine of the Hanbalites. Even in Baghdad they had to lower their expectations in the long term. Ibn `Aqīl believed it was suicidal to go against the consensus of all scholars with the theory that one could hear God himself speak during the recitation; while Ibn Abī Ya`lā described it as the opinion of 'some' whose identity he did not reveal. In a fatwā Ibn Taymiyya would later express outrage at the heresy of some people in Gīlān who, having apparently grown up in a Hanbalite environment, believed in the non-createdness of the recited word to the extent that human speech, too, might be eternal. Karābīsī had thus won a sweeping victory where the substance was concerned, but in the eyes

of the 'orthodox' view of history, he would remain a heretic.

## The 'Undecided Ones' (wāqifa)

Hanbalite tradition frequently mentions the so-called 'undecided ones' (wāqifa), i.e. those who could not decide whether the Quran was created or uncreated, in the same breath as the Lafziyya. However, the wāqifa are at the same time those who 'have stood still', at the very point that Ibn Hanbal had embraced for a long time: that one must not decide in this matter. From a historical point of view one might simply call them doctrinal traditionalists. They did not go beyond the assertion that the Quran was 'God's speech' or 'God's word', and when others started talking about the non-createdness of the Quran, they had suddenly become 'doubters'. In Ibn Hanbal's circle waqf was now a precept of piety in the context of the issue of lafz only.

The doctrinal traditionalists knew, of course, that they could refer to the past. They were probably quite numerous. Muhāsibī had already mentioned them in his Ri`āya, and Ibn Sa`d (d. 230/845), who was understandably reticent in the context of the Quran – he had been among the first seven who had given in before Ma`mūns – noted two of them: Mus`ab b. `Abdallāh al-Zubayrī (d. 236/851), the author of Jamhara fī nasab Quraysh, and Abū Ya`qūb Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm b. Kāmjār, also known as Ishāq b. Abī Isrā'īl (151/768– 245/859?), a member of an ancient pro-Abbasid family from Marv who practised talab al-`ilm with zeal.$ One of Bukhārī's teachers was among them, too: `Alī b. Tibrākh, better known as `Alī b. Abī Hāshim. The members of the older generation escaped the polemic overall, Ibn Hanbal respected Ibn Abī Isrā'īl's hadith treasury, and his son `Abdallāh attended his lectures. The younger generation, however, was scrutinised much more closely in Baghdad. Ya`qūb b. Shayba (d. 262/875), respected author of a Musnad, apparently had to bury his hopes of the office of judge because Mutawakkil had requested information about him from Ibn Hanbal who described him as an innovator and sectarian. As he was also a Mālikite, he would not have had much chance of success in Iraq in any case.

The Hanbalites saw their suspicions confirmed when certain theologians had the idea of employing the Wāqifite position in order to present the khalq al-Qur'ān in a new guise. While they exercised επoχή in the question of createdness, for the rest they merely replaced the term makhlūq with another: namely muhdath which, as we have seen,/could be justified with reference to the Quran if one interpreted Quranic dhikr, the 'admonition' as revelation. This group takes us beyond the circle of Ibn Kullāb and Karābīsī for good. They were not Nābita but successors of Bishr b. al-Marīsī, and not Shāfi`ites or Mālikites but Hanafites. The most prominent of them was

## Abū `Abdallāh `Abdallāh Muhammad b. Shujā` al-Thalji

(181/797–Dhū l-Hijja 266/July 880),15 a member of the Banū Thalj descended from an ancient Khorasanian family who had cooperated with the Abbasids during the revolution. He was wealthy and had close links to the Tāhirids among whom he lived in Baghdad towards the end of his life.. He was thus independent enough to devote himself entirely to the religious sciences. He made a name for himself as a jurist in particular; he had studied under Hasan b. Ziyād al-Lu'lu'ī (d. 204/819)17 and was later regarded as the most eminent authority in Iraq.18 The titles transmitted from him concern question of furūʿ, but he is also quoted in questions regarding usūl. Abū l-Layth al-Samarqandī referred to him as the most important Iraqi in his Nawāzil fī l-furūʿ, besides numerous older Iranian scholars; it seems that he maintained ties with his east Iranian home. In the Maghrib he gained influence through his pupil Haytham b. Sulaymān al-Qaysī (d. ca. 275/888), who had met him during an educational journey to the Orient and continued to correspond with him even later, when he became qādī of Tunis. Based on this correspondence Qaysī quoted him in his K. adab al-qādī wal-qadā'. A voluminous K. tashīh al-āthār bore witness to his hadith knowledge. He was also an expert in the science of reading the Quran. He

also collected expert opinions on the subject of the createdness of the Quran, as shown by a quotation preserved by Ash`arī. In his youth he had heard the K. al-maghāzī from Wāqidī (d. 203/823); he appears in its riwāya. When Mutawakkil was looking for a successor to Ibn Abī Duwād, he was considered for the post besides Yahyā b. Aktham. He was not chosen – allegedly because the caliph once again consulted Ibn Hanbal, who was against the 'Jahmite'. He was seen as the candidate favoured by Ishāq b. Ibrāhīm, the long-serving prefect of the Baghdad police, who was connected to the Tāhirids and consequently may have been better acquainted with him. His friends thought that he had declined the position when offered it by his kinsman as he did not need it for either financial reasons or prestige.

It is still possible that his 'Jahmite' views played a part in this matter. Dārimī is probably not altogether wrong when he says that the theology of compromise embraced by Ibn al-Thaljī only gained ground under Mutawakkil; it is unlikely to have influenced the decision of who would become Ibn Abī Duwād's successor. It seems that in other subjects Ibn al-Thaljī continued to follow Bishr al-Marīsī's precepts. He wrote a refutation of the anthropomorphists, and he rejected the ru'ya bil-absār. In both these cases he had set his sights on the ashāb al-hadīth. This was why he decided to use metaphorical exegesis; like Bishr he even applied it to hadiths that Ibn Qutayba had rejected as false at the same time. Later he would be accused of having fabricated the scandalous traditions, which he tried to force into giving up some meaning, in order to revile the ashāb al-hadīth all the more.

When it came to determinism he also agreed with Bishr; here, he referred to a version of the hadith of the predetermination in the womb that he, and only he, had heard from his teacher Yahyā b. Ādam. Ibn al-Nadīm's introducing him as a Mu`tazilite must thus be taken with a pinch of salt; Ka`bī, who was closer to him chronologically, considered him a Kufan, i.e. Hanafite, sympathiser. His opponents regarded him as the 'shield of the Jahmiyya'. Ibn Fūrak thought he was a follower of Najjār, but this need not mean much, either, as it only referred to the fact that he believed God to be omnipresent. In addition this is a point in which he, as with the khalq al-Qurān, differed from Bishr al-Marīsī. He had, as he tells us, discussed the matter with Bishr in his youth and limited the omnipresence to mean that God was at least 'above' (fawqa) his throne. That he should be sitting directly on the throne did not fit into his concept. He referred to Ibn `Abbās, who had divided the respective verses in sura 20:5–6 differently, and rather than reading 'the All-compassionate sat himself upon the throne (istawā); to him belongs (lahū) all that is in the heavens and the earth ...' had come to the conclusion that 'the All-compassionate was on the Throne. Equal to him (istawā lahū) is all that is in the heavens and the earth ...'. Sitting had thus been philologically removed, and 'on the throne' could be interpreted as a kind of floating above the throne without contact which would be a limitation.

Being a Hanafite, Ibn al-Thaljī did not have much affection for Shāfi`ī; he recalled seeing in his youth how the latter made his entry into Baghdad riding a donkey and dressed like a travelling musician, i.e. in foreign clothing and flamboyant headdress. All the more surprising, then, that someone who had the greatest esteem for Shāfi`ī should convert to Ibn al-Thaljī's theory in the matter of the Quran, or at least use the same terminology. this was

## Abū Sulaymān Dāwūd b. `Alī b. Khalaf al-Isfahānī

(d. 270/884). It is well-known that he would also go his own way in jurisprudence later, but he did write a K. al-kāfī fī maqālāt al-Muttalibī (i. e. al-Shāfi`ī). He was certainly no 'Jahmite', but what we know about him does not allow us to classify him as a pupil of Ibn Kullāb's, as later sources sometimes do. He does not seem to have any direct links with Karābīsī, either. While Hanbalite circles tried to link him to the lafz theory, we know that he wrote against Karābīsī. He certainly believed articulating the Quran to be created, but to him this was not a subject for discussion. He was accustomed to

different things as he had studied under Abū l-Hudhayl's pupil Abū `Abd al-Rahmān al-Shāfi`ī. As a result he had no qualms even when it came to interpreting God's speech: it may be eternal, but only in the sense that God is capable of it from the very beginning. It was realised only during the act of revelation; it is self-evident that subsequent recitation by humans or written copies of the Quran can be nothing other than created. He is said to have found an original explanation here: sura 56:78f. asserts of the eternal Quran, the 'preserved scripture', that 'only the pure may touch it', while copies on earth are touched by people who are not in a state of ritual purity. It is not surprising that this less than delighted the Hanbalites. They regarded Dāwūd's interpretation as dependent on the Mu`tazilite al-Nāshi', with whom he had engaged in controversy, and they said that Ibn Hanbal himself did not allow him into his house when he came to introduce himself.

Abū l-Qāsim `Abd al-Wahhāb b. `Īsā b. `Abd al-Wahhāb b. Abī Haiya,
d. Sha`bān 319/Aug.–Sept. 931, was one of Ibn al-Thaljī's true pupils. In his youth he had been Jāhiz' copyist and 'publisher'. He does not seem to have been infected by the latter's theological ideas, but like Ibn al-Thaljī he practised wuqūf in the question of the khalq al-Qur'ān and rejected the vision of God. In his K. man qāla bil-`adl min al-muhaddithīn, which Malāhimī would later quote, he collected traditions that might be used on behalf of the latter idea. Al-Khatīb al-Baghdādī was rather gentle with him all the same. It is true that he had also studied under doctrinal traditionalist scholars such as Ishāq b. Abī Isrā'īl, and even under victims of the mihna such as e.g. Ibn Malāj, who had had to agree to divorce his wife because of his distanced attitude to the khalq al-Qur'ān. His hadith was universally respected.

The last one we must mention is the man against whom Dārimī wrote his Radd `alā l-Marīsī al-`anīd. The opponent mentioned in the book was certainly not Ibn Abī Haiya as he had met Bishr al-Marīsī in person, while Ibn Abī Haiya died a whole century after him. For Dārimī himself, Ibn Abī Haiya was too young as well, as Dārimī died in 280/894, and the 'opponent' can only have been a contemporary of his. At this time we are not yet able to grasp him more closely. However, we learn in more detail than we have concerning the preceding persons just how he responded to the issue under discussion:

> Someone who says the Quran is created, is an innovator. Someone who calls it uncreated or says it is he – i.e. God –, is an unbeliever. Whoever says that it is different from God, has hit upon the right thing. If then, after having hit upon the right thing in this way, he (still) claims it is uncreated, he shows that he is stupid. If he says that (the Quran) grows out of a body, he is an unbeliever. – Speech is something distinct from the speaker, and speaking is different from him who speaks. Recitation (qur'ān), that which is being recited, and the person reciting all denote distinct things.

The Quran is 'effected' (maf`ūl), not 'made' (maj`ūl), as Bishr al-Marīsī had said, but is not muhdath and certainly not makhlūq, either.

Clearly there was a search for the correct term for some time from the midthird century onwards. While Dāwūd al-Isfahānī and Zuhayr al-Atharī both decided in favour of muhdath, they were firmly opposed by Abū Mu`ādh al-Thūmanī – in Egypt? – who was determined to use the term hadath instead; he did not accept maf`ūl, either, but only fi`l. However, it was the first of these terms that had a future, as muhdath was largely adopted by the Shī`ite theologians once they had joined forces with the Mu`tazila. It suggested itself to the Zaydites in any case; they had already been striving for agreement in the question during Iskāfī's day. The fact that during the time of the great imams Ja`far al-Sādiq had been against makhlūq68 may have played a part in the case of the Imāmites. The reason given, however, was a different one, and Ibn Mattōya has Ibn al-Thaljī express it: in the context of literary works makhlūq may also mean 'fiction', 'invented', or even 'imputed'. Muhammad al-Tūsī went into great detail concerning the question, suggesting in the end to use not only muhdath but also munazzal, in

order to avoid all undesired overtones. Both words were authorised by the Quran. Even Mu`tazilites saw the advantage this provided; Qādī `Abd al-Jabbār, too, used muhdath above all. He did not, however, want to reject makhlūq altogether; he probably owed this to the tradition of his school. In his view it was not usually correct that makhlūq might refer to something 'contrived', or fiction, as we should say. On the other hand, some-one who avoided muhdath and used makhlūq only would soon be regarded as a loner. <>

Kant and His German Contemporaries, Volume 1: Logic, Mind, Epistemology, Science and Ethics edited by Corey W. Dyck and Falk Wunderlich [Cambridge University Press, 9781107140899]

Volumes like this one edited by Corey W. Dyck and Falk Wunderlich are as important to the historiography of philosophy as they are for our knowledge of German philosophy in the eighteenth century. They show that the "grand narrative" approach to the history of philosophy, which only pauses to mention a few great works by a small number of major figures from a relatively small part of the world, is simply not satisfactory as a way of writing philosophy's history.

That grand narrative histories are shaped by prejudice is demonstrated by works like Peter Park's *Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy* (2013), which recounts how German historians of philosophy during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries grounded their histories in racist anthropology and systematically excluded non-European philosophy from their histories. The studies of early modern women philosophers, undertaken by *Project Vox* and *New Narratives in the History of Philosophy,* make a similar point, though they do more than diagnose the prejudices that have excluded women from the history of philosophy. Their efforts to "reconfigure, enrich, and reinvigorate the philosophical canon" serve as helpful models for correcting the historical-philosophical record.

Works like *Kant and His German Contemporaries* may not directly confront the prejudices that guide the grand narrative histories, but they help us see that these narratives distort and misrepresent the history of philosophy in other ways too. They show that even philosophers, like Kant, who are recognized as major figures and play central roles in the grand narratives, were engaged in discussions of "enormous intellectual richness, vigor and importance" (1) with figures and works, ideas and arguments, that are routinely ignored by grand narrative histories. That Kant's philosophical exchanges with his German contemporaries "did not fit neatly into the narrative advanced by Kantian historians in particular, which divided the pre-Kantian philosophical debate into warring rationalist and empiricist camps, the better to retrospectively prepare the way for Kant's own novel synthesis" (2), is all the more reason to question the veracity of these narratives.

The book is divided into five parts, which reconstruct Kant's philosophical relationships with his predecessors, peers, and successors by focusing on different themes. In the first part, on formal and transcendental logic, Brian A. Chance argues that the conception of "purity" that Wolff employs in his empirical psychology had an important influence on the structure of *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781/1787). While Kant often uses "pure" as a synonym for "*a priori,*" Chance suggests that he also uses "purity" to refer to "the ability of one cognitive faculty to create representation without relying on others" -- a sense of the term that derives from Wolff's *Deutsche Metaphysik* (1719), where the "pure understanding" is defined by its independence from the faculties of imagination and reason (20). This conception of purity helps Chance to show that there is a "perfect similarity" (29) between the pure and applied parts of general logic and the divisions of transcendental logic that Kant lays out in the 'Transcendental Analytic' and 'Transcendental Dialectic.' Huaping Lu-Adler considers the relationship between mathematics and logic from a Kantian perspective, treating Kant's use of circular notation to represent logical relations as a kind of case study. She shows that Kant adopted this form of notation from Euler, though his views on the nature of logic led him to change the context in which it was used. Instead of using circles to sensualize logical abstractions, Kant used them to separate concepts and their

extensions from their empirical sources, so that they could be considered purely formally (52-53).

In the second part, on metaphysics and the philosophy of mind, Udo Thiel examines Tetens' conception of *Selbstgefühl*. Against Hume, Tetens holds that *Selbstgefühl* can ground the psychological unity of the self, though he acknowledges that the "ontological ground" of that unity remains an object of "theoretical speculation" (68). Kant rejects the claim that inner sense is sufficient for psychological unity, though he shares Tetens' views about the importance of unity for empirical psychological conceptions of the self as well as his claims about the necessity of psychological unity for our cognition of objects (72-75). Dyck turns to the rational psychology of Georg Friedrich Meier, who is remembered as the author of the *Auszug aus der Vernunftlehre* (1752) that Kant used as a textbook in his logic lectures, but who also wrote on the immortality of the soul in a way that "constitutes a clear anticipation of Kant's own distinctive claim that the immortality of the soul is (merely) an object of a moral belief" (77). Central to Dyck's argument is Meier's critique of demonstrative proofs of the soul's immortality and his insistence that moral certainty of the soul's survival of death can be grounded in reason as well as in religious revelation (82). Brandon C. Look surveys Maimon's response to Kant's first *Critique* and his Leibnizian criticism of Kant's distinction between sensibility and the understanding. In the end, Look suggests that Maimon's criticism forced Kant to acknowledge that Leibniz had, in fact, distinguished sensibility and the understanding and even to claim that, in his pre-established harmony, Leibniz "had in mind not the harmony of two different natures, namely, sense and understanding, but that of two faculties belonging to the same nature, in which sensibility and understanding harmonize to form experiential knowledge" (109).

The third part, on truth, idealism, and skepticism, begins with a chapter comparing Lambert's and Kant's conception of truth by Thomas Sturm. Starting with a discussion of "Putnam's Kant," that is, Kant as an internal realist, Sturm argues that Kant's conception of truth is "conceptually independent of his account of knowledge -- and in part even guides and restricts the latter" (119), which makes it difficult to situate him within contemporary debates between realists and anti-realists. Sturm then considers the distinction between logical and metaphysical truth in Lambert (120-124) and Kant's impossibility argument, which suggests that truth cannot be defined without reference to the content of a judgment (124-129), showing that, while there is broad agreement between them, Kant limits the explanatory power of a definition of truth (130).

Also working in a comparative mode, Paul Guyer explores the similarities between Mendelssohn's refutation of idealism in the *Morgenstunden* (1785) and Kant's arguments in the first *Critique*. Guyer argues, first, that Kant added his 'Refutation' to the second (1787, B) edition in part to respond to Mendelssohn and not only in response to the charge, made in the Feder-Garve review, that his idealism was indistinguishable from Berkeley's. Second, he notes that, unlike Mendelssohn, Kant denies the spatio-temporality of things in themselves (136, 148-150), thus embracing idealism, while also including "an *a priori* and anti-Cartesian proof that the possibility of self-knowledge is dependent upon belief in the independent existence of enduring objects," which "makes Kant's idealism a *transcendental* idealism" (136, 150-152).

Falk Wunderlich turns his attention to Platner's shifting criticisms of Kant in the second (1784) and third (1793) editions of his *Philosophische Aphorismen*. Wunderlich shows that, in the second edition, Platner accused Kant of being a Humean skeptic, who denied "that there is a self beyond the operations of the mind" (157), despite the evidence of our "feeling of self" (157-158). In the third edition, Platner positions himself as a skeptic, while condemning Kant for dogmatically attempting "to measure the bounds of the entire cognitive faculty, and, based on that, to determine the bounds of metaphysics with demonstrative exactness" (161).

In part four, on the history and philosophy of science, Eric Watkins focuses on "two specific issues that are central to Lambert's and Kant's projects, namely what cognition (*Erkenntnis*) is and how it relates to science (*Wissenschaft*)" (180). He identifies a series of similarities and differences

between Lambert and Kant (185-190), which show that, while the two philosophers understand *a priori* cognition in remarkably similar ways, Kant draws a clearer account of the relations between intuitions, concepts, and cognition than Lambert does and also explains, through his conception of reason, the unity and end of science, as well as its relation to morality and its place in a philosophical system, more fully than does Lambert. Jennifer Mensch calls our attention to Kant's appeal to Blumenbach's "formative drive" (*Bildungstrieb*) in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (1790). Mensch carefully reconstructs the context of Kant's reference to Blumenbach, namely, Kant's ongoing polemic against Herder; his developing views on generation, inheritance; and the criticisms that Forster had leveled against Kant's essay, "Determination of a Concept of a Human Race" (1785). Mensch shows that Kant's appeal to Blumenbach's "formative drive," in this context, is more strategic than substantive. Not only did Kant hope to "gain the support of the rising of the Göttingen medical faculty" (193) for his polemics against Herder and his response to Forster, he also hoped that Blumenbach would recognize and adopt the teleological interpretation of epigenesis that he presented in the third *Critique* (208-210). Mensch shows that Kant was largely successful, since Blumenbach later described his position as combining the "physic-mechanical with the purely teleological" (209).

Finally, in the fifth part, on freedom, immorality, and happiness, Paola Rumore argues that "Crusius' attitude towards the central topic of rationalistic psychology and the critique he put forth opened a viable path to Kant, an alternative to the dominant options at the time" (215). She emphasizes Crusius' critique of metaphysical proofs of the immortality of the soul (216-219) as well as his moral proof (219-225), based on "an internal striving (*Trieb)* to an eternal final end in finite creatures" and on the claim that "happiness," understood as "the reunification with God which rational and freely acting creatures achieve by means of virtue" is "God's objective final end" (219-220). Kant is quite critical of these arguments, particularly in the transcripts of his metaphysics lectures (see 225-231), but, like Crusius, he does provide a moral justification for belief in the immortality of the soul in the *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788).

Stefano Bacin addresses the conflict between Kant and Feder over morality. Feder is known to Kantians as an empiricist and a hostile reviewer of the first *Critique*, but many do not realize that, in moral philosophy, Feder's view was "the most important philosophical alternative to Kant's novel approach in the German debates of their time" (234). Bacin identifies three main differences between their positions: Kant's opposition to the empirical investigations of the will associated with "universal practical philosophy" (237-241); Feder's defense of an intrinsic connection between virtue and happiness (241-246); and the methodological differences between Kant's rationalism and Feder's empiricism, the former insisting the moral principles be derived from pure reason, the latter demanding that morality be based on careful observation of experience.

Heiner F. Klemme, in the last chapter, considers Kant's response to Garve's views on morality, freedom, and natural necessity and their role in the development of his moral philosophy. This subject is of particular interest, because the composition of Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785) can be traced back to Kant's plans to write a response to Garve's *Philosophische Anmerkungen und Abhandlungen zu Cicero's Büchern von den Pflichten* (1783) -- at least according to Hamann (251-252). Klemme indicates that Garve accepted the Wolffian conviction that "obligation and virtue imply freedom" (254), but remained skeptical about attempts to explain their relationship. Kant tries to refute this skepticism, and the fatalism with which he thinks it is associated, through his deduction of the idea of freedom in Part III of the *Groundwork*. Klemme also suggests that we regard Kant's remarks on Garve in "On the common saying: That may be correct in theory, but it is of no use in practice" (1793) as a "belated commentary on subsections four and five of his *Groundwork"* (262), acknowledging that it was Garve's skepticism that motivated Kant's appeal to the concept of freedom to "save the possibility" of moral imperatives (263).

Each of the chapters is rich in historical detail and carefully argued, so the volume as a whole is informative and rigorous. Readers will come away from the volume with a more authentic understanding of Kant, a more nuanced appreciation of his German contemporaries, and a better sense of the debates within which Kant's critical philosophy was situated. I think readers will also recognize that Kant, his contemporaries, and their debates, are not merely "of historical interest," since contemporary philosophers are still grappling with many of the same issues as Kant's predecessors, peers, and immediate successors.
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A Good Look at Evil by Abigail L. Rosenthal [Wipf & Stock, 9781532616372]

We meet with evil in the ordinary course of experience, as we try to live our life stories. It's not a myth. It's a mysterious but quite real phenomenon. How can we recognize it? How can we learn to resist it? Amazingly, philosophers have not been much help. Despite the claim of classical rationalists that evil is "ignorance," evil-doers can be extremely intelligent, showing an understanding of ourselves that surpasses our own self-understanding. Meanwhile, contemporary philosophers, in the English-speaking world and on the Continent, portray good and evil as social constructs, which leaves us puzzled and powerless when we have to face the real thing. Thinkers like Hannah Arendt have construed evil as blind conformity to institutional roles--hence "banal"-- but evil-doers have shown exceptional creativity in bending and reshaping institutions to conform to their will. Theologians have assigned evil the role of adversary to the divine script, but professing religionists are fully capable of evil, while atheists have been known to mount effective resistance. More than broad-brush conceptual distinctions are needed. A Good look at Evil maps the actual terrain--of lived ideas and situations--showing how to recognize evil for what it is: the perennial and present threat to a good life.

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The sorts of worked-out life stories advocated in A Good Look at Evil are not to be thought of as fictions. They exhibit a serious commitment to practical reason. However, in Chapter One, the rationality of what people call an ideal story is distinguished not only from fiction but also from the sort of rationality that is just shrewd economy in the choice of means to get to goals that are fixed incorrigibly. Personal identity is found in the acts of living and defending one's story. Evil is first encountered as a deliberate and knowing threat to personal identity.

Chapter One of A Good Look at Evil sets forth the special kind of nonfiction rationality that belongs to the living of a story. A nonfiction story is factual, yet shot through with evaluations. The next step is to defend its definition of the good life against the philosophical objection that facts and values must be hopelessly estranged.

In Chapter Two, the method is explained by which the concepts defended in Chapter One are shown to have practical application in concrete cases. For each kind of evil explored, a 'pure type' is constructed, a hypothetical agent who aims at that kind of evil – not merely stumbles into it.

These first two chapters form Part One, "Conceptual Foundations."

In Part Two, "Evil Under Wraps;" the method of pure types sees its first two applications. Chapter Three, "Going to the Bad;" is about personal dissolution. Chapter Four, "Selling Out," deals with institutional corruption.

Part Three concerns "Evil In the Daylight:" Its topic is genocide, which cannot ordinarily take place without the sanction of an entire culture or its government. The moral assessment of agents who do evil at the behest of their culture or government is a very difficult thing. It must be carried through nevertheless, if moral standards are not to collapse relativistically into mere cultural norms, norms that may themselves sanction genocide.

Chapter Five, "The Types of Genocide," tries therefore to set forth and resolve the special difficulties involved in the struggle to rediscover and mark out the universal moral lines in that place where cultures confront and challenge each other's right to exist and to flourish – the vast and obscure place of the human imagination called 'history.'

Chapter Six, "Banality and Originality," focuses on the Holocaust. It deals partly with objections to such a focus, objections on the ground that the Holocaust is not a special or extreme case of the evil of genocide. It is also concerned to take up some themes associated with the name of Hannah Arendt: the partial delegitimation of the Nuremberg and Eichmann trials; the alleged ordinariness of the Nazi perpetrator; the alleged moral complicity of his victim.

Chapter Seven, "Thinking Like a Nazi," then deals directly with the Nazi as a pure type of genocidal evil. By his deliberate acts, the ideal stories of persons who live, as everyone does, embedded in their cultures, are deliberately and consciously destroyed.

Part Four, "Particulars: Living One's Story," contains two new essays, appearing in A Good Look at Evil for the first time. What role do they play?

Chapter Eight, "Spoiling One's Story: the Case of Hannah Arendt," returns to Arendt, this time as a person whose story deserves to be studied in its own right. Since writing Chapter Six, new material has come out shedding light on her allegations of complicity on the part of the victims of the Holocaust and also on the alleged 'banality' of Adolf Eichmann, as the man in charge of making sure that the Holocaust got done.

Chapter Nine, "God and the Care for One's Story," also deals with new material, but this time the author is the person supplying it. When one has argued, in the course of many chapters, that we live stories, and that we ought to live them intelligently and defend them against attack, some readers at least will wonder whether the author has any views about the influence of the divine in the stories we live. If she thinks there might be such a thing as Providential intervention, could she construct a 'pure type' to show what such intervention might look like?

Part Four is called "Particulars" – here the method of pure types is largely set aside. After all, Hannah Arendt is not a theoretical construction. She was a real woman, a respected philosopher and political thinker, whose influence lives on after her. In Chapter Nine, this use of real-life persons to illustrate the story continues. This time Rosenthal is the one who lives it, it is her story, and the occurrences in the story that she takes to be evidence of divine intervention are first spelled out and then defended.

Abigail Rosenthal proposes a new way of understanding one of the oldest mysteries – the nature of evil. Drawing on wide literary and philosophical resources, Rosenthal proposes that narrative self-understanding is the key to a good life. She traces the implications of this idea for understanding various types of evil, including the ultimate evil of Nazi genocide – which, she argues, cannot be understood in Arendtian terms as a kind of banality. Highly personal and original, Rosenthal's work offers new ways of grappling with some of the largest ethical questions. – Adam Kirsch, author of The Global Novel: Writing the World in the 21st Century

Rosenthal pinpoints the characteristic feature of evil – at least the leading type of evil – that distinguishes it from what is only morally wrong or very, very bad. It is based on her basic notion of an ideal 'life story' or plot. She extends both concepts from individual victims to races and populations as victims. [T]here is nothing banal or ordinary about evil, the intentional disrupting of the victim's 'ideal thread' or plot.... In a fascinating new essay, Rosenthal revisits Hannah Arendt ... applying her 'plot' concept to Arendt herself in light of what is known about Arendt's long intellectual and personal relationship with Heidegger. Rosenthal argues that despite a splendid recovery from early adversity, Arendt went on to 'spoil' her own life story. And in a concluding piece, Rosenthal shows from her own experience how one can have reason to believe that a person's life story has been co-authored by God. – William G. Lycan, author of Real Conditionals

It is a most compelling and creative work. Rosenthal is analyzing the 'stories' that people tell us about themselves, in terms of both their lives and their work. She does so in an effort to understand genocidal evil-doers, both those who perpetrate and collaborate with it and those who cover up such crimes. – Phyllis Chesler, author of An American Bride in Kabul: A Memoir

As a person who wholeheartedly subscribes to the idea that we must be constantly attentive to, and increasingly watchful over, the `plots' of our own unfolding stories, I found Abigail Rosenthal's ' a welcome, revealing, and indispensable book about the slippery crevices of the moral life. I hope it is translated into many languages. Everyone should read it. – Gail Godwin, author of Heart: A Personal Journey Through Its Myths and Meanings

A Good Look at Evil maps the actual terrain – of lived ideas and situations – showing how to recognize evil for what it is: the perennial and present threat to a good life. <>

Aristotle - Contemporary Perspectives on his Thought: On the 2400th Anniversary of Aristotle's Birth edited by Demetra Sfendoni-Mentzou [De Gruyter, 9783110564174]

This collection of essays by leading Aristotle scholars worldwide covers a wide range of topics on Aristotle's work from metaphysics, politics, ethics, bioethics, rhetoric, dialectic, aesthetics, history to physics, psychology, biology, medicine, technology. The thorough exploration of the issues investigated deepens our knowledge of the most fundamental concepts, which are crucial for an overall understanding of Aristotle's work. Moreover, the contributors explore the relevance of Aristotle's ideas to contemporary issues and provide new perspectives on the study of Aristotle's thought. The essays of the volume were presented at the plenary sessions of the World Congress "Aristotle 2400 Years," organized by the Interdisciplinary Centre for Aristotle Studies of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, on May 23-28 2016, in commemoration of the 2400th anniversary of Aristotle's birth. The aim of the congress was to advance scholarship on all aspects of Aristotle's work, both in philosophy and in the fundamental disciplines of science. The impressive number of 250 papers from 40 countries highlighted the fact that Aristotle's work continues to exercise an influence on our intellectual lives on a global scale.

Epistemology
Robert Bolton: Two Conceptions of Practical Skill in Aristotle
Richard McKirahan: "As in a Battle When a Rout has Occurred"
V Aristotle in the History of Philosophy Aristotelian Tradition
Dermot Moran: Aristotle's Conception of Ousia in the Medieval Christian Tradition: Some Neoplatonic Reflections

Excerpt: This collection of twenty essays by leading Aristotle scholars worldwide includes a thorough investigation of a wide range of themes on the Stagereite's work in philosophy and the sciences. The themes spread from Physics, Biology, Psychology, Meteorology to Ethics, Politics, Rhetoric, Poetics, Ontology, Theology, Epistemology and Aristotelian Tradition. Through a variety of approaches and thorough analyses, the contributors provide an in-depth exploration of the issues investigated, suggesting at the same time new perspectives on the study of Aristotle.

Earlier versions of these essays were presented at the Plenary and Invited Speakers Sessions of the World Congress "Aristotle 2400 Years," which was organized by the "Interdisciplinary Centre for Aristotle Studies" (DI.K.A.M.), of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (A.U.Th.), on May 23 — 28, 2016, in celebration of the 2400th anniversary of Aristotle's birth. The aim of the Congress was to advance scholarship on all aspects of Aristotle's work, which had a unique impact in the history of human thought for more than two millennia and continues to be present in our intellectual lives; a work which spreads over the broadest range of topics, covering all major branches of Philosophy and extending in an impressive way into areas related to all fundamental fields of Science.

In the 62 years Aristotle lived (384-322 B.C.) he wrote more than 200 treatises, only one-fifth of which have survived. His teachings in areas, such as Logic, Metaphysics, Ontology, Political and Moral Philosophy, Rhetoric, Poetics, have put an everlasting seal on the Hellenistic and Graeco-Roman world, on Byzantine scholarly tradition, on the Arab world, on the Medieval and Modern thought of Europe. For all this, already in the Late Middle Ages, Dante characterized him as "the master of those who know."

Indeed, Aristotle was the first in the history of mankind to provide the laws of the human mind. His Logic was the basic instrument of Medieval Philosophy, under the general name of Opyavov, and dominated unchanged the intellectual life of the Eastern and the Western world until at least the 17th century. Aristotle's  was embraced by the Hellenistic world, the Arabs, the Byzantines, the European-Western Philosophers, the Modern Western World and left an indelible mark on Metaphysics. His writings on the question of being qua being, and his concepts of substance, eidos, (form), (species), dynamis), (actuality), (entelechy), that he was first to use and analyse, remain the most significant contribution to Metaphysics. His philosophy, due to the prestige that it acquired by the work of St. Thomas Aquinas, laid the foundations for the education of the European Universities until the 17th century.

Aristotle's contribution to moral and political philosophy is a diachronically worthy treasure. His ideas of (democracy) and (polity) are some of the debts of the Western world to the Stageirite. His views on the best, or most preferable, state, based on democratic principles, laid the foundations for most of the Western democracies in Europe and the United States of America. In his Politics, Aristotle highlights the significance of (paideia) for the development of and (good and wise) citizen and suggests for the first time in the history of education that should be public, statutory and compulsory. Aristotle's treatise (Poetics) has been the emblematic text on the theory of Arts and his definition of stands as an inexhaustible source of inspiration through the centuries.

For the Stageirite philosopher, both politics and ethics are directly related to Law and Society. In the center is always, defined by Aristotle as ("animal by nature rational and political"), thus expressing the philosopher's strong belief that is by nature governed by logic and acquires its meaning only within the community. Concepts, such as (virtue), (eudemonia), (mean, middle), (practical wisdom), (friendship), are fundamental, both to his moral and political theory. Aristotle teaches us, that

(virtue) should dominate our impulses and instincts, so that we can be able to achieve (measure), between the two ends: and (excess and deficiency). To accomplish and finally passions must be in reasonable control, and in agreement with logos (reason). This can be achieved by an exercise of practical wisdom. Finally, friendship is even more important than justice for the achievement of (amity) in the city-state.

Aristotle's contribution to Logic, Metaphysics, Political and Moral Philosophy, Rhetoric, Arts, Poetry and Drama has, undoubtedly, been the most appreciated part of his work through the centuries. However, the Stageirite was not only a philosophical mind, but also a scientific one. His contribution to Natural Science and scientific thinking is enormous. His work covers an impressive number of scientific disciplines, such as Physics, Biology,

Marine Biology, Zoology, Embryology, Teratology, Developmental Biology, Botany, Taxonomy, Psychology, Medicine, Agriculture, Mathematics, Chemistry, Meteorology, Astronomy, Geology and Mechanics. The incredible wealth of his observations in all areas of Philosophy of Nature and the number and kind of researches conducted during his stay in Assos, in Asia Minor, in Lesbos and in Macedonia, during the period that he was a tutor of Alexander (347-335 B.C.), reveal that Aristotle was a great observer of nature and a research scientist. For him, as opposed to his teacher Plato, "all realms of nature are marvelous" (Part. An. 645a16).

In his Zoological and Biological treatises, Aristotle shows an amazing passion for the observation of animals "without omitting ... any member of the kingdom, however ignoble" (Part. An. 645a5 — 6). He gives us remarkable descriptions of terrestrial and marine animals, their parts and organs, the different ways in which they reproduce, their diet, the environment they live in. His scientific curiosity also led him to observe and record such cases as the stages of the development of the chicken embryo in the egg, or the function of one of the eight tentacles of the male octopus when it copulates with the male. He also gives reports of the internal anatomy of approximately one hundred and ten different kinds of animals, probably thirty-five of which must have been dissected by Aristotle himself. Thanks to all these, Aristotle is considered as the father of Biology and Taxonomy and as the most significant Biologist of antiquity. His contribution to Psychology has played a similar role in the history of this discipline. His treatise De anima laid the foundations of Psychology and survived without any significant change until the advent of Brentano in the 19th century. His definition of the (soul), in terms of and , combined with his views on reproduction in his (Generation of animals), provides highly suggestive ideas for our understanding of basic issues in contemporary Biology and Genetics.

Aristotle's (Meteorologica), written around 340 B.C., is the first broad and comprehensive book on the explanation of weather and astronomical phenomena. In his treatise (De caelo), Aristotle reports that he observed the occultation of the planet Mars by the Moon (see Cael. II.12, 292a3-5), an event which has now been tested for its liability and has been calculated to have happened precisely on May 4, 357 B.C. Aristotle's Astronomical work has been read and commented by the great scientists of the Renaissance, Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and later by Newton.

What makes Aristotle's enormous contribution to science even more valuable and timeless is the fact that he set up the very concept. He thus contributed to the birth of science as a particular way of knowing, by showing that what makes is the knowledge of propter quid, rather than the knowledge of 6-n (quid). Aristotle was also the first to introduce and discuss a great number of concepts, such as matter and (form/species form), (nature), (cause), (motion), (infinite), (continuity), (potentiality), (space) and (time), concepts which no discussion in the fields of Philosophy and of Science can ignore. Although his system of Physical Science has been considered, since the Renaissance and almost up to our days, as the least valuable part of his thought—with the exception of Biology until the advent of Darwin's theory of evolution— today there is a growing interest in approaching problems of Philosophy of Science by an appeal to Aristotle. Especially in the fields of Biology and Physics, it is now becoming all the more evident that

in order to comprehend the processes which take place in the physical world, we have to abandon the basic schemes of Classical Physics and turn for inspiration to some of Aristotle's highly illuminating and suggestive insights.

The twenty essays of this volume provide penetrating analyses of central issues in Aristotle's multitudinous and multifarious work, suggesting at the same time contemporary perspectives on his thought. The issues are treated under six general topics, which follow the pattern of the thematic areas of the World Congress "Aristotle 2400 Years."

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The World Congress "Aristotle 2400 Years" was organized by the "Interdisciplinary Centre for Aristotle Studies" of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki on May 23-28, 2016. The Congress was under the auspices of the President of the Hellenic Republic; it also had the full support of the International Federation of Philosophical Societies (FISP), the Academy of Athens and the Hellenic National Commission for UNESCO.

The aim of the Congress was to advance scholarship on all aspects of Aristotle's work, a work that deserves to be studied not only for its long-standing influence, but also for its relevance for the 21st century and for its potential to lead us to a deeper understanding of concepts, ideas and problems of our own era; a work that can also offer the paradigm par excellence for an interdisciplinary approach of knowledge.

The proclamation by UNESCO of 2016 as the "Aristotle Anniversary Year" provided the opportunity for the organization of a series of events in Greece and around the world, to honour the great Stageirite philosopher. The World Congress "Aristotle 2400 Years," was the high spot of all these events for several reasons: it had the unique privilege to be held not only at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, that bears the philosopher's name, but also in ancient Stageira and in ancient Mieza. It also had the honour to host 22 outstanding experts on Aristotle's philosophy as Invited Speakers and in addition the impressive number of 250 Aristotle scholars from 42 countries from the five Continents, and from a rich diversity of philosophical and cultural traditions. During the six days that it lasted, the total number of Participants/Attendees approached the number of 600.

The Congress programme spread over a wide range of topics covering the following major branches of Aristotle's work in Philosophy and the Sciences:

Philosophy of Nature: Physics, Biology, Psychology, Astronomy, Meteorology. II. Philosophy of Human Action: Ethics, Politics, Rhetoric, Poetics. III. First Philosophy: Ontology, Cosmology, Theology. IV. Theory of Thinking: Logic, Epistemology, Methods of Inquiry. V. Aristotle's works: Transmission, Edition, Authenticity. VI. Aristotle in the History of Philosophy: Predecessors, Contemporaries, Aristotelian Tradition. VII. Aristotle and Contemporary Thought. A big proportion of the contributed papers will appear in the Proceedings of the World Congress `Aristotle 2400 Years" (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, forthcoming, 2018).

The Congress turned out to be a unique, intellectually exciting event to be remembered for a lifetime. The fact that it took place in the homeland of Aristotle, and gave the opportunity to the participants to walk and exchange ideas in ancient Stageira, the very place where Aristotle spent the first years of his life, and in ancient Mieza, the place that the Stageirite taught Alexander the Great, offered a thrilling, once in a lifetime experience. On the other hand, the excellence of talks of renowned Aristotle scholars, who participated as Invited Speakers, the number and the high quality of the contributed papers presented, and the global recognition of the Stageirite philosopher, made the Congress a point of reference worldwide and proved that the teachings of Aristotle have much of value to offer us today.

As President of the Congress, I take this opportunity, to thank once again all those who contributed with their presence and their work to the success of the Congress. I also wish to express my sincere thanks to the Rector of the Aristotle

University of Thessaloniki and Honorary President of the Congress, Perikles Mitkas, and the Vice-Rectors, especially Nikolaos Varsakelis and Theodore Laopou-los, for their support in every possible way. My most sincere thanks are due to the distinguished invited speakers for their valuable contribution to the World Congress "Aristotle 2400 Year"; to the members of the Honorary Academic Committee, the International Scientific Committee, the Finance and the Organizing. <>

Spinoza: A Life, Second Edition by Steven Nadler [Cambridge University Press, 9781108425544]

Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677) was one of the most important philosophers of all time; he was also one of the most radical and controversial. The story of Spinoza's life takes the reader into the heart of Jewish Amsterdam in the seventeenth century and, with Spinoza's exile from Judaism, into the midst of the tumultuous political, social, intellectual, and religious world of the young Dutch Republic. This new edition of Steven Nadler's biography, winner of the Koret Jewish Book Award for biography and translated into a dozen languages, is enhanced by exciting new archival discoveries about his family background, his youth, and the various philosophical, political, and religious contexts of his life and works. There is more detail about his family's business and communal activities, about his relationships with friends and correspondents, and about the development of his writings, which were so scandalous to his contemporaries.

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## Excerpt: Preface to the Second Edition

It has been almost three hundred and fifty years since the death of the philosopher Bento/Benedictus de Spinoza, in 1677, and over two decades since I completed the first edition of this biography. Remarkably, we are still uncovering new facts related to his life — in archival documents, in published and unpublished treatises and broadsheets, and in a wide variety of correspondences — as well as putting together already known facts in new and illuminating ways. Despite the still relatively impoverished information about his ancestry, his parents and other relatives, his youth, and even the years of his maturity, a better picture is emerging of his family background, his activity as a merchant, and his life after his extraordinary expulsion from the Amsterdam Portuguese Jewish congregation. We are also, I believe, gaining a deeper understanding of his grand philosophical project, especially as Spinoza scholars are now more open than ever to the various intellectual contexts of his thought.

In this second edition, I have also been able to take advantage of Edwin Curley's completion of his magisterial, two-volume English edition of Spinoza's writings. This means that, for the most part, I can refer the reader consistently to just one source for translations of Spinoza's works and letters (although in some cases I have modified these translations)…

## Preface to the First Edition

Baruch de Spinoza (1632-77) was the son of a prominent merchant in Amsterdam's Portuguese Jewish community. He was also among the more gifted students in its school. But something happened around his twenty-third year — whether it was sudden or gradual, we do not know — that led to the harshest excommunication ever proclaimed by the leaders of the Amsterdam Sephardim. The result was Spinoza's departure from the community — indeed, from Judaism entirely. He would go on to become one of the most

important and famous philosophers of all time, and certainly the most radical and controversial of his own.

The young man's transformation (if that's what it was) from ordinary Jewish boy — living, to all appearances, a perfectly normal orthodox life and remarkable perhaps only for his intelligence — to iconoclastic philosopher is, unfortunately, hidden from us, possibly forever. We have only the herem document, full of oaths and maledictions, that was composed by the community's governors. There is so little surviving material, so little that is known for certain about the details of Spinoza's life, particularly before 1661 (when his extant correspondence begins), that we can only speculate on his emotional and intellectual development and on the more mundane matters that fill out a person's existence. But what a rich field for speculation it is, particularly given the fascination of its subject.

Metaphysical and moral philosopher, political and religious thinker, biblical exegete, social critic, grinder of lenses, failed merchant, Dutch intellectual, Jewish heretic. What makes Spinoza's life so interesting are the various, and at times opposing, contexts to which it belongs: the community of Portuguese and Spanish immigrants, many of them former "marranos," who found refuge and economic opportunity in the newly independent Dutch Republic; the turbulent politics and magnificent culture of that young nation which, in the middle of the seventeenth century, was experiencing its so-called Golden Age; and, not the least, the history of philosophy itself.

As a Jew, even an apostate one, Spinoza was always, to a certain extent, an outsider in the Calvinist land in which he was born and from which, as far as we know, he never traveled. But after his excommunication from the Talmud Torah congregation and his voluntary exile from the city of his birth, Spinoza no longer identified himself as a Jew. He preferred to see himself as just another citizen of the Dutch Republic — and perhaps, as well, of the transnational Republic of Letters. He nourished himself not only on the Jewish traditions to which he had been introduced in the synagogue's school, but also on the philosophical, theological, and political debates that so often disturbed the peace of his homeland's first hundred years. His legacy, of course, was as great as his appropriation. In many respects, the Dutch Republic was still groping for its identity during Spinoza's lifetime. And as much as Spinoza's Dutch contemporaries reviled and attacked him, there can be no denying the significance of the contribution that he made to the development of Dutch intellectual culture. It is, perhaps, as great a contribution as that which he made to the development of the character of modern Judaism.

This is the first full-length and complete biography of Spinoza ever to appear in English. It is also the first to be written in any language in quite a long time. There have, of course, been short studies of one aspect or another of Spinoza's life, and practically every book on Spinoza's philosophy begins with a brief biographical sketch. But the last substantial attempt to put together a complete "life" of Spinoza was Jacob Freudenthal's Spinoza: Sein Leben und Sein Lehre at the beginning of this century.' A great deal of research into the history of Amsterdam's Portuguese Jews and on Spinoza himself has been done since Freudenthal published his valuable study, however. As a result of the enormously important work of scholars such as A. M. Vaz Dias, W. G. Van der Tak, I. S. Révah, Wim Klever, Yosef Kaplan, Herman Prins Salomon, Jonathan Israel, Richard Popkin, and a host of others, enough material has come to light over the last sixty years about Spinoza's life and times, and about the Amsterdam Jewish community in particular, that any earlier biography is, essentially, obsolete. And I should make it clear for the record that, without the labors of those individuals, this book could never have been written. I can only hope that I have made good use of their work.

Let the scholarly reader beware: it was not my intention to track down and present the various sources of Spinoza's thought, all the possible thinkers and traditions that may have influenced him. That would be an infinite task, one that no individual could accomplish in a lifetime. This is, in other words, most definitely not an "intellectual" biography. At certain points it was important — indeed, essential — for me to look closely at what

seemed to be Spinoza's intellectual development. But I make no claims for exhaustiveness in my research on his philosophical origins. Nor is this a study of Spinoza's philosophy. Books and articles on his metaphysical and other doctrines are a dime a dozen, and I had no desire to add to the growing bibliography of literature for specialists. Rather, I have tried to provide the general reader with an accessible overview of Spinoza's ideas. If I appear to some Spinoza scholars to be guilty at times of simplification or distortion, then I plead nolo contendere: I do not want to pick any academic fights on the finer details of Spinozism. Let that be for a different time and place. What I am interested in — and what I hope my reader is interested in — is the life and times and thoughts of an important and immensely relevant thinker.

The question that lies at the heart of this biography is how did the various aspects of Spinoza's life — his ethnic and social background, his place in exile between two such different cultures as the Amsterdam Portuguese Jewish community and Dutch society, his intellectual development, and his social and political relationships — come together to produce one of history's most radical thinkers? But there is another, more general question that interests me as well: what did it mean to be a philosopher and a Jew in the Dutch Golden Age? The quest for answers to these questions must begin almost two hundred years earlier, in another part of Europe. <>

Spinoza's Political Treatise: A Critical Guide edited by Yitzhak Y. Melamed, Hasana Sharp [Cambridge University Press, 9780521882293]

Spinoza's Theological-Political Treatise was published anonymously in 1670 and immediately provoked huge debate. Its main goal was to claim that the freedom of philosophizing can be allowed in a free republic and that it cannot be abolished without also destroying the peace and piety of that republic. Spinoza criticizes the traditional claims of revelation and offers a social contract theory in which he praises democracy as the most natural form of government. This new Critical Guide presents new essays by well-known scholars in the field and covers a broad range of topics, including the political theory and the metaphysics of the work, religious toleration, the reception of the text by other early modern philosophers, and the relation of the text to Jewish thought. It offers valuable new perspectives on this important and influential work.



Excerpt: If it is no longer possible to call Benedict de Spinoza's Theological-Political Treatise "a neglected masterpiece," such a description of the Political Treatise remains quite justified. Editors of various critical editions praise the Tractatus Politicus as Spinoza's most developed analysis of civil life,

containing the most mature and systematic expression of his political thought. In the recent publication of the second volume of The Collected Works of Spinoza, Edwin Curley contends that the Political Treatise "offers us the materials for a much deeper understanding of Spinoza's political philosophy than we could glean from his other works."' In the French edition, Pierre-François Moreau goes further. He declares that we find in Spinoza's final work the most "autonomous" expression of his first principles as well as his politics. According to Moreau, we find in the Political Treatise Spinoza's philosophy freed at last from both the conceptual constraints of Cartesianism and traditional perspectives on natural law and right.' Yet, very few scholars, especially among those writing in English, examine the TP in any detail. How is it that a major work by such an influential and controversial philosopher has been virtually ignored?

Although we do not know precisely when Spinoza began composing his Tractatus Politicus, he was working on it intensively from the second half of 1676 up until his untimely death in February 1677. In contrast to a number of his other works, Spinoza likely did not circulate the manuscript among his friends and correspondents. The only reference to it is in a copy of a letter, the original of which is lost. We know neither the date nor the addressee of the letter, though it served as the preface to the Political Treatise, included in his Opera Posthuma (1677). The letter apologizes for a lapse in communication, but expects that his friend will be pleased since it was by virtue of this very friend's urging that he had been occupied composing the Political Treatise. He describes the first six chapters, and notes that he is currently drafting the seventh on monarchy. He announces his intention to proceed to an analysis of "Aristocratic and Popular Governments, and finally to Laws and other particular questions concerning politics."' Spinoza succumbed to illness after authoring only four paragraphs of what was projected to be one of two chapters on democracy, or popular government. Thus, what was planned but never written includes the remainder of chapter II, another on democracy, as well as chapters on "laws" and "other particular questions concerning politics." The fact that his last work was incomplete and uncirculated among his friends serves as partial explanation for its relative obscurity.

Unlike the Theological-Political Treatise and the Ethics, the TP did not attract much attention for the first two centuries following Spinoza's death. It would be fair to conjecture that the Political Treatise simply disappeared in the controversies surrounding the Ethics and Theological-Political Treatise. Small batch printings of the Principles of Cartesian Philosophy, the Ethics, and especially the Theological-Political Treatise were frequent in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Between 1670 and 1694, the TTP was printed many times, often under disguised titles, and distributed in various translations: French, English, and Dutch. The eighteenth century saw many printings of the Ethics and the TTP as well as a translation of the entire Opera Posthuma into German. To appreciate the significance of Spinoza's influence in the history of modernity, scholars point to Pierre Bayle's widely read Historical and Critical Dictionary (1697), which dedicates its longest entry to Spinoza. Besides Bayle's dictionary, the other primary introductions to Spinozism for the wider, educated European public was Diderot and d'Alembert's Encyclopédie (1751-1759). Neither mentions the Political Treatise at all. So while Spinoza is widely considered among the most influential philosophers of the modern period, his final words were not among those that preoccupied either his critics or his acolytes.

The history of Spinoza's reception focuses heavily on the first part of the Ethics, in particular on the relationship between substance and modes, along with significant attention to (and, of course, alarm at) his critiques of teleology, providence, miracles, and free will. His contemporaries and successors were most concerned to determine the theological and metaphysical implications of Spinoza's insistence that modes inhere in Substance, such that particular things ought to be understood as those infinitely many ways that God exists. Even if his political philosophy was original and radical, most shocking and exciting were Spinoza's denials of any real distinction between the creator and its creations, the teleological order of the universe with man at its center, and the portrait of a God

who might intervene prudently in worldly affairs. Spinoza's apostasy — fantastic and real — overshadowed the portrait we have only recently begun to draw of Spinoza as a political scientist: a thinker striving to make sense of human affairs "with the same freedom of spirit" proper to mathematics or meteorology (TP, ch. III/273/34).

Today, although scholarship on Spinoza is flourishing, very little of it develops the concepts and arguments of his final work. While we can only speculate about why this is the case, the fact that the Theological-Political Treatise primarily discusses democracy while the Political Treatise only does so before examining the form of government that most preoccupies twentieth- and twenty-first-century political philosophy in the west is surely part of the explanation. The Theological-Political Treatise likewise concerns issues — such as the relationship between religious pluralism and political freedom — that remain at the center of geopolitical struggles today. Yet, if we can hope to find in the Political Treatise a "much deeper understanding of Spinoza's political philosophy" and the most "autonomous" and original expression of his thinking, we risk missing a great deal by ignoring it. Without the Political Treatise, we not only lack a more complete picture of Spinoza as a political thinker, but we are also deprived of many of his insights into the dynamics of power and social life.

This volume brings scholarly attention to this least studied of Spinoza's major works. Since so little has been written on the Political Treatise, independent of Spinoza's other work, we aim to begin rather than conclude discussion of the text. It is intended as an invitation to deeper exploration of the many problems and analyses we might find in the Political Treatise. Since the essays included in this volume and those to come will likely produce interpretations no less diverse than those of the Ethics and the Theological-Political Treatise, we do not want to foreclose debate about the message or meaning of the Political Treatise in this introduction. Nevertheless, we will say a few words about the work's global ambition.

In his editorial preface, Curley announces that the "central thesis of Spinoza's moral and political philosophy is that nothing is more useful to us than living in community with other people, and binding ourselves to fellow citizens by such ties as are apt 'to make us one people" (E4app12] II/269/9—10). The Political Treatise does not deviate from this central thesis, declaring repeatedly that the commonwealth operates to the extent that "the multitude is guided as if by one mind." Moreover, the civil order is more coherent, harmonious, and unified to the extent that it agrees with the dictates of reason (TP, ch. 2] III/283/10-20). Like the virtuous person in the Ethics, the commonwealth is powerful and rational to the extent that it does those things that truly enhance and contribute to its perseverance (TP, ch. 4] III/292).

Just as the first part of the Ethics arouses no end of interpretive problems by claiming that modes have their being in substance and are freer to the extent that they are conceived through the necessity of their flow from the essence of God, the Political Treatise likewise invites us to puzzle over the precise relationship of the many to the one. If a state operates only by securing some kind of mental harmony, what is the minimum threshold for unity? If we are more or less "one" depending on how well our actions agree with reason, do we cease to be distinct individuals to the extent that we exercise our power effectively? Or does the "one mind" of civic rationality yield some kind of dialectical paradox such that each of us is increasingly individuated and united to the collective to the extent that the civil order encourages the free exercise of our powers? The Political Treatise reveals the practical dimensions of age-old metaphysical questions concerning the identity of particulars that together compose larger unities. Likewise, it takes the constitution of unity to be a social problem that might be solved politically. It elaborates an institutional program that promises to coordinate an inevitably diverse populace, subject necessarily to affects, into an effective unity (animorum unione).

The express aim of the Political Treatise is to outline the conditions under which a commonwealth's affairs may be "so ordered that, whether the people who administer them are led by reason or by an affect, they can't be induced to be disloyal or act badly" (TP, ch. II III/275/21-25. Italics added). This aim is much more ambitious than the TT

P, where Spinoza stresses: "I do not intend to show how a state could be formed so that it might, in spite of everything, always be preserved securely" (TTP, ch. 17] III/203/5). In the TP, Spinoza's concern is less with the susceptibility of subjects to irrationality than with the temptation of rulers to abuse. He insists everywhere that it is folly to count on the virtue of the state's ministers for an enduring commonwealth. 'Whether the constitution is monarchical, aristocratic, or democratic, it is necessary to appoint judges who will "practice justice without giving special consideration to anyone, not even the King, if he commands something to be contrary to the established law. For Kings are not Gods, but men, who are often captivated by the Syrens' song" (TP, ch. 7] III/308/1—2). The first word of the Political Treatise is affectus, in whose bondage each of us remains necessarily. The problem is not only that any one of us is susceptible to illness, greed, or vengeance. It is that a poorly ordered commonwealth provides nearly irresistible temptations for those in power to undermine the fabric of social life. When affairs are so ordered that it is all too easy for a powerful few to seek private gain or to use the police or military as a vector for revenge, even the strongest of souls may be compelled to do so. For reason "has no weight in the marketplace or the court, where we need it most" (TP, ch. 1] III/275/ 13-15).

One of the important features of the TP is the appearance of the notion of a "free multitude" (ch. 5 [11I/296-7], and ch. 7 [III/319]). While in the TTP and the Ethics Spinoza's attitude toward the multitude is typically negative, the TP promotes the establishment of a community of free men. The reader will also discern in the TP passages in which Spinoza criticizes his own, early negative attitude toward the multitude (compare TP, ch. 7 [III/319/27] with E4p54s). The result is that the Political Treatise appears more universalistic, evincing an ambition to maximize the proportion of a commonwealth's subjects who might benefit from institutionalizing liberating forms of association. Rather than blaming some segment of society for civil unrest, the Political Treatise aims to understand how natural beings, subject necessarily to passions, can be enabled and constrained to animate and preserve the common interest. It treats the virtue and vice of rulers and ruled as the creatures of the commonwealth. If rulers are good, the credit lies with the State's organization. If subjects violate the law and threaten social security, the State must be disordered (TP, ch. 5] III/295-96). Spinoza's political program is predicated on the universality of our finitude. It appreciates the vulnerability of each and every one of us to vice. Nevertheless, the vice of statesmen is of particular concern because it is especially consequential. Thus, the focus of the Political Treatise is upon those forms of political order that breed vicious ministers of public affairs whose disdain for law and the common interest threaten to "turn the civil order into a state of hostility" (TP, ch. 41 III/293/22).

At the same time, our finitude justifies the relative optimism and ambition of the Political Treatise. Because we are so deeply shaped by how political and social life is ordered, by how others act and feel, and by civic participation, a State organized to engender a free multitude rather than slaves (instruments of pleasure and power for the rulers) will yield enduring power for itself and its constituents. He thus outlines the institutional arrangements that support the greatest possible exercise of reason, for as many — male — citizens as possible. Representatives of government ought to be involved in different trades, hail from diverse regions, and have different forms of expertise. Transparency and participation, he suggests, will enable as many as possible to govern and be governed in accordance with their own interests. In addition to an uncompromising critique of political abuse, Spinoza's commitment to realism exudes hope for the possibility of a free republic.

Although the Political Treatise conveys a deep appreciation for human plasticity and the possibilities of shared virtue, Spinoza famously excludes women and servants (as well as foreigners and criminals) from the category of subjects who might share the duties of democratic government. This exclusion is at odds with several currents of his argument in the TP as well as the philosophical anthropology of his Ethics. If, as he contends repeatedly, we reason better, the more actively diverse members of the commonwealth contribute to the process of deliberation, why exclude the vast

majority of constituents? If a preponderance of vice is owed to a poorly ordered commonwealth and not to any innate defect in human beings, why not order the society to maximize the political intelligence of the whole populace? These and other problems concern contributors to this volume, but critical debate will surely not be settled here. Spinoza's Political Treatise is both incomplete and imperfect, but its study provides an undeniably richer and perhaps more controversial portrait of his political philosophy.

The first two chapters address the relationship of Spinoza's Political Treatise to his other major works. Michael Rosenthal's essay asks four questions about Spinoza's political theory. First, what is the nature of Spinoza's so-called realism about politics? Second, what is the ideal civil order or constitution? Third, what does it mean for a realist about politics to speak of ideal constitutions? Fourth, what is the relation of the TTP to the TP? Some have argued that Spinoza's account in the TP is more "scientific" than in the TTP and eliminates artifices like the social contract and narrative. Rosenthal claims that the TP still depends upon them in crucial ways. He argues the same tripartite structure of explanation is found in both the TTP and the TP: the descriptive or sociological (third-person); the juridical or normative (second-person); and the narrative (first-person). The goal of this chapter is to provide answers to the first three questions concerning how realism is compatible with idealization in terms of this tripartite account.

A commitment to method, argues Julie Cooper, is one of Spinoza's philosophical signatures. Yet surprisingly little has been written about Spinoza's method for the study of politics. In this context, the Political Treatise emerges as a crucial text for understanding Spinoza's method, because it is the lone text in which Spinoza opines on proper approaches to the study of politics. In this chapter, Cooper examines the techniques that Spinoza employs in the Political Treatise. When compared to the Theologico-Political Treatise, the Political Treatise is notable for its abstraction, for the negligible work performed by history and experience, according to Cooper. She highlights Spinoza's abstract turn in an effort to temper some of the revolutionary fervor that surrounds Spinoza's unfinished work. In the Political Treatise, dispensing with an abstract theory of right does not usher in a permanent revolution. Rather, it licenses abstraction from historical contingency in a quest for modes of argument — whether deductive or empirical — powerful enough to forestall controversy and dissent.

The next four contributions, each in its own way, pay particular attention to affects, social passions, and virtue. They address the relationship of these human phenomena to the formation or durability of a commonwealth. Moira Gatens examines what Spinoza means when he commits to developing his political theory from the point of view of "human nature .. . as it really is." She maintains that the Political Treatise treats human nature and its powers of action as they are revealed in recorded history and through everyday experience and observation rather than in an idealized or a priori way. Spinoza's ambition is to refrain from mocking or bemoaning human folly and instead to try to understand the causal ground of human action. Following the method deployed in natural philosophy, he vows to consider human affects not as malfunctions of human nature but as necessary and integral parts of its mode of being. But does this stated aim of the TP indicate an inconsistency or conundrum in Spinoza's philosophy? Given his explicit critique of universals and abstractions, and his doctrine of the singular essence that defines each individual thing, is it permissible for him to posit a conception of human nature at all? If it can be shown that Spinoza does not have a robust notion of an actually existing human nature, then in what sense can the TP claim to show human nature as it really is?

Running through Spinoza's work — argues Susan James — is the venerable view that human beings have more in common with each other than with any other kind of thing, and that, as they become more rational, their commonality increases. James's chapter begins by considering the kinds of commonality that are at stake in Spinoza's argument. At first glance it seems that people become more like one another as reasoning leads them to shared knowledge claims, but this, she suggests, is not all that Spinoza has in mind. The differences that interest him are above all

differences in our affects, and the commonalities with which he is concerned are commonalities of desire. This view is worked out in his doctrine of the imitation of the affects, a psychological mechanism that both makes us interdependent and inclines us to envy. One of the tasks of the state is therefore to contain the envy that underprivileged groups are liable to feel for those whose political rights or privileges exceed their own. But how can political communities ensure that envy does not directly or indirectly generate faction and conflict? In particular, how is it meant to be limited in the model constitutions set out in the Political Treatise, which all contain significant levels of political inequality? James identifies a solution to this problem and applies it to Spinoza's notorious defence of political inequality between men and women.

Chantal Jaquet examines Spinoza's claim in TP, ch. 6, that a multitude unites to form a political body prompted not by reason but by some common affect: fear, hope, or desire to avenge a common injury. This chapter examines the possibility, realizability, and legitimacy of such a paradoxical and problematic form of unity. It demonstrates the originality of Spinoza's thesis, which has not been recognized by commentators. It proceeds to examine the problems a foundation of revenge involves, such as durability, susceptibility to violence, and legitimacy. It concludes with a definition of the "correct use" of revenge by distinguishing carefully, as Spinoza does, a passion for revenge that derives from desiderium rather than from cupiditas. It illuminates the precise kind of vindictive affect that can ground a multitude's agreement, and thus sovereign law and common justice.

Hasana Sharp develops the implications of Spinoza's invocation in chapter 6 of the traditional analogy between the oikos and the polis. Careful attention to this analogy reveals a number of interesting features of Spinoza's political theory. Spinoza challenges the perception that absolute monarchy offers greater respite from the intolerable anxiety of the state of nature than does democracy. He acknowledges that people associate monarchical rule with peace and stability, but asserts that it can too easily deform its subjects. Unchallenged monarchy may be credited with a certain order, "but if slavery, barbarism, and desolation are to be called peace, there can be nothing more wretched for mankind than peace." This is all familiar to friends of Spinoza, but what kind of democracy is the alternative to those monarchies that tend toward despotism? It is a form of association that, he suggests, resembles a bitterly quarrelsome but nevertheless virtuous family. Thus, he admits that democratic, or popular, rule is typically turbulent and disorderly, but urges his reader to view contentions and disputes as a kind of salutary discord that preserves rather than threatens virtue.

The proceeding three essays consider matters specific to the distinctive regimes of government. The first two examine the question of national religion in aristocracies. The third considers Spinoza's remarks on the relative advantages of aristocracy versus democracy. The chapter by Mogens Lærke takes a closer look at Spinoza's conception of a "national religion" in chapter 8 of the TP, in connection with another text that it is explicitly and closely related, namely chapter 19 of the TTP, dedicated to the "right concerning sacred matters" (jus circa sacra). Lærke argues that we should not see Spinoza's call for a national religion to reflect straightforward Erastianism, or the subjection of all religious matters to state control. Instead, on Spinoza's view, state administration of sacred matters is a delicate balancing act between both promoting and curbing religious diversity within the state, drawing the benefits from it while avoiding its inherent dangers. Lærke's argument is that the conception of a national religion in TP, ch. 8, is Spinoza's practical guide to how to perform this balancing act.

Daniel Garber's contribution examines Spinoza's recommendation that all the patricians in an aristocracy "should be of the same Religion, a very simple and most Universal Religion, such as we described in that Treatise." What does Spinoza mean here by the "very simple and most Universal Religion," he asks. Garber argues against the view that Spinoza intends the dogmas of the TTP outlining a religion of reason to replace traditional religions. Religion for Spinoza, Garber argues, is practice, not faith, and it involves imperatives to be

followed and not dogmas or beliefs to be held. The "very simple and most Universal Religion," he argues, consists only of the imperative to love one's neighbor as oneself, and to love God above all. The dogmas of Universal Faith are needed only for those not capable of attaining religion through reason: For the rational agent, the imperatives are not laws, given by a divine lawgiver, but eternal truths.

In "Spinoza on Aristocratic and Democratic Government," Theo Verbeek makes a compelling case for special attention to the neglected chapters of the Political Treatise on aristocracy. He demonstrates the novelty of Spinoza's claims about aristocracy, which contain an implicit critique of his own country. In addition, he maintains that Spinoza's celebrated preference for democracy is less a spirited defense of egalitarian principles than a resignation to the impossibility of sustaining the best government in principle: aristocracy. Verbeek argues that the events of 1672 depleted Spinoza's hope of modeling politics on the rational morality he advances in the Ethics. His advocacy of democracy, then, signals the loss of faith in the self-correcting mechanisms of reason, and the inevitability of the instability democracy promises.

The concluding three chapters examine the question of political power — its character and its sources of durability and vulnerability — in the TP. Yitzhak Y. Melamed's chapter begins with the observation that Spinoza is commonly perceived as suggesting that any empowerment is essentially good. In his chapter, Melamed discusses Spinoza's assertion in chapter 7 of his Political Treatise that "the most stable state is one which defends only its own possessions, and cannot seek those of others." Melamed shows that Spinoza develops a view according to which having too much power is likely to bring about the destruction of the state. Thus, it is a matter of luck (i.e. of having just the right amount of power) that determines the fate and survival of the state. Melamed then attempts to explain how these claims of Spinoza's can be reconciled with his general view of power as virtue, and what can we learn about Spinoza's understanding of power from the surprising passage in the seventh chapter of the TP.

Spinoza's treatment of absolute sovereignty raises a number of interpretative questions. According to Justin Steinberg, Spinoza seems to embrace a form of absolutism that is incompatible with his defense of mixed government and constitutional limits on sovereign power. And he seems to use the concept of "absolute sovereignty" in inconsistent ways. Steinberg offers an interpretation of Spinoza's conception of absolutism that aims to resolve these concerns. Steinberg argues that Spinoza is able to show that, when tied to a proper understanding of authority, absolute sovereignty is not only compatible with, but actually necessitates, powersharing and constitutionalism. His treatment of "absolute sovereignty" in the political works is akin to his treatment of "substance" and "God" in the Ethics: he transfigures the concept from within a common framework. This interpretation renders intelligible and consistent the various claims that Spinoza makes about sovereign absolutism in the Political Treatise.

Filippo Del Lucchese focuses on the relationship between Machiavelli and Spinoza, using the concept of constituent power to analyze their contribution to the foundation of modern political thought. Both authors ground the stability of the State and its freedom on the popolo (Machiavelli) and the multitudo (Spinoza); this is not the generic people of modern constitutionalism, but rather the demos, the specific group inside the civitas whose power is exercised on, and sometimes against, other political subjects. Both authors aim at keeping alive the conflictual and constituent force that creates the juridical space of the State by recognizing the prominent role of social and political conflict. 'While Machiavelli explicitly argues for social conflict as the ground of political freedom, Spinoza develops his conflictualist approach through more implicit examples. Considering them together allows one to identify a radical democratic and revolutionary ground for the foundation of political modernity. <>

Spinoza and German Idealism edited by Eckart Förster, Yitzhak Y. Melamed Cambridge University Press, 9781107021983]

There can be little doubt that without Spinoza, German Idealism would have been just as

impossible as it would have been without Kant. Yet the precise nature of Spinoza's influence on the German Idealists has hardly been studied in detail. This volume of essays by leading scholars sheds light on how the appropriation of Spinoza by Fichte, Schelling and Hegel grew out of the reception of his philosophy by, among others, Lessing, Mendelssohn, Jacobi, Herder, Goethe, Schleiermacher, Maimon and, of course, Kant. The volume thus not only illuminates the history of Spinoza's thought, but also initiates a genuine philosophical dialogue between the ideas of Spinoza and those of the German Idealists. The issues at stake - the value of humanity; the possibility and importance of self-negation; the nature and value of reason and imagination; human freedom; teleology; intuitive knowledge; the nature of God - remain of the highest philosophical importance today.



Excerpt: German Idealism is sometimes characterized as a synthesis of the fundamental ideas of Spinoza and Kant. Though such a statement is too simplistic, there can be little doubt that without Spinoza, German Idealism would have been just as impossible as it would have been without Kant. Indeed, each of the German Idealists emphasized the importance of Spinoza for his own endeavor – in terms of both agreement and disagreement – just as each of them did with Kant.

Yet the precise nature of Spinoza's influence on the German Idealists has hardly been studied in detail. While a few older monographs address individual aspects of this relationship, there is in English no comprehensive examination of the profound impact that Spinoza's philosophy had on the German Idealists. Most importantly, there is no work that represents the current state of scholarship in these fields and reflects the enormous advances achieved by the research of the last few decades.

The present volume ills this lacuna. Moreover, the volume also sheds light on how the appropriation of Spinoza through Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel was prepared by the reception of Spinoza's philosophy by, among others, Lessing, Mendelssohn, Jacobi, Herder, Goethe, Schleiermacher, Maimon, and, of course, Kant. The main aim is not merely to trace a part of the reception history of Spinoza's philosophy, however, but to initiate a genuine philosophical dialogue between the ideas of Spinoza and the German Idealists. We believe that the issues at stake – the value of humanity, the possibility and importance of self-negation, the nature and value of reason and imagination, the possibility of a philosophical system, human freedom, teleology, intuitive knowledge, the nature of God – are of the highest philosophical importance even today.

This collection is especially timely in light of the trends in recent scholarship. Over the last few decades, there has been within the anglophone philosophical community a remarkable revival of interest in German Idealism. In its first phase, this revival gave particular emphasis to the relationship between German Idealism and Kantianism, playing down the metaphysical or speculative side while stressing the social and pragmatic dimensions of the idealist systems. More recently, however, this interest has also taken a more metaphysical direction, coupled with a concern with how the German Idealists conceived of the proper task and nature of philosophy itself.

This new direction of inquiry has been paralleled, interestingly, by the re-emergence of metaphysics as a central area in analytic philosophy. As is well known, the analytic tradition began with a pronounced rejection of the Hegelian and Spinozist philosophies of the British Idealists , and it seems hardly a coincidence that the re-emergence of metaphysics as a central philosophical discipline toward the end of the twentieth century occurred simultaneously with an increase of interest in and engagement with Spinoza's philosophy, including a re-evaluation of his central role in the development of modern philosophy. In point of fact, the fate of Spinozism has always been – and presumably will continue to be – strongly tied to the fate of metaphysics, for Spinoza is the metaphysician par excellence of western philosophy.

The present volume grew out of a conference on Spinoza and German Idealism, held at Johns Hopkins University in May, 2010. The conference's goal was to bring together scholars working in these areas and to make available for general discussion some of the results of these promising recent developments.

In the opening chapter, "Rationalism, idealism, monism, and beyond," Michael Della Rocca examines Spinoza's philosophical position from a number of diferent angles. He articulates, first, the particular kind of rationalism Spinoza endorses. He then explains what kind of idealism Spinoza's rationalism commits him to – namely a version of idealism compatible with Spinoza's explanatory separation between thought and extension. He then turns to the nature of the monism embedded in Spinoza's rationalism – namely a monism in which the multiplicity of finite things enjoys only some degree of existence. In the end, however, Della Rocca argues, this line of thought pushes us beyond both monism and Spinoza to a view according to which, perhaps, no thing exists fully.

The presence of Spinoza in Kant's Critique of Pure Reason is examined by Omri Boehm in his chapter, "Kant's idea of the unconditioned and Spinoza's: the fourth Antinomy and the Ideal of Pure Reason." Taking his cue from Kant's claim, in the Critique of Practical Reason , that if transcendental idealism is denied, "nothing remains but Spinozism," Boehm argues that this claim in fact reaffirms an argument Kant had already advanced in the fourth Antinomy. In light of this Antinomy's analysis of the unconditioned being's relation to the world, it becomes clear that already in the first Critique Kant had viewed Spinozism as a necessary outcome of transcendental realism.

The relation between Kant and Spinoza is examined further in a chapter by Karl Ameriks, entitled "The question is whether a purely apparent person is possible." As Ameriks argues, given both Kant's transcendental idealism and his critique of rational psychology , it is not easy to understand how – or even whether – Kant can vindicate any substantial claims about our personal identity . Spinoza's philosophy presents a significant challenge to such claims, and Schleiermacher's notes on Spinoza and Jacobi provide one of the very few early discussions as to how Kant's philosophy might relate to that of Spinoza. By considering a wide range of Kantian texts, Ameriks discusses how Kant might have reacted to Schleiermacher on this topic.

In 1785, four years after the publication of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason , F. H. Jacobi published his conversations with Lessing, On the Doctrine of Spinoza, in Letters to Mr. Moses Mendelssohn . With this Jacobi ignited the notorious Spinozastreit , or Pantheism Controversy, which shook the German intellectual world at the end of the eighteenth century. Jacobi himself was negatively disposed toward Spinozism (as was the addressee of his letters, Mendelssohn ) and strove to ofer an

alternative to it. Thus, Michael Forster argues in "Herder and Spinoza," he can hardly be credited with initiating the "massive wave of positive appropriations of Spinoza" that followed in the wake of his publication. Instead we must turn to those who, at the time, were enthusiasts for Spinoza's philoso¬phy: Lessing, Herder, Goethe, and among these Herder most of all. In i787 Herder published a work, entitled God: Some Conversations, which defended a revised form of Spinoza's metaphysical monism and determinism . As Forster shows, however, Spinoza's positive inluence on Herder began as early as i768li769, and Herder gradually came to incorporate increasingly fundamental aspects of Spinoza's thought from both the Tractatus Theologico–Politicus and the Ethics.

At the bottom of Goethe's disagreement with Jacobi's interpretation of Spinoza lies his conviction that, in identifying the "spirit of Spinozism" with the principle a nihilo nihil it , Jacobi commits Spinoza to a causal explanatory principle, and thus to a second kind of knowledge . For Goethe, however, Spinoza's "most subtle ideas" concern the third kind of knowledge . In "Goethe's Spinozism," Eckart Förster traces the steps that Goethe undertook to develop Spinoza's programmatic reflections on the third kind of knowledge into a methodology of scientia intuitiva applicable to natural objects.

Fichte , in his early Wissenschaftslehre , criticizes Spinoza's account of consciousness for both finite and infinite beings. In "Fichte on the consciousness of Spinoza's God," Johannes Haag reconstructs this criticism against the background of Fichte's own conception of consciousness, in particular the specific understanding of the hathandlung , i.e., the original positing of the I as an I, and the allied concept of an intellectual intuition . As Haag argues, while Spinoza's subjects of empirical consciousness are incapable of an intellectual intuition, his God is similarly incapable of proceeding from the original hathandlung to the second, equally essential step of self-positing, namely that of counter-positing. As a consequence, God too is incapable of an intellectual intuition, since the latter presupposes the second step. As a result, neither empirical subjects nor God can fulfill the conditions Fichte places on an explanation of consciousness.

In "Fichte on freedom: the Spinozistic background," Allen Wood explores Fichte 's conception of freedom and his arguments for it, emphasizing the powerful influence Spinoza always had on Fichte. When the latter was "converted" to Kantianism in 1790, he had yet to publish anything, but he was already twenty-eight years old, and a fully formed philosopher; he even thought of himself as having a philosophical "system." All the evidence suggests that this system was a form of Spinozism. Throughout Fichte's life, Spinoza continued to be at least as powerful an influence as Kant ever was. his is true even with respect to that issue wherein Fichte saw himself aligned with Kant and in opposition to Spinoza: namely, freedom of the will. We have here a paradigm example of what we may call 'negative influence' in philosophy: the influencing philosopher determines the way the influenced philosopher poses and resolves the issue about which they disagree.

In "Spinoza in Schelling's early conception of intellectual intuition," Dalia Nassar examines Schelling's earliest philosophical writings and argues that, until 1796, Schelling was much more influenced by Spinoza than by Fichte . In particular, she contends, Schelling's conception of intellectual intuition , which he first developed in Vom Ich als Prinzip der Philosophie (1795), mirrors Spinoza's third kind of knowledge . In spite of his clear affinity with Spinoza, however, Schelling maintains a critical attitude toward him. Nassar considers the reasons for Schelling's distance from Spinoza and concludes that, for Schelling, Spinoza's immanentism was not immanent enough.

Michael Vater ("Schelling's philosophy of identity and Spinoza's Ethica more geometrico ") closely examines the extent of Spinoza's presence in Schelling's first document of his Philosophy of Identity, the 1801 essay Presentation of My System of Philosophy . Of those who sought to incorporate into their own systems as much as they dared from the Ethica more geometrico , no one, Vater argues, was more forthright than Schelling. His Presentation utilized three key concepts of Spinoza: the definition of substance as self-existing and attribute

as what is conceivable only through itself; the infinite nature of the apparently finite; and conatus , or the endeavor of a finite entity to preserve its being.

In the German Idealists' appropriation of Spinoza, few thoughts were considered as important and central as the principle omnis determinatio est negatio , which Hegel and his contemporaries attributed directly to Spinoza. In his chapter, "'Omnis determinatio est negatio': determin¬ation, negation, and self-negation in Spinoza, Kant, and Hegel," Yitzhak Melamed argues that this famous dictum was in fact interpreted in three quite different senses, which might be called the acosmic, the dialectical, and the Kantian sense, respectively. He examines each interpretation in detail and compares it with Spinoza's own position. Ultimately, he concludes that, in spite of Kant's expressed hostility toward Spinoza's philosophy, his latent use of the formula turns out to be much closer to Spinoza's meaning than Hegel's enthusiastic adoption of the principle.

Dean Moyar examines Hegel's criticisms of Spinoza in order to address the ongoing dispute about Hegel and metaphysics. This debate is consistently framed in terms that refer to Spinoza as a philosopher with a robust metaphysical view. The assumption is that if Hegel is shown to be closer to Spinoza than to Kant , his view should be considered metaphysical. By examining Hegel's criticism of Spinoza, focusing especially on the relation between thought and substance, Moyar clarifies some of the central issues in the debate over Hegel's metaphysics and situates his position on metaphysics in relation to both Spinoza and Kant.

Gunnar Hindrichs interprets Spinoza's and Hegel's philosophies as two models of metaphysical inferentialism . Both combine the inferential texture of thinking with revisionary metaphysics. They differ, Hindrichs argues, in the fact that Spinoza's model rests on definitions of basic concepts and amounts to an intuitive knowledge of the whole, whereas Hegel's model dismisses these moments as violating the inferential structure of thought. For Hegel, the only fixation that can be justified under inferentialist premises is the closed system at the end of reasoning. Thus, Hegel transforms Spinoza's prima philosophia into a philosophia ultima.

Frederick Beiser, in "Trendelenburg and Spinoza," maintains it is necessary to consider the nineteenth-century philosopher Trendelenburg if one wants to do full justice to the theme of Spinoza and German Idealism. For the same criteria by which we describe Schelling and Hegel as idealists apply perfectly well to Trendelenburg. Tracing the latter's complex and developing appropriation of Spinoza, Beiser shows that Trendelenburg regarded Spinoza's system as new and original in that he provided the only alternative to materialism and teleology as the principles for the explanation of reality – a position for which Spinoza himself, however, provided insufficient justification.

What would Spinoza have made of the idealists' appropriations and criticisms of his thought, as presented by the authors in this volume? This collection opens with an examination of Spinoza's philosophical position and concludes with Don Garrett's "Reply on Spinoza's behalf."

The editors would like to express their heartfelt thanks to the authors for their thoughtful contributions to this volume, and to John Brandau for preparing the indices. <>

The Young Spinoza: A Metaphysician in the Making edited by Yitzhak Y. Melamed [Oxford University Press, 9780199971657]

*Ex nihilo nihil fit*. Philosophy, especially great philosophy, does not appear out of the blue. In the current volume, a team of top scholars-both up-and-coming and established-attempts to trace the philosophical development of one of the greatest philosophers of all time. Featuring twenty new essays and an introduction, it is the first attempt of its kind in English and its appearance coincides with the recent surge of interest in Spinoza in Anglo-American philosophy.

Spinoza's fame-or notoriety-is due primarily to his posthumously published magnum opus, the *Ethics*, and, to a lesser extent, to the 1670 *Theological-Political Treatise*. Few readers take the time to study his early works carefully. If they do, they are likely to encounter some surprising claims, which

often diverge from, or even utterly contradict, the doctrines of the *Ethics*. Consider just a few of these assertions: that God acts from absolute freedom of will, that God is a whole, that there are no modes in God, that extension is divisible and hence cannot be an attribute of God, and that the intellectual and corporeal substances are modes in relation to God. Yet, though these claims reveal some tension between the early works and the *Ethics*, there is also a clear continuity between them.

Spinoza wrote the *Ethics* over a long period of time, which spanned most of his philosophical career. The dates of the early drafts of the *Ethics* seem to overlap with the assumed dates of the composition of the *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect* and the *Short Treatise on God, Man, and His Well Being* and precede the publication of Spinoza's 1663 book on Descartes' *Principles of Philosophy*. For this reason, a study of Spinoza's early works (and correspondence) can illuminate the nature of the problems Spinoza addresses in the *Ethics*, insofar as the views expressed in the early works help us reconstruct the development and genealogy of the *Ethics*. Indeed, if we keep in mind the common dictum "nothing comes from nothing"-which Spinoza frequently cites and appeals to-it is clear that great works like the *Ethics* do not appear ex nihilo. In light of the preeminence and majesty of the *Ethics*, it is difficult to study the early works without having the *Ethics* in sight. Still, we would venture to say that the value of Spinoza's early works is not at all limited to their being stations on the road leading to the *Ethics*. A teleological attitude of such a sort would celebrate the works of the "mature Spinoza" at the expense of the early works. However, we have no reason to assume that on all issues the views of the *Ethics* are better argued, developed, and motivated than those of the early works. In other words, we should keep our minds open to the possibility that on some issues the early works might contain better analysis and argumentation than the *Ethics*.



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even utterly contradict, the doctrines of the Ethics. Consider just a few of these assertions: that God acts from absolute freedom of will, that God is a whole, that there are no modes in God, that extension is divisible and hence cannot be an attribute of God, and that the intellectual and corporeal substances are modes in relation to God. Yet, though these claims reveal some tension between the early works and the Ethics, there is also a clear continuity between them.

Spinoza wrote the Ethics over a long period of time, which spanned most of his philosophical career. The dates of the early drafts of the Ethics, as documented in his earliest letters, seem to overlap (or almost overlap) with the assumed dates of the composition of the Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect and the Short Treatise on God, Man, and His Well-Being, and precede the publication of Spinoza's 1663 book on Descartes' Principles of Philosophy. For this reason, it seems that a study of Spinoza's early works (and correspondence) could illuminate the nature of the problems Spinoza addresses in the Ethics, insofar as the views expressed in the early works help us reconstruct the development and genealogy of the Ethics. Indeed, if we keep in mind the common dictum "nothing comes from nothing"—which Spinoza frequently cites and appeals to—it is clear that great works like the Ethics do not appear ex nihilo. In light of the preeminence and majesty of the Ethics, it is difficult to study the early works without having the Ethics in sight. Still, I would venture to say that the value of Spinoza's early works is not at all limited to their being stations on the road leading to the Ethics. A teleological attitude of such a sort would celebrate the works of the "mature Spinoza" at the expense of the early works. However, we have no reason to assume that on all issues the views of the Ethics are better argued, developed, and motivated than those of the early works. In other words, we should keep our minds open to the possibility that on some issues the early works might contain better analyses and argumentation than the Ethics.

The mid-nineteenth-century discovery of the two Dutch manuscripts of Spinoza's Short Treatise on God, Man, and His Well-Being proved to deliver a crucial impetus for the study of the formation of Spinoza's thought and his early works. The publication of Meinsma's seminal 1896 study and collection of sources, Spinoza en zijn kring, was followed in the twentieth century by the important books of Jacob Freudenthal (Spinoza: sein Leben und seine Lehre, 1904), Stanislaus von Dunin-Borkowski (De junge de Spinoza, 1910), I. S. Révah (Spinoza et Juan de Prado, 1959), and Henry Méchoulan (Amsterdam au temps de Spinoza, 1990). These crucial tomes, alongside scrupulous philological works by Filippo Mignini, Fokke Akkerman, and Piet Steenbakkers and more recent studies by Yosef Kaplan on the seventeenth-century Jewish community of Amsterdam, placed the field on solid ground. Nevertheless, there is still much regarding Spinoza's early biography and thought that is shrouded by the veils of ignorance and ideology. Specifically, we seem to have little solid knowledge of the reasons for the ban placed on Spinoza in July 1656, and of Spinoza's intellectual development in the following years. Regrettably, much of the discussion of Spinoza's attitude toward Jewish philosophy and thought has been motivated and masked by ideologies and counter-ideologies. On the one hand, we encounter the still-common narrative, which could be dismissed as simple ignorance were it not the outcome of deeply entrenched prejudices, of Spinoza's ascent from the fundamentalist philosophy of the rabbis to the enlightenment of Cartesianism. In fact, the major medieval Jewish philosophers—Maimonides, Gersonides, and Hasdai Crescas—openly advocated views which hardly any Cartesian would dare entertain due to their heretic perception in the Christian context. On the other hand, we find the ideological construct of "Philonic philosophy" by Harry A. Wolfson, who virtually effaced any difference between Spinoza and his medieval predecessors (as well as between the various medieval philosophers themselves) in an attempt to provide a counter-narrative to Hegel's Christian historiography of the history of philosophy. Thus a careful, thorough, and ideology-free examination of Spinoza's critical dialogue with Jewish sources is still a desideratum, awaiting the formation of a critical mass of scholars equipped with the required philological and philosophical skills.

Most of the essays in the current collection stems from two jointly organized conferences that were held in the fall of 2011 at Johns Hopkins University and the École normale supérieure de Lyon. The aim of the conferences, and of this collection, was not to provide a systematic commentary on the corpus of Spinoza's early works, but rather to bring together scholars from several continents, with diverse philosophical orientations and scholarly interests, in order to stimulate the study of Spinoza's early works. For this reason, I have not hesitated, as editor, to allow some degree of overlap among the topics of the papers, especially since they display well-distinguished attitudes. The scholarly literature on the early works of Spinoza is quite limited (especially in English), and it is my hope that the current volume will stimulate interest and further study of this argument-rich, bold, and imaginative corpus. Our aim here is not to summarize the achievements of a certain research agenda, but rather to re-launch one.

The twenty studies assembled in this volume differ significantly in their scope. Some concentrate on a single work by the young Spinoza, while others discuss a broad selection of texts. In the first of these studies, Edwin Curley, a leading scholar and translator of Spinoza for several decades, addresses an early work of Spinoza's that is not available to us (and perhaps never existed at all!). In his Dictionary article on Spinoza, Bayle claimed that Spinoza had com¬posed (but never printed) a defense of his departure from the synagogue, which included many of the things that subsequently appeared in his "pernicious and detestable" Theological-Political Treatise. Curley attempts to determine what this work might have contained, assuming that it existed.

In 1979 Filippo Mignini published a groundbreaking study that contested the then commonly assumed chronology of Spinoza's development, and argued that the Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect (= TIE, first published in Spinoza's 1677 Opera Posthuma) had been written by Spinoza before the Short Treatise on God, Man, and His Well-Being.7 Over the past thirty-five years, several editions and translations of Spinoza's early works have appeared, along with a number of studies concerning the formation of his philosophy, and a great majority of these have followed this seminal essay, either in its entirety or in partial form.8 In his current contribution (Chapter 2 of this volume), Mignini provides additional evidence in support of the anteriority of the TIE, and further develops his general interpretation of it, by focusing on Spinoza's notion of "fiction."

Two studies address the crucial notion of truth in the TIE. According to Alan Nelson in Chapter 3, though the TIE emphasizes the project of attaining true ideas, it proposes that the final goal, the "highest good," is to perfect one's nature through the "knowledge of the union that the mind has with the whole of Nature" (TIE §13). In the first part of his chapter, Nelson draws out connections that Spinoza seems to be making between true ideas and the unification of the mind with the whole of Nature, or God, and points out the Cartesian background of these connections. The second part of the chapter traces the development of these themes in the Ethics. The goal of the Ethics is again to achieve union with God, but now this is to happen through an intellectual love of God, which is "the very love of God by which God loves himself" (E5p36) and one and the same as God's love of men (E5p36c). The mind's being a true idea of the body, however, appears to be inconsistent with unification with God, because the mind is affected by other finite things. In Chapter 4, John Morrison suggests a thorough and systematic new interpretation of Spinoza's concept of truth in the TIE (and the Ethics), according to which an idea of x that is contained in S's mind is true, if and only if, (1) it represents x's essence (and perhaps properties) but nothing else, and (2) it is contained in S's inborn idea of her own essence, or was deduced by S from ideas contained in her inborn idea of her own essence.

Michael LeBuffe's contribution (Chapter 5) addresses the provisional morality of the TIE. According to LeBuffe, the young Spinoza proposes that even as we work at emending the intellect we should live by certain rules, which we must assume to be good. We should accommodate ordinary ways of speaking and living to the extent that we can without compromising our project. We should enjoy pleasures in moderation. Finally, we should seek instrumental goods only insofar as they are necessary for health and social acceptability. In

order to explain shifts in Spinoza's views about the way that we should live while we pursue the good, LeBuffe traces developments in his accounts of ideas and of the relationship between the philosopher and society. The final essay to concentrate on the TIE is by Mogens Lærke, who studies Leibniz's engagement with this work. In May 1678, Leibniz wrote from Hanover to his friend Ehrenfried Walther von Tschirnhaus: "Surely you do not ignore that the posthumous works of Spinoza have been published. Among them there is a fragment On the Emendation of the Intellect, but he stops exactly at the place where I expected the most" (A II, i, 413). This short passage constitutes the only direct evaluation of Spinoza's TIE by Leibniz that we know of. It was the result of his first (and last) reading of the text, which had taken place some four months earlier, shortly after the son of a certain Abraham Arendt brought Leibniz a copy of the freshly printed Opera Posthuma, which had been sent directly to Hanover from Amsterdam by one of the editors of the work, Hermann Schuller. At that time, Leibniz read the TIE attentively, underlining and writing short marginal comments in his copy of the work. Leibniz's evaluation of the TIE in the letter to Tschirnhaus expresses disappointment, and one wonders what exactly it was that Leibniz so eagerly expected to learn at the point where Spinoza's text breaks off with a reliqui desiderantur. In Chapter 6, Lærke attempts to answer this question by reconstructing Leibniz's reading of the TIE on the basis of his marginal notes and the context of his engagement with Spinoza's philosophy in the latter half of the 1670s.

Five of the chapters concentrate on the Short Treatise on God, Man, and His Well-Being (= KV). This early work of Spinoza's was neither published in his lifetime nor included in his Opera Posthuma. Two manuscripts of the Dutch translation of the work were discovered in the nineteenth century, and ever since it has attracted the attention of scholars interested in Spinoza's philosophical development. Daniel Garber studies the Cartesian nature of this work in Chapter 7. Spinoza is best known for the monism of his Ethics and his account of mind as identical to body. However, Garber argues, he took quite a different view in the KV. Although in many ways Spinoza's early view of mind and its relation to body shows many affinities with the view that he was later to take, Garber argues that in the KV Spinoza held that the mind is a thing (a mode, though not a substance) genuinely distinct from the body. More generally, Garber argues, in the KV Spinoza is much more directly engaged with debates coming out of Descartes and early Cartesianism than he would be in the Ethics, where the influence of Hobbes is stronger. Colin Marshall, in Chapter 8, studies Spinoza's mostly neglected account of reason in the KV. That account, Marshall argues, has at least four features that distinguish it from that of the Ethics: in the KV, (1) reason is more sharply distinguished from intuitive knowledge, (2) reason deals with things as though they were "outside" us, (3) reason lacks clarity and distinctness, and (4) reason has no power over many types of passions. Marshall argues that these differences have a unified explanation, consisting of a principle that Spinoza accepts in both works and a central change. The principle is that "whatever we find in ourselves has more power over us than anything which comes from outside," and the change is that the objects of reason are common things/common notions. Understanding this, Marshall claims, sheds light on the psychological and epistemological motivations behind Spinoza's mature doctrines.

In Chapter 9, Russ Leo shows that Spinoza was a careful reader of Calvin and of Reformed Orthodoxy. Throughout the KV, Spinoza used and transformed Calvinist concepts and terms. This suggests that Calvinism acted as another crucible for Spinoza's mature thought. Moreover, it shows that, in his attempt to address a larger, ecumenical audience, Spinoza was willing to enter into debate with Calvinists and Anti-Calvinists alike during the vibrant and volatile theological-political milieu of the 1640s and 1650s. Chapter 10 by John Carriero focuses on chapter 16 of part 2 of the KV. His contribution scrutinizes Spinoza's odd notion that the will is not a "real thing" but rather a "being of reason." Spinoza develops this claim by comparing the will to a universal. In the first part of the chapter, Carriero contrasts Spinoza's conception of a (physical) individual as a determination of the universe's basic geometrical, kinetic, and dynamic

invariances with an Aristotelian conception of an individual constituted by various interrelated "perfections" that are capable of two modes of existence, one in the individual and another in the mind. As Carriero argues, Spinoza's thesis that the will is not a real thing concerns what might be thought of as the ontology of power and cuts more deeply than the themes usually associated with Spinoza on the topic of free will, namely those concerned with freedom, determinism, and the Principle of Sufficient Reason. Spinoza's fundamental claim concerns what a power (such as the will) is—that is, a certain determination of the universe's invariances, which implies that the will is not some "compartmentalized" power that we bring to the universe's causal table.

The last essay focusing on the Short Treatise is Chapter 11 by Valtteri Viljanen. In this chapter, Viljanen traces and explicates the rather consistent essentialist thread that runs through the KV. This allows us not only to better understand the work itself but also to obtain a firmer grasp of the nature of its author's whole philosophical enterprise. In many ways, the essentialism we find in the Short Treatise is in line with Spinoza's mature thought; but there are also significant differences, and discerning them throws light on the develop¬ment of his philosophy. Viljanen argues that, while Spinoza's notion of essence remained rather stable throughout his career, its ontological status underwent some notable changes, being in the Short Treatise less independent of actual existence than in the later works.

Chapter 12 by Frédéric Manzini poses the question: "When was Spinoza not young anymore?" As Manzini points out, there is much discussion about whether Spinoza's system was the same in his early works as in his Ethics. Manzini suggests that Spinoza's coming of age—philosophically speaking—can be assigned to a single, crucial moment, namely the incompletion of his 1663 book, Descartes' Principles of Philosophy, which presumably attested to Spinoza's decision to abandon, rather than reform, Cartesianism. Chapter 13 by Tad Schmaltz studies the conception of eternity in Spinoza's early period. There is some scholarly controversy over whether Spinoza endorsed a durational or non-durational account of eternity in the Ethics. There is also the unresolved question of whether the sort of eternity that Spinoza attributes to substance in this text is the same as the sort of eternity he attributes there to certain modes of substance (such as "infinite modes" and the human mind). Schmaltz suggests that we can make some progress on these difficult interpretive issues by considering the connection of the Ethics to two 1663 texts by the young Spinoza: the Cogitata Metaphysica (appended to Spinoza's book, Descartes' Principles of Philosophy) and the so-called "Letter on the Infinite." According to Schmaltz, these texts indicate that, on Spinoza's considered view, substance is eternal in a non-durational sense, but that modes can be eternal only in a durational sense.

For German and British Idealist readers of Spinoza, the key to his metaphysics is its alleged "acosmism"—that is, its denial of the reality of the "world" of finite things. In Chapter 14, Karolina Hübner examines and challenges the oft-repeated Idealist argument that what leads to the unreality of finite things is the fact that the differentiation of finite individuals as finite requires negation, whereas what genuinely exists is purely positive. The chapter investigates how Spinoza understands the nature of negation, its role in constituting finite things, and its relation to both divine and human thought; it also examines several possible but ultimately unsatisfying arguments on both sides of the controversy, arguments that focus on divine omniscience and divine attributes. In conclusion, Hübner suggests that Spinoza's early Metaphysical Thoughts offers unparalleled insight into his conception of negation, showing in particular that its account of "beings of reason" presents a powerful argument against the Idealist. Chapter 15 by Oded Schechter traces the development of Spinoza's theory of the three (or four) kinds of cognition. While previous scholars have paid some attention to the minor changes in the description of each of the kinds of cognition, Schechter goes further, and shows that the nature and function of the threefold distinction changes from one work to another. The TIE relies on the distinction as part of its attempt to find the proper method for philosophizing. In the KV the kinds of cognition are presented as different manners of conduct, while in

the Ethics the three kinds of cognition constitute distinct manners of existence. Relying on this crucial observation, Schechter explains Spinoza's enigmatic claims in the conclusion of the Ethics about the eternity of our minds.

In his early writings, Spinoza advocates a thoroughgoing anti-abstractionism. As he warns readers in his earliest work, "so long as we are dealing with the investigation of things, we must never infer anything from abstractions, and we shall take very great care not to mix up the things that are only in the intellect with those that are real" (TIE §93). In Chapter 16, Samuel Newlands explores Spinoza's early writings against abstracta and abstract thinking. He investigates whether Spinoza's early repudiation of abstractions and abstract thinking is consistent with his ontology, and also looks at Spinoza's only explicit argument in these texts for his anti-abstractionism. Finally, Newlands discusses the wide-ranging uses to which Spinoza puts his anti-abstractionism. Yitzhak Y. Melamed argues in Chapter 17 that a study of the early works of Spinoza and the early drafts of the Ethics shows that Spinoza experimented with various conceptions of substance and attribute that are significantly distinct from the definitions we find at the beginning of the final version of the Ethics. Indeed, Melamed suggests that at a certain point in his development Spinoza seems to have entertained a metaphysics free from the notion of attribute. According to Melamed, the tensions inherent in Spinoza's account of substance and attribute were never fully resolved, even in the final version of the Ethics.

Ursula Renz in Chapter 18 examines the shift from Spinoza's early characterization of the intellect as "wholly passive" to his later views, according to which mental states consist in the activity of forming ideas. Following a close reading of the relevant passages of the Short Treatise, she argues that, in contrast to Descartes, Spinoza is not bound by any kind of systematic constraint to conceive of the intellect as either passive or active. The reason is that, according to him, there is no real distinction between the understanding and the will, or to be precise, between the activity of understanding and the activity of willing. Renz investigates the development of Spinoza's use of the notion of idea, and she contends that this development is at least partially due to Spinoza's new approach to the mental. As an overarching argument, she shows that while large parts of the conceptual or metaphysical framework remain the same in the Ethics, there are major shifts in the level of Spinoza's philosophy of mind and epistemology. In Chapter 19, John Brandau concentrates on Spinoza's enigmatic claim in the KV that entities can have varying degrees of essence. This puzzling claim can create the impression that Spinoza quantified essence as a mass term rather than a count term, and that entities are distinguished not by possessing distinct essences so much as by possessing distinct quantities of a homogenous "stuff," essence. In his chapter, Brandau provides an alternative explanation of what Spinoza might have meant by claiming that entities may have varying degrees of essence. He argues that Spinoza identified a thing's essence with its perfection, and that, generally speaking, an entity may have more or less essence in proportion to the quantity of its essential properties.

Pina Totaro, the author of the concluding chapter of the volume, is the co-discoverer of the manuscript of Spinoza's Ethics, recently found in the Vatican Library. The manuscript contains some crucial elements for a better understanding of the intellectual biography and philosophy of the young Spinoza. The Vatican manuscript is not an autograph, but a copy made by Pieter van Gent. It was brought to Rome probably by the German mathematician and philosopher E. W. Tschirnhaus, who gave the manuscript to the Danish scientist and theologian Niels Stensen. Before leaving Rome for Northern Europe, Stensen delivered the manuscript of the Ethics to the Congregazione del S. Uffizio with a complaint against Spinoza. After having recovered the history of the Vatican manuscript, Totaro discusses the differences between the manuscript of the Ethics and the printed edition in the Opera Posthuma (1677).

Let me conclude by thanking the Philosophy Department, the Singleton Center for the Study of Pre-Modern Europe, and the Stulman Program in Jewish Studies—all at Johns Hopkins University—and the École normale supérieure de Lyon for their generous support of the two conferences and this collection. I would also like to thank Jason Yonover

for his skillful copyediting of the final manuscript of the book and Alex Englert who prepared the index with great care. Finally, I would like to dedicate this volume to our colleague, Alan Gabbey, in honor of his retirement. <>

Exemplars of Truth by Keith Lehrer [Oxford University Press, 9780190884277]

This monograph is both an intellectual summation as well as a philosophical advancement of key themes of the work of Keith Lehrer on several key topics--including knowledge, self-trust, autonomy, and consciousness. He here attempts to integrate these themes and develop an intellectual system that can constructively solve philosophical problems. The system is indebted to the modern work of Sellars, Quine, and Chisholm, as well as historically to Hume and Reid. At the core of this system lies Lehrer's theory of knowledge, which he previously called a coherence theory of knowledge but now calls a defensibility theory.

Lehrer argues that knowledge requires the capacity to justify or defend the target claim of knowledge in terms of a background system. Defensibility is an internal capacity supplied by that system to meet objections to the claim. This theory however leaves open the problem of "experience"--noted by other philosophers--i.e. how to explain the special role of experience in a background system even granted we are fallible in describing it. Lehrer offers a solution to the problem of experience, arguing that reflection on experience converts the experience itself into an exemplar, something like a sample that becomes a vehicle or term of representation.

The exemplar represents itself and extends to represent the external world. It exhibits something about evidence and truth concerning experience that, as Wittgenstein noted, cannot be fully described but can only be shown. Exemplar representation is the missing link of a background system to truth about the world.

CONTENTS


Excerpt: As i looked at my work over more than half a century, it fit together in a systematic way that surprised me and motivated the present manuscript. I have written about knowledge, self-trust, consciousness, and autonomy. This resulted in books and volumes of journals collecting deeply insightful articles about what I had written). How could all that fit together into one system? The answer is this volume, but here is the short story. What unifies my thought is the theme of the critical evaluation of the initial states of desire, belief, and conception. Social scientists provide us with accounts of how these states arise and their defects. What we desire, believe, and conceive is often irrational. So what is a philosopher to contribute? A theory of how evaluation of these states takes us to a higher plane of what it is reasonable for an autonomous and trustworthy agent to prefer, to accept, and to think. It is natural for the social scientist to look for regularities, universal or stochastic principles, that govern our thought and action. Finding such laws is the invaluable game of science. But they, like the rest of us, confront the question of the reasonableness, justification, and defensibility of what they study. The answer to the question is creative evaluation…

## Defensible Knowledge And Exemplars Representation

After writing a number of books on knowledge, the question arises—Why another? The answer is brief. There was a history of epistemology aimed at finding certain and infallible statements as a foundation, a tradition advanced by Schlick (1979) and Ayer (1940) among others in the 20th century. The effort failed. The reason is that all description is fallible and because we are fallible in our use of language. That led to a view that knowledge must result from the relation to a background system of description, which, though fallible, is the basis for the defense and justification of knowledge claims. This was a view defended in various forms by

Neurath (2008), who opposed the foundational theory, and in unique ways by Quine (1960), Sellars (1963a), and myself. I have called it (Lehrer, 1974) the coherence theory. However, all of the authors were left with the problem of explaining the special role of experience in the background system. This book offers a solution to the problem of the role of experience. The solution presented in this book is that reflection on experience converts the experience itself into an exemplar, something like a sample that becomes a vehicle of representation. The special role of the exemplar of experience is to be at the same time the term of representation and the object represented. The exemplar represents itself and exhibits something about evidence and truth concerning experience that, as Wittgenstein ([1922] 1999) noted, cannot be fully described but can only be shown. Exemplar representation is the missing component that links a background system to truth about the world.

## An Overview

Good philosophy should contain something old, something new, something borrowed, and something true. In Knowledge (Lehrer, 1974), I defended a coherence theory of knowledge based on a theory of justification construed as the capacity to meet objections to the knowledge claim in terms of global features of a background system of belief. Here, I maintain the view that knowledge is the capacity to meet objections in terms of a background system. That is something old. Something new is that I now construe the capacity as a local defense of the target claim, and I construe the system as an evaluation system of claims that are positively evaluated and autonomously accepted combined with preferences over states of acceptance and reasonings involving such states. Most critically, I amend my view to include something borrowed from Hume (1888) about sensory experience. That is a theory of the relation of the background system to exemplar representations of experience. Using experience as a vehicle of representation has a reflexive truth security, though the operation of representation is fallible, as are all the operations of the mind.

Exemplar representation provides a truth security from the process of reflexive exemplarization of sensations. However, that security is consistent with my earlier claim (Lehrer, 1974) that beliefs about the character of sensations and thoughts are corrigible as a result of the influence of the background system. I may know from exemplarization what a sensation is like, but, at the same time, form a false belief about the sensation. My earlier example (Lehrer, 1974) was a person informed by a respected physician that itches are mild pains. The person believes, accepts, that he has a pain when he itches, and as a result the belief is false. Taking an aspirin will not relieve the itch. Even if the person knows what the itch is like from exemplarization, he may misidentify it as a pain from the influence of background beliefs and the possibility of error. The process of exemplarizing may itself be cognitively distorted by background beliefs, and even where it is effective and not distorted, that is only a contingent fact. The truth security of exemplar representation does not supply the logical impossibility of error. The logical possibility of error is ubiquitous and exhibits how we are fallible. Nevertheless, exemplar representation can provide evidence and defense for what we accept.

Finally, I argue that we have an exemplar representation of the evidence of truth and of truth itself. This may leave you wondering whether I have abandoned coherentism for foundationalism. The answer is explained in the last chapter. I seek to offer you something both new and true.

## Global Coherence Versus Local Defense

I called my theory a coherence theory because justification and defense of a knowledge claim's target content depends on a relation to a background system, but it is better named as a defensibility theory of knowledge as Kim suggested in his doctoral dissertation at the University of Arizona (1992). The features of the background system that enable the subject to meet objections to the target content are usually local features of the system relevant for the specific defense of that content rather than global features of the system. Defense of the target content directs the background system toward what is relevant for

the defense of that content and meeting those objections. The theory of defensible knowledge has itself been modified to meet objections, as I shall explain below. Central to the modification is a theory of representation to explain how the background system is connected with truth by the evidence of experience. A theory of exemplarized experience explains the connection. I turn now to a brief narrative of my efforts to articulate a satisfactory coherence theory of defensible knowledge.

Objections arose to what I argued, and the justification of my epistemology required that I answer the objections my views elicited. This resulted in the publication of later books, Theory of Knowledge (1990) and Theory of Knowledge, 2nd edition (2000b), as well as a sequence of published papers. There were changes of details, and details are important, but I want to make it clear what central idea motivates the theory I have been articulating over half a century. It is a simple idea motivated by a line in Sellars (1963a). He remarked that reliable belief formation was not sufficient for knowledge because it neglected the role of what I called the justification game in human knowledge. His point was that a true belief could arise in a reliable manner though the subject is unable to justify the acceptance of the belief. Belief, not even reliably formed belief, is enough for knowledge. One must have adequate evidence and be able to articulate it to succeed in the justification game of knowledge.

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A short summary of what has been offered may be useful to tie my argument together. I have discussed knowledge, self-trust, autonomy, and consciousness. I appreciate the logical detail of the style of analytic philosophy. However, I attempted to construct a system for consideration. The risk of error is greater in the project, but my goal is philosophical explanation. As I observed the constructive and destructive work of detailed analysis, which I value and hopefully exhibited, I became convinced it takes an explanatory system, a theory, to solve philosophical problems, whatever the risk of error. A new theory of knowledge motivated me. Here are the components in brief of what I have done. The theory, suggested by my earlier work, is that there is a kind of knowledge that I have called a coherence theory of knowledge but now prefer to call a defensibility theory of knowledge. The basic assumption of such a theory is that knowledge requires the capacity to justify or defend the target claim of knowledge in terms of a background system. The defensibility is an internal capacity supplied by that system to meet objections to the target claim. The account of defense or justification both in terms of what is considered an objection and how it is met is initially an internal matter, though the influence of external criticism is essential to making the internal worthy of self-trust. It is a central feature of the personal and internal that it reflects the trustworthiness of a person in the pursuit of reason, most notably, in the goal to discern truth from error. I assume that a person may believe things prior to understanding the distinction between truth and error. Moreover, as many have argued, belief may arise before the use of reason and remain contrary to it. So, I took a different propositional attitude to form the background system, which I call acceptance. One has the freedom to decide whether to accept a claim or reject it. I formerly thought of the background system as simply a system of what a person accepts. Though acceptance remains the basic propositional attitude, the voice of reason within, meeting objections that arise from what a person accepts must include reasonings on acceptances and preferences concerning acceptances in the background system. I called the background system the evaluation system.

The role of preference is of special importance in the account of meeting objections. One way, though not the only way, of meeting an objection to a target claim is to reply to the objection that it is more reasonable to accept the target claim than the objection in terms of the evaluation system. What is the source of such reasonableness? The reply is twofold. First of all, the person prefers accepting the target claim to accepting the objection. Secondly, the person is reasonable in what they prefer. The reasonableness of acceptances, preferences, and reasoning depends on the reasonableness of the person, which in turns depends on the trustworthiness of the person in the

pursuit of reason and truth. Trustworthiness does not guarantee success, for we are fallible, but the trustworthiness of a person is the source of the reasonableness in what the person accepts, prefers, and how they reason. Of course, the trustworthiness of a person, which amounts to being worthy of self-trust, is not a blank check but depends in turn on what a person accepts, prefers to accept, and how they reason. There is a loop of trustworthiness to the manifestations of it and back onto itself.

Given the fallibility of our trustworthiness in discerning truth from error, defensibility of justification in terms of an internal system is not sufficient for knowledge. An external truth constraint is required, namely, that the defense is not defeated or refuted by errors in the evaluation system that supplies the defense. Defense or justification that is not defeated or refuted by errors in the background system is defensible knowledge. I have called the subsystem of the evaluation system cleansed of error the ultrasystem of a person. That system tests personal defense and justification to yield the undefeated and irrefutable defense.

This account left us with two problems. One concerns truth. The question is whether the background system connects representation with experience and what we accept with empirical truth. The most fundamental change in my reflections on knowledge is that I argue that conscious experience can become a vehicle of representation as the experience is used to represent what it is like by exhibiting what it is like. Such experience is self-representational, and the acceptance of such a representation closes the gap between the vehicle of representation and the experience that makes it true. The truth-maker and the representation of it are one. Representation incorporates instantiation. The role of such self-representation or reflexive representation provides the empirical connection of representation with phenomenology and acceptance. The process, which I called exemplarization, must yield exemplar representation. When it does, however, there is an identity between the vehicle representation and the truth-maker. Moreover, as we know what the exemplarized experience is like, we know something about what truth is like as we experience the identity of representation and truth-maker.

What is the connection between reflexive exemplar representation and other representations? The exemplar representation may be attached to represent other experiences, as well as external qualities and external objects, exhibiting what it is like to experience them. Radiating and extending semantic connections, one might think of them as stochastic-meaning connections. The exemplarized experiences become exhibits of what the external entities are like, or at least, what it is like to experience them. In this way, the accepted premises of our experience, our exemplar representations, become part of the justification and defense of target knowledge claims within our evaluation system. Our reasonings from the evidence of premises of exemplarized experience to conclusions extending beyond them become part of that system. When objections are met and the defense of the target claim is undefeated and unrefuted by errors in our system, we obtain defensible knowledge. Notice the role of the evaluation system even in the defense of exemplar representation. The process of exemplarization must itself be trustworthy and be defended against the objection that it is not. The defense appeals to and depends on the evaluation system as the exemplar representation is included within it.

Some will think of exemplar representations of experience as foundations of our knowledge as they provide evidence, though use as evidence requires the system support of their trustworthiness. I have suggested the metaphor of a keystone in the arch of reason and argued before that the principle of trustworthiness is the keystone in the arch of acceptance. I amend the metaphor to include a pair of stones at the base of the arch that are exemplar representations of the internal and external world. They would sit useless on the ground of knowledge without the arch of acceptance and the keystone holding it together. I acknowledge, however, the special role of experience and the exemplar representation of it in an arch of empirical knowledge.

Exemplar representation can be attached to other representations. The attachment is stochastic, even if

it is semantic and constitutive of meaning. This entails that what is attached can be detached. We all know this as we discover the illusions of sense. When an illusion is understood, moreover, the experience is detached from one representation and attached to another. Here we confront the connection between freedom and autonomy on one side and representation and acceptance on the other. We have autonomy in how we represent the world and what we accept about it. The dogmatic fixation of belief may conceal this autonomy and the connection between how we represent the world and ourselves in our world. This is a mistake we transcend more easily by distinguishing acceptance from belief and knowledge. The dynamic change and choice in how we represent the world and the diachronic character of the connection of experience with meaning create the stones in the keystone arch of knowledge. Experience and autonomy are the parents of creative thought and representation.

The appeal to autonomy raises questions I have sought to answer. Autonomy, I have argued, is conveyed by a power preference. A power preference loops back onto itself as one of the preferences concerning a target choice. The power preference achieves autonomy when the explanatory loop is primary. One might object that reason, guidance by reasoning, settles the matter of what to prefer, even what power preference to have. However, the preference for how to reason loops back onto itself in what I have called an ultrapreference. The ultrapreference is itself a power preference. A power preference of choice is autonomous when the explanatory loop is primary, that is, when you have that preference because you prefer to have it. Power preferences for how we choose, how we reason, and, yes, how we represent the world and ourselves are an expression of our autonomy. Are those preferences in turn influenced by how we represent the world? Yes. Which comes first, autonomy or representation in the life of reason? Neither. Welcome to the largest loop of reason. Answers to fundamental questions of knowledge, autonomy, and truth are tied up, down, and together in the explanatory loop. I hope that the chapters in this book draw you within it. <>

The Time Has Come: Why Men Must Join the Gender Equality Revolution by Michael Kaufman [Counterpoint, 9781640091191]

"For too long the struggle for the rights of women and girls was seen as women's business. Of course, it's equally men's business and stops being such a struggle when it's seen that way. This reframing gives us a chance to understand violence against women as deeply toxic for us all." —Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women

The Time Has Come explores how a patriarchal culture that has given power to men comes at a huge cost to women, children, and, surprisingly, to men as well. It details how very achievable changes in our workplaces, in the ways we raise boys to be men, and in the movement to end men's violence will bring significant rewards to communities all around the world.

Michael Kaufman is the cofounder of the White Ribbon Campaign—the largest international network of men working to end violence against women—and for decades has been an advisor on gender equality to the United Nations, governments, NGOs, schools, and workplaces around the world. With honest storytelling, compassion, and hard-hitting analysis, The Time Has Come is a compelling look at why men must take a stand in the fight for general equality.

Contents

Excerpt: The public world of gender relations is exploding around us. The private world of relationships, families, and sex is a minefield of power and love. There has never, ever, in the eight-thousand-year history of our male-dominated world, been a moment quite like this. You and I are living it. The gender equality revolution.

It's in our offices and factories in the quest for equal pay, for women's advancement, and against sexual harassment. It's on college campuses, in downtown neighborhoods, and suburban homes in the fight to end violence against women. It's the struggle by parents to redefine whose work it is to raise children and for society to provide the resources for parents to do the job well. It's the back-and-forth skirmishes to ensure that women have the unalienable right to physical autonomy, including choosing whether or not to become a parent. It's a powerful rethinking of how we raise girls and boys. It's a celebration of the right to love who we want to love and define who we want to be. It's a push for more, and more diverse, women in politics and in the boardroom.

The gender equality revolution is coming on fast and coming on strong.

It's time for men to join the fight for gender equality.

Fifty years of feminist organizing came to a head in early 2017. Millions of women and hundreds of thousands of men greeted the election of Donald Trump with some of the largest demonstrations the United States has ever seen. People joined in around the world. They were not only reacting to Trump's boast of assaulting women but also were there to celebrate the impact of feminism and to show they would resist any attempts to roll back progress on women's rights.

The people in the streets and the tens of millions more who cheered in support inserted new life into decades of feminism and powered everything that was to come. Within months, revelations of sexual harassment and assault poured out of Silicon Valley; the film, theater, and TV industries; and the corporate world at home and abroad. The betrayal of trust, abuse of authority, and the denigration of women by men in positions of power pounded into our brains. As #MeToo and #TimesUp captured our attention, discussions quickly moved from newsrooms to dining rooms, staff rooms, and locker rooms. Men asked wives, daughters, and coworkers: Did anything like that ever happen to you? and a frightening number of women answered, Yes, of course, but why has it taken men so long to listen?

The spreading shock waves are giving new impetus to demands in our workplaces for equal pay and equal access to all jobs. The millennia-long affirmative action program for my half of the species simply can't go on. The shock waves are bringing new energy to concerns about the panoply of violence—verbal, sexual, emotional, physical—that countless women still experience. They are bringing more attention to the critical need for quality, affordable childcare and for parental leave.

And for men? More and more of us are realizing we cannot stay silent. We know we must speak out and we must examine our own attitudes and behaviors. But we're also realizing that it's time to rethink and reshape what it means to be a man because of the destructive and self-destructive ways we've defined manhood.

## When I Chose to Join the Fight

For almost four decades, the focus of my work as an educator, advisor, speaker, activist, and writer has been on engaging men to promote gender equality and to explore how gender equality is bringing positive changes to men's lives.

I grew up in the 1950s and 1960s in a pretty traditional North American home (first in Ohio, then North Carolina, then in Ontario, Canada). Dad was a doctor, Mom a housewife. But equality was assumed. There was never a question The phalanxes of Secret Service, plainclothes Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and who knows who jamming the corridors outside the meeting room. And yet, it was also utterly mundane, just another meeting at another table: people occasionally shared a quick aside with a neighbor, a few leaders fiddled with their translation devices to find

the right channel, and one fidgeted and seemed rather out of place.

Whatever the problems with these types of meetings (including their staggering security budgets) and whatever criticism I might have about some of the policies of these leaders, it was an incredible moment. It shows the world-shaking impact of feminism. It led to at least one bit of concrete action: countries pledged $3.8 billion for girls' education in the Global South—the United States was the only country that didn't put up a penny. In a wide range of discussions during the course of the year, government ministers and policy makers were addressing women's rights, the impact of policies on women and girls, and the role of men and the lives of men and boys.

From dining rooms to the halls of power, gender equality is definitely on the table.

This book is all about how men can join women—in part by women reaching out to men and challenging us, and in part by men reaching out to our brothers—in continuing what is the greatest revolution in human history: the work to win women's rights, gender justice, and gender equality.

And as we shall see, winning those rights and the massive changes of our era that started as a women's revolution are already bringing enormous benefits to men and to the world.

What that means, and what I aim to show you, is that feminism is the greatest gift that men have ever received.

However, it does not come for free. It means challenging inequality and also challenging oneself It often requires challenging the beliefs and actions of other men around us. It means listening to the voices of women and daring to look at forms of power and privilege we have enjoyed as men that might have been invisible to us. Yet I am absolutely certain that men's commitment to a gender-equitable future will transform men's lives in positive ways.

Men's embrace of this change has certainly been sparked and encouraged by women. But ultimately we need to find effective ways to bring in men as active proponents of change. This starts with men being part of the struggle for women's rights. In that, we can take some inspiration from two men living half a world apart.

## Two Men

We often think of leadership as what takes place at the apex of a company, a government, or a team. But leadership is also about our actions in our neighborhoods, over a glass of beer, or in our homes. Sometimes it's a small gesture, while other times it's far more dramatic. And while we need new government policies, changes in laws and action at the highest levels, some of the most effective change happens in our communities or at a kitchen counter.

This includes men taking leadership alongside women to work for the right for women to live free of violence. After all, this right is not only critical for women's safety, health, and emotional well-being, it is a precondition for women's equal participation in the work force, education, and politics. It's also the precondition for future generations of girls and boys to grow up in loving and secure homes, free of the emotionally and intellectually debilitating impact of violence on children.

I met a man from the Swat Valley, a remote, mountainous region of Pakistan. He was young, but already his face was gaunt and angular, as if blowing sand had chiseled rock fractured by cold winter nights. His hair was thick and dark, and by the end of the afternoon, dense stubble had formed on his face. When I first sat down with him in a small restaurant, his shoulders were slumped and he glanced around with caution, perhaps even suspicion. But when we talked, a fierce passion came into his eyes and his soft voice rose when he spoke of the day he graduated from law school and returned home to Swat. (At the time, many years ago, I hadn't heard of this region; now I know it is where Malala and her family are from.)

While he was away at law school, the generals in power, in an attempt to appease the rising number of Islamic fundamentalists, were making use of something called the Hudood Ordinances. It was a reactionary interpretation of Islamic law that proclaimed, among other things, that if a girl or woman made an accusation of rape, she had to

produce four male witnesses to substantiate the crime. As you might imagine, no woman was ever able to meet this requirement. Not only would their accusations then be branded as false, but these women could then be charged with adultery. If found guilty, they could be put in prison; they could be put to death.

This man saw all this and said to himself, This is against the legal tradition of Pakistan. And he thought, This is not what I believe are the teachings of Islam. He decided to defend these women and he quickly found success, if not in leading to charges against the men who had committed sexual assault, at least in receiving acquittals of adultery for these girls and women.

The response of the powers that be was to throw him into prison. When he told me this, I instantly imagined the hardship and suffering he underwent in this prison in a remote region of Pakistan. And then I imagined even worse: how the other male prisoners had tormented him when they discovered why he was there.

Whatever I imagined, however, was wrong. When the other male prisoners found out he was in prison for defending women in their community, they went on a hunger strike. It was a place where food was never plentiful, but they refused to eat even what little they had until this man was released. It did not take long, for within days, the rusty door was unlocked and he walked away free.

Another story, from half a world away: It was a number of years ago. I was in a small town on the shore of Lake Huron helping folks on a local campaign to promote equality and end violence against women. The air was crisp that night in early winter, and already there was a layer of powdery snow on the ground. Christmas lights glowed on lampposts as I drove toward a church to talk about the problem of violence against women. I spoke that night about the epidemic of this violence, from the most commonplace sexual harassment at work to the most horrific moments of murder; of the pioneering, difficult, and often heroic work of women around the world; and of the White Ribbon Campaign.

After my talk, a man approached me. I noticed his hesitation to speak. I was pretty tired and steeled myself for what I imagined would be a long, impromptu counseling session. Patiently, he waited until other people had asked me a question or exchanged a few words. He didn't speak until everyone had left.

Finally, with eyes unable to meet mine and in a quiet voice, he asked me: "Is it okay if, well, you know, if people make copies of White Ribbon things?" I assumed he meant making copies of our posters and flyers, or our materials for distribution in schools or workplaces.

"Of course," I said. "We encourage you to take whatever we do and adapt it for your own use." Still wary, he asked, "Even your TV ad?" At the time we had a thirty-second television message about the importance of men speaking out. "That too," I said. He still didn't look at me. Finally he said, "Is it okay to make more than one copy?" I said he could make all the copies he wanted.

Only then did he relax and look at me.

He said, "Well, I've made dozens and dozens of copies."

He owned a small shop that repaired electronic equipment, especially VCRs. He had made many copies of our TV message and whenever he repaired a VCR, he slipped in the videocassette and returned it to the owner without say¬ing a word. So when his customers switched on their TVs to see if the VCR worked, suddenly they would see a message about speaking out against men's violence toward women.

It's a long way from a small town in North America to a bustling city in the Swat region of Pakistan. One of these men risked much more than the other. But these two men represent the millions of men and boys around the world who, right now, are speaking out to their friends at school or work, or who are raising their sons with a strong belief in the equal rights of women. There are millions of men who are supporting campaigns big and small, who are taking initiatives to make their own lives, workplaces, and homes more gender equitable.

There are so many of us, so many men, who are now realizing these changes stand to make our own lives better too. There are so many men who realize the time has come. <>

The Time Is Now: A Call to Uncommon Courage by Joan Chittister [Convergent Books, 9781984823410]

Beloved nun and social activist Joan Chittister, who appeared on Oprah's Super Soul Sunday, offers a soul-stirring and inspiring guide that speaks to all who feel disillusioned and dissatisfied with the power-hungry institutions and systems of this world.

Joan Chittister has been a passionate voice for women's rights for over 50 years. Called "one of the most well-known and trusted contemporary spiritual authors" by Publishers Weekly, this rabble-rousing force of nature for social justice and fervent proponent of personal faith and spiritual fulfillment draws on the wisdom of prophets--both ancient and modern--to help us confront the societal forces that oppress and silence the sacred voices among us.

Pairing scriptural insights with stirring narratives of the truth-tellers that came before us, Sister Joan offers a compelling vision for readers to combat complacency and to propel ourselves toward creating a world of justice, freedom, peace, and empowerment.

For the weary, the cranky, and the fearful, Sister Joan's energizing message invites us to participate in a vision for a world greater than the one we find ourselves in today. This is spirituality in action, this is practical and powerful activism for our times.



Excerpt: In all my years of traveling around the world, one thing has been present in every region, everywhere. One thing has stood out and convinced me of the certain triumph of the great human gamble on equality and justice.

Everywhere there are people who, despite finding themselves mired in periods of national darkness or personal marginalization refuse to give up the thought of a better future or give in to the allurements of a deteriorating present. They never lose hope that the values they learned in the best of times or the courage it takes to reclaim their world from the worst of times are worth the commitment of their lives. These people, the best of ourselves, are legion and they are everywhere.

It is the unwavering faith, the open hearts, and the piercing courage of people from every level of every society that carries us through every major social breakdown to the emergence again of the humanization of humanity. In every region, everywhere, they are the unsung but mighty voices of community, high-mindedness, and deep resolve. They are the prophets of each era who prod the rest of the world into seeing newly what it means to be fully alive, personally, nationally, and spiritually.

It is to these average but courageous people.

## Why Read This Book

With the world around us cracking at the seams and America in a state of polarization and political disarray, this book sets out to answer the most serious questions of them all:

How do we really get out of the swamp we're in?

Answer:

By confronting it.

Response:

How?

Answer:

Truthfully.

Response:

But what will that take?

Answer:

A model, a vision, a commitment, courage, and .. .

Annnnnnd ... ?

What else is needed to fix this muddled world?

Answer:

You.

## A Choice

We have a choice.

You and I stand in a space between two worlds. The first world is the one we were told—and never doubted—would last. The statue of Lady Liberty stood in the bay of the Port of New York and welcomed foreigners to our shores. The Constitution rested on its three-part government, each one serving as a check and balance on the other two, all of them devoted to answering the needs of the entire country. That was then.

Now the statue still stands there but the welcome is an illusion that is too often measured by color and ethnicity. The Constitution still exists, yes, but its interpretation now rests more on the prejudices of partisanship than on universal national concerns.

The second world in which we are steeped, the one we are living in now, defies everything we were taught to expect. Immigrants in dire straits are locked out of the United States. Members of Congress barely speak to their counterparts across the aisle, let alone feel required to respond to their needs. Long-standing international alliances are fracturing. The proliferation of nuclear weapons has raised its ugly head again after years of negotiation—even in countries long considered too small and remote to be a threat to anyone. As Americans, we are the first country to unilaterally violate an international treaty. In our withdrawal from the treaty with Iran that constrained its nuclear ambitions, we undermine international negotiations. A secure and stable national future for a global community can no longer be taken for granted.

We have a choice.

More than that, national borders everywhere are breaking down as entire populations are driven from their homes to find a place in other countries. Yet at the same time, alt-right and far-left political positions are dividing peoples everywhere, threatening local and global peace.

Somewhere between pre-war isolation and a postwar world that put its hope in the power of global institutions, life turned upside down. We became citizens of the world, cling as we might to small-town USA. The planet is now our neighborhood, a polyglot place where very different kinds of people need and want the same things.

We now find ourselves surrounded by people formed in other ways and places who by virtue of their tribes, cultures, and religions see life in other ways than we do. They were raised to value other ideals than we were. They speak another language. They paint a different face on their icons of God. They, too, seek life in its fullness. At base, we are all nothing more than humans together. We all want an order in our societies that we can depend on. We want a good future for generations to come. We want a way to make a steady, decent living that provides the basics of life and a chance to enjoy them. We want the opportunity to become the best of ourselves. Most of all, perhaps, we want a government that exists for the good of its citizens, that protects rather than oppresses its people, that is an equal partner in the community of nations.

Until now, destiny meant the right to get more of the past. Not now. Instead, the diverse cultural and generational makeup in our country does not yearn for the America of the past because they never knew it.

We may all seem to be going in the same direction, but when we get to the crossroads of a world in flux the human parade splits: Some emphasize the need to preserve the values and

structures that brought us to this point. Others warn that standing still while the world goes on will be our downfall. So we wander in a world of expectations we can neither see nor embrace.

Breaking news: the world is a land mine of differences.

No doubt about it. The direction we take at this new crossroad in time will not simply affect the future of the United States. It will determine the history of the world. The future depends on whether we make serious decisions about our own roles in shaping a future that fulfills God's will for the world, or simply choose to suffer the decisions made by others intent on imposing their own vision of tomorrow.

This moment is a daunting one. At every crossroad, every one of us has three possible options: The first choice is to quit a road that is going somewhere we do not want to go. We can move on in another direction. We can distance ourselves from the difficulties of it all. We can leave the mission unfinished.

The second alternative is to surrender to the forces of resistance that obstruct our every step toward wholeness. We can succumb to the fatigue of the journey that comes from years of being ignored, ridiculed, or dismissed for our ideas. We can go quietly into oblivion, taking on the values of the day or going silent in the face of them. This choice, in other words, is to crawl into a comfortable cave with nice people and become a church, a culture, a society within a society. We can just hunker down together and wait for the storm to calm down, go by, and become again the nice warm womb of our beginnings.

The third choice is to refuse to accept a moral deterioration of the present and insist on celebrating the coming of an unknown, but surely holier, future. The third choice is to go steadfastly on, even if we are not sure what we will find at the end of it. The third choice is to follow the path of the prophets of old. It is to echo those who came before us who spoke the voice and vision of God for the world. It is to risk, as the prophets did, not really being heard at all—at least not until long after the fact.

The third choice is a choice that demands great courage. But courage, however apparently fruitless, is not without its own reward. Anaïs Nin wrote once: "Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage." And courage is a prophet's road.

The prophets had a choice.

So do we. <>

Rationalization in Religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam edited by Yohanan Friedmann and Christoph Markschies [De Gruyter, 9783110444506]

Current tendencies in religious studies and theology show a growing interest for the interchange between religions and the cultures of rationalization surrounding them. The studies published in this volume, based on the international conferences of both the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften and the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, aim to contribute to this field of interest by dealing with concepts and influences of rationalization in Judaism, Christianity, Islam and religion in general. In addition to taking a closer look at the immediate links in the history of tradition between those rationalizing movements and evolutions in religion, emphasis is put on intellectual-historical convergences: Therefore, the articles are led by central comparative questions, such as what factors foster/hinder rationalization?; where are criteria for rationalization drawn from?; in which institutions is rationalization taking place?; who propagates, supports and utilizes rationalization?

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Excerpt: The present volume is based on the conference on "Rationalization in Religions" convened jointly by the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften and the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities in Berlin on December 16-18, 2013. The conference was the first in a series of workshops on religion and modernity arranged on the basis of the collaboration agreement concluded in 2000 between the two academies.

## Christoph Markschies: Rationalization in Religions

Philosopher Carl Friedrich Gethmann, a member of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy, has described rationalization as the "targeted, structured and reproducible operation of optimization." Gethmann's broad definition covers rationalization across a range of very different areas — in the economy, in society, even in the mind of the individual. In our own field of religious studies, the first scholar who comes to mind in this context is the philosopher and sociologist Max Weber, who introduced the term "rationalization" to the field.' Maintaining that religious rationalization preceded social rationalization, Weber identified rationalization structures within the Judeo-Christian tradition that, as Gethmann puts it, "encouraged the establishment of rational conceptions of the world and the emergence of a modern consciousness."' In his studies of the "economic ethics of the world religions," Weber developed the notion of a universal historical process of "disenchantment" (Entzauberung) of the religious-metaphysical conceptions of the world and argued for a "unidirectional rationalization of all world religions." According to Weber, all paths of religious rationalization lead towards an understanding of the world that is purified of magical notions. Only the occidental path of development, however, leads to a fully decentralized understanding of the world.'

It is not my intention, at this juncture, to provide a full recapitulation of Weber's view of the rationalization that is inherent in all world religions. His basic assumptions concerning an occidental rationalism, and thus a particularly marked rationalism in the occidental religions, which he set against the Orient and its religions,' appear highly problematic to us today. In view of the obvious problems in Weber's conceptualization, I believe it makes more sense, in talking about "rationalization in religions," to stick with Gethmann's definition of rationalization and to speak of an optimization of the "rationality" of religion. But what is rationality? I turn again to Gethmann, who defines "rationality" as "developing processes for the discursive upholding of claims to validity, to follow these and to avail of them."' A religion becomes rationalized when its exponents argue discursively - that is, in line with contemporary standards of rationality - in favor of its claims to validity, and when those claims to validity can be asserted in this way, instead of authoritatively and using instruments of power.

Notwithstanding our criticism of Weber, we are left with the question of whether such a tendency is actually inherent in all world religions, and whether this development intensifies over time. The conference on which the present volume is based set out to address this question, focusing mainly on Judaism, Christianity and Islam, aside from Shaul Shaked's treatment of Zoroastrianism. Many of the papers focus specifically on the formative periods in which these three religions (sometimes referred to as "Abrahamic") came into contact with the "cultures of rationality" that surrounded them, leading them to develop independent philosophies, theologies or at least argumentations with the pagan culture of rationality on the basis of their respective Holy Scriptures.

To an extent, Berlin can be described as a hot spot for this kind of research into the formative periods of the Abrahamic faiths. In the area of Judaism, for example, one could mention the studies of Peter Schäfer of Berlin (and Princeton), who convened several conferences, the results of which have since been published, to examine the relationships between the Greco-Roman culture of rationality and the large corpuses of rabbinic literature.' Regarding Islam, we might point to the Berlin research of Islamic studies scholar Sabine Schmidtke, also of (Berlin and) Princeton, whose paper "Rediscovering Theological Rationalism in the Medieval World of Islam"9 was part of a larger project funded by the European Research Council - the groundwork for which, however, was laid down by several research groups at the Israel Institute for Advanced Studies, to which our Jerusalem colleagues, such as Sarah Stroumsa, made a considerable contribution. In the area of Early Christianity, we may note the studies of the reception of the Alexandrian culture of knowledge, and especially of (neo)Platonic philosophy, among Alex¬andrian Christians such as Clement of Alexandria and Origen; this work, too, has taken place in Berlin, within the circle surrounding the edition of the works of these Early Christian thinkers, in particular at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy, but of course not only there.'

A number of efforts have recently been made to analyze and compare these attempts - facilitated by the continued existence in Late Antiquity of a culture of knowledge with shared standards of rationality - to integrate a culture of knowledge and rationality into the respective religions; worth mentioning here, for example, are the publications of Guy Stroumsa.' These comparative approaches are, of course, still in their nascent stages, with studies of "rationalization in religions" generally limited to one of the three - Judaism, Christianity or Islam - not to mention certain limitations in their perspectives (for example, because of the way reception has developed in modern times, the significance of Platonism has been afforded more attention than that of the Stoic tradition).

An earlier collaborative effort to examine "Religion and Rationality" was undertaken at a conference with that title held in Berlin in 2009. That conference took a closer look at the relationship between scripture and rationalization - that is, between normative texts and efforts to adapt reflective work on them to contemporary standards of rationality. The colloquium's thesis was that interpretation, particularly in the form of scientific commentaries, is a literary medium and institutional method for approaching holy texts that makes it possible to arrive at rationalizations in accord with a methodically controlled procedure. The colloquium took a very broad comparative approach, classifying Marxist texts alongside ancient oriental ones as "Scriptures" in the terms of a phenomenological approach to religion. The question already arose there as to whether a phenomenological comparison of the possibly differing potentials of religions to rationalize their traditions, and of their possibly differing strategies, would have to look not only at interpreting Holy Scriptures but also at theological reflections that are not presented in the form of commentary.

While we might tremble today to sketch broad outlines and model clear structures like those proposed by Weber, perhaps we can nevertheless create a list of criteria to outline how rationalization might be practiced by those actively involved in religions (such as religious experts or theologians). I would like to mention a few questions that might be helpful in this regard:

- What factors promote/impede rationalization?

- From where are the criteria for rationalization drawn, and how are they applied?
- In what institutions does rationalization take place, and where is it critiqued?
- What circles of proponents propagate, support and utilize rationalization?
- Does the friction between clergy and other theologians that is so characteristic of Christianity exist in other religions as well?

The papers presented herein offer a historical perspective on these and other questions, along with some answers.

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As a methodological framework critical rationalism upholds the following theses, among others:

There is something (reality) not created by man's ideas, language and/ or conventions. This reality, which is full of mysteries, nevertheless is assumed to be, in principle, comprehensible.

All knowledge claims are conjectural and remain so until they are refuted. Nevertheless, it is not impossible to get closer to a true understanding of reality, whether natural or socially constructed, by means of learning through our own mistakes and by reflecting on the mistakes committed by others.

All observations are theory-laden. There is no such a thing as `brute or naked (i.e. un-interpreted) fact'.

It is the `growth of interesting and informative knowledge about reality', and not `knowledge per se', which is important.

Knowledge advances in two complementary ways: via negativa and via positiva. The former concerns what we learn from disproving the conjectures made about the reality of things. We learn that reality is not the way these conjectures claim that it is. In other words, we learn through the mistakes we have made in our conjectural exploration of reality or from the mistakes made by others. The latter pertains to conjectures which so far, and despite our best efforts to refute them, have proved resilient and remain corroborated. Such claims are regarded as our best provisional candidates for knowledge about reality.

The following schemata present the way we develop our knowledge:

P1—>TS—>EE—>P2

In the above schemata, P1 is a problem which presents itself to the inquirer. TS is a tentative solution which the inquirer produces (in the shape of a conjecture) to solve the problem. There may be more than one solution for the problem with which the inquirer is grappling (TS, ... TS n+m). Each proposed solution should then be subjected to the process of error elimination (EE). Each genuine problem, almost invariably, introduces in its wake fresh new problems (P2 ... P n+m) due to the fact that reality, as critical rationalists assume, is not exhausted by our conjectures and constantly introduces new aspects/challenges.

Critical assessments of conjectures are made in two ways: for all those knowledge claims and conjectures which have empirical content and deal with empirically accessible aspects of reality, assessment will be done by means of empirical testing as well as analytical (i.e. rational, logical and philosophical) evaluations. For those knowledge claims which do not have empirically testable contents and/or are about those aspects of reality which are not empirically accessible, and are neither empty nor truisms nor tautologies, assessment will be done by analytical means. Such claims can also be assessed in an indirect way by evaluating empirical/practical consequences which may result from them.

Morality/ethics and the growth of knowledge are closely connected. Morality manifests its role in the growth of knowledge in at least two ways. On the one hand, inquirers must regard `others' as ends in themselves and not means. This is because it is only through dialogue with `others' that one can hope to correct one's mistakes (avoid one's epistemological blind spots) and also get access to unique sources of knowledge (Popper, [1945]1966: ch. 23). But proper dialogue can only take place if the interlocutors regard those with whom they are interacting as belonging to the category of ends in themselves. On the other hand, inquirers must avoid

resorting to any tactic, e.g. obscurantism or ad-hoc manoeuvres, which would make the task of critical assessment of their knowledge claims less effective.

Pluralism (in the sense of diversity of ideas and views and the existence of pluralistic knowledge eco-systems) is of great importance for the growth of knowledge. In a pluralistic environment, in which a large variety of conjectures can be produced as possible solutions to the challenges presented by reality, the chances of stumbling upon a conjecture which is on the right track are much higher than in eco-systems in which one or a few dominant views stifle the flourishing of alternative ideas or suppress their emergence.

Justification, of all sorts and types, is impossible. Whatever people suggest as a justification for their claim is in need of further justification. The impossibility of justification however, does not mean that we cannot rationally prefer some theories to others. This is done by means of producing sound arguments which explain why some theories are to be preferred to others.

Induction, as a method of logical inference, is invalid, and as a method for discovery is impossible. The impossibility of induction has no impact whatsoever on our ability to learn from experience by means of the method of producing conjectures and trying to find their shortcomings. The so-called `problem of induction', generalisation from a limited set of data, is one of the aspects of 'the problem of demarcation', distinguishing between genuine knowledge and pseudoknowledge. The latter problem is about what we learn the former about how we learn.

Critical rationalists introduce the following finer sub-divisions in reality (R): the natural (physical) part of reality (World1) (W1)), the subjective content of each individual's cognitive and emotive apparatus (World, (W2)) and the sphere which contains ALL publicly available products of human interaction with reality (World3) (W3)). W3 contains all intellectual/linguistic (in the extended sense of the term) products. It is the abode of entities such as our theories, moral principles, legal codes, blueprints and plans of all technological products, music, poetry, religious, philosophical and other types of ideas. W3 is as real as the other types of reality. This is because entities in W3 have the power of influencing other aspects of reality. W, is the link between W, and W3. Challenges presented to people (W2s), either through what happens in W, or by what appears in W3, may prompt them to come up with solutions. The conceptual contents of these solutions belong to W3. Similarly, ideas deposited in W3 could prompt people to make changes in W.

Knowledge claims ought to be objective. Objectivity is here understood as amounting to `public accessibility and public assessability'. Although pursuers of knowledge are immersed in their own local cultures and traditions and carry their cultural and metaphysical baggage as well as value systems, they can do their best, in their quests to understand different aspects of reality, to keep their conjectures free of such external influences in order to depict reality itself as faithfully as possible. What makes this task possible is the public accessibility and assessability of scientific (knowledge) conjectures. The critical assessment of these conjectures helps pursuers of knowledge to (as much as humanly possible) detect and eliminate the biases that may have been imported into their conjectures and thus make their conjectures represent reality more faithfully.

From the above it also follows that knowledge claims ought to be, as much as it is possible, value-neutral. What pursuers of knowledge, in their efforts to understand reality, aim to achieve is a truthful understanding of reality itself and not values or habits of this or that individual, group or culture.

Human knowledge is not absolute, certain, infallible, indubitable or justified. In other words, our knowledge claims, which are always conjectural, cannot — no matter how accurate they are — fully capture reality. Reality, as critical rationalists surmise, is indeterminately infinite, whereas we are finite, fallible creatures with limited cognitive abilities.

Certainty/certitude belongs to the realm of personal psychology. It is not an epistemological category. Psychology deals with external causes whereas epistemology is concerned with internal reasons and arguments. It is possible to induce

'certainty/certitude' about certain ideas/claims in individuals' minds by non-cognitive means such as brain-washing and propaganda. Individuals may also acquire certainty as a result of their existential experiences. However, whatever about which individuals are `certain', as a result of external stimuli or personal experiences, as long as it remains in their W2S, it cannot be regarded as objective knowledge since it is neither publicly accessible nor publicly assessable.

Whatever becomes part of the three worlds (1, 2 & 3), i.e. the realm to which human beings have access, would inevitably and necessarily assume the limitations of these three worlds. Within each world there are indeterminately large number of capacities and potentials which can, in principle, be actualised.

All theories (conjectures, hypotheses etc.), which are needed to be produced in response to the challenges presented by reality, must be constructed by us. Reality does not suggest any solution or conjecture (theories). The role of reality is to act as a referee and judge in assessing the tenability (or otherwise) of our proposed conjectures (solutions).

In the course of acquiring knowledge by means of the method of conjectures and refutations, one ought to distinguish between two important contexts: the context of discovery and the context of assessment. The role of these two contexts in producing knowledge is different but complementary. Neither can, in the absence of the other, produce knowledge. The context of discovery belongs to the realm of personal psychology. It is intimately related to one's W2. It is the arena in which, as a result of one's constant and systematic grappling with the problem(s) with which one is dealing, the `solution(s)' to one's problem(s) may be `envisioned' or `experienced' in the shape of flashes of insight, moments of epiphany, flares of intuition and their ilk. These visions/experiences, which are all `existential' in kind and not `epistemological', are, by their very nature, transitory and short lived. As soon as they are over, one needs to `reconstruct' them by means of one's memory, concepts and language. The reconstructed `solution(s)' must then be presented to 'the context of assessment', which is the public arena, and must be assessed critically to expose their faults and defects. `Reconstructed' versions of `existential moments' can never fully represent reality since our language and concepts always remain imperfect. Nevertheless, such 'reconstructions' can, in principle, present good approximate representations of some aspects of reality, and it is not impossible to get closer to a better understanding of reality via such `reconstructions'.

Critical rationalism relies on a meta-method/methodological framework called situational analysis/situational logic, for exploring the situations in all those realms in which human interaction matters. Since this meta-method will be used in the subsequent chapters of the present volume, below I briefly introduce its main features.

## Situational analysis

Situational analysis which was introduced by, and further developed by other fellow critical rationalists provides, in the general context of critical rationalism, a powerful tool for analysing the acts of human actors in various situations. `Situation' is a general name for any circumstance in which human actors interact with each other (and with the environment); in other words it refers to particular `human conditions'. To analyse a situation means to study the ways in which the main actors act (in relation to other actors and the environment) to achieve their aims and objectives. The analyst explores the impacts and outcomes (i.e. the wanted and unwanted consequences) of the actions of the actors in the situation.

The first task of the analyst is to define a boundary for the `situation'. That is to say, the time and place which identifies the `situation' in question. He/she should provide reasons as to why such a proposed boundary is suitable for understanding the `situation' under consideration. For example, suppose a researcher (or an analyst) intends to do a research on the response of Muslim intellectuals to modernity. The researcher/analyst should specify the boundary of his/her `problem situation' by specifying the place (e.g. the country) to which the intellectuals in question belong and the period in which their activities he/she intends to explore. For example, if the analyst has in mind to explore

the responses of Egyptian Muslim intellectuals to modernity in the period between 1900 and 1930. After de-limiting the boundary of the situation, the analyst should specify the main actors and others whose action may influence 'the situation' in ways which are of interest or importance from the view of the analysis in question. To each actor, a set of aims as well as a certain amount of background knowledge related to the situation and the aims they pursue are attributed. These attributions are nothing but conjectures produced by the analyst. For each attribution, the analyst ought to produce reasons as to why it fares better in comparison to some rival attributed aims/background knowledge in the face of challenging evidence/arguments. The analyst should also identify the set of `institutions' (including traditions, laws, rules and regulations) as well as the physical environment (obstacles) in the situation under study which could influence the actions of the actors.

Each model of `Situational Analysis' is also enriched by an empirical conjecture which serves as the major premise in the explanatory scheme of the model. This conjecture is called 'the rationality principle' or 'the principle of charity'. It simply states that actors in the `situations' act in ways they think to be fit for their purpose. The rationality principle implies that an agent/ actor in a situation may act according to beliefs/theories which he/she may think to be true, though those beliefs/theories may be false in reality.

The importance of this `principle' is that it forces the analysts to do their best to find a rational explanation for the actions of the actors in a particular situation, even in the face of most adverse evidence. To ascribe the unusual actions of particular actors to their madness or insanity would not help us to learn anything from the situation and the interaction of the actors in it. Mad or insane behaviour does not need rational explanation. It requires only causal explanation.

Situational analysis is not based on subjective features of actors, such as their hopes or fears, but objective problems which actors want to solve (or objective aims which they want to achieve). The analyst can ascribe various cognitive and emotional capacities to actors, on a conjectural basis. However, his/her conjectures must be empirically falsifiable. In other words, they must have informative content. They must not be truisms or tautologies.

This model for analysis could be applied equally effectively to both texts and events. The outcome of the analysis would be objective since it can be scrutinised by other researchers. They can critically examine any claims made about the situation or the actions of the actors. They can also examine the assumptions made in reconstructing the `situation'. As a result of such critical assessments, the original account of the situation under considera¬tion could either be improved upon or discarded.

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Scientific conjectures (conjectural knowledge-claims) aim to transcend particular contexts and account for each context's particularities by incorporating initial and boundary conditions in the theory's general body. Einstein's general theory of relativity is supposed to be valid throughout the universe, despite the fact that the particular form of the space-time curvature caused by the gravitational field of the black hole in our galaxy's centre differs from the space-time curvature caused by a quasar's gravitational field. Technologies, on the other hand, are context-sensitive, for without proper fine-tuning a technology devised to respond to the needs of people in a specific environment or context may not work properly in other environments or contexts. For example, a car designed for Europe's cold and wet climate has to be modified appropriately before it can be used in Africa's hot and dry deserts. An astronaut walking on the Moon's surface must wear a space suit, as opposed to a tuxedo or woolly jumpers.

Another notable difference pertains to the fact that scientific knowledge is, by and large, cumulative, whereas technological know-how is to some extent (though not in all cases) tacit and non-cumulative. Those past scientific (knowledge) conjectures that have been successful over a long period of time and have successfully defeated our best and most effective attempts to falsify them are routinely incorporated as approximations in the subsequent and more explanatory theories. As for technologies, since part of their know-how is

transferred through some sort of master-disciple relationship or acquired as personal skills, in many cases if the know-how is lost it is lost forever, or at least its retrieval would be extremely difficult.

The criteria for judging advances in science and in technological activities are also different. In science, the criterion of approaching the ideal of the truth about reality provides a rough (and admittedly not yet very well formalised) measure for progress. In technology and engineering, where the main concern is usually devising more effective practical solutions, or more efficient machines and instruments, pragmatic considerations are more prominent.

Contrary to the view held by a number of writers, including Martin Heidegger, technologies do not have essences but only functions, which cause them to become individuated. Their users could add or omit functions in order to adapt them to the purposes they have in mind.

For both knowledge claims and technological constructs, reality is the final arbiter: it corrects the mistakes of our knowledge claims and exposes the defects of our technological constructs. For technologies, although the users' tastes and preferences (which together form an important part of their networks of meaning) are important for judging the technology's desirability, nevertheless, the constraints imposed by reality for judging the efficacy of its functions are decisive.

Each specific technology is identifiable as such only for those who share a network of meaning or a collective intentionality that recognises that particular technology and its characteristic functions. For example, an Amazonian tribal member will see a laptop as a thing, not a laptop. Philosophers define such a case as the difference between "seeing" and "seeing as". Seeing something as something particular is only possible for those who share in the network of meaning related to that thing.

Earlier it was suggested that the aim of science is to discover the truth about reality. At the most basic level, such truth corresponds to fundamental laws that govern reality at those levels. In the natural sciences, fundamental laws are our best guesses for capturing the fundamental laws of nature. It is therefore important to distinguish between these laws and the fundamental laws of science. The latter, as suggested above, are our best representations of the former. Fundamental laws are universal and valid in all contexts.

In the realm of technologies, which is a realm entirely constructed by us and which should be distinguished from realm of science/nature, all laws are phenomenological (technological/empirical). Phenomenological laws are used in specific contexts and for particular phenomena (e.g. the classical laws of gases, Ohm's law of electric resistance in electric circuits, Hooke's law of elasticity, the laws of fluid dynamics and Coulomb's law of the force between two electric charges). According to critical rationalists, all such laws are derivable from fundamental laws either directly or by "approximate derivation". For example, Coulomb's law is a consequence of Maxwell's equations and the Lorentz force for static charges, and the Euler equation for a perfect fluid is a consequence of the fundamental law of dynamics and Kepler's law, which states that the planets' elliptical orbits can be approximately derived from Newtonian theory.

Knowledge/science does not tell technologists what to do, but, at best, only specifies the boundaries or limits of what cannot be achieved. For example, the principle of energy conservation informs technologists and engineers that it is impossible for them to construct a perpetual motion machine. Similarly, entropy suggests that they cannot make a machine that functions at a 100 per cent efficiency rate. <>

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